



The Hindu Important News Articles & Editorial For UPSC CSE

Saturday, 05 Oct , 2024

Edition: International | Table of Contents

Page 01 Syllabus : GS 3 : Internal Security	28 Naxalites killed by security forces in Chhattisgarh gunfight
Page 01 Syllabus : GS 2 : International relations	Jaishankar will travel to Pakistan for SCO meeting
Page 04 Syllabus : GS 2 : International relations	Jaishankar meets Dissanayake, pledges India's support for economic recovery
Page 09 Syllabus : GS 1 : Indian Society	A tribe out of time
Report In News	EnviStats India 2024
Page 06 : Editorial Analysis: Syllabus : GS 3 : Disaster Management	Kerala urgently needs to identify risk zones

At least 28 Naxalites were killed by security forces in a gunfight in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region.

28 Naxalites killed by security forces in Chhattisgarh gunfight

This is the second-highest tally of Naxal casualties in any operation in the State; the number of insurgents killed this year touches 185; one policeman injured in grenade blast in Bastar region; anti-Naxal operations surged since BJP came to power

Shubhomoy Sikdar
RAIPUR

At least 28 Naxalites were killed by security forces in a gunfight in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region on Friday, according to the police.

One policeman was injured in a grenade blast during the operation.

The gunfight began around 1 p.m. in the Abujhmad area of Narayanpur district in the left-wing extremism-affected Bastar region. At 8 p.m., the police provided the final number of bodies recovered, after which Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai congratulated the forces in a post on X.

"In a fierce encounter between security forces and Naxalites in the border area of Narayanpur and Dantewada districts, reports suggest that 28 Naxalites have been killed. This major achievement by our brave soldiers is commendable. I salute their courage and indomitable spirit," Mr. Sai said.

Red alert

Encounters between security forces and Maoists have become frequent this year. A look at the encounters since April this year



Oct. 4, 2024: 28 Maoists killed in Bastar area, the second highest in terms of casualties	Sept. 3: Nine Maoists killed in Dantewada	April 16: 29 Maoists killed at Kanker-Narayanpur border, recording the biggest ever toll	April 10: 12 Maoists gunned down
			April 2, 2024: 13 Maoists killed in Bijapur

lites have been killed. This major achievement by our brave soldiers is commendable. I salute their courage and indomitable spirit," Mr. Sai said.

Arms found

In a statement issued earlier in the day, the police said a joint team of security forces from Dantewada

and Narayanpur set out on an operation after receiving specific information about the presence of Naxalites in Abujhmad, a largely unsurveyed area in southern Bastar. The clash broke out around 1 p.m., after which firing continued at regular intervals. An AK47 rifle, a Self Loading Rifle (SLR) and other

weapons were found at the site of encounter, the police said.

After Friday's anti-Naxal operation – the second biggest in terms of casualties inflicted by the State this year and in the conflict zone's history – the number of Naxals killed by the forces this year has shot up to 185.

There has been a surge in anti-Naxal operations since the new BJP government came to power in December 2023. Mr. Sai's post on X added: "Our fight to eliminate Naxalism will only end when we achieve complete success, and for this, our double-engine government is fully committed. The eradication of Naxalism from the State is our ultimate goal."

In a media interaction, the Chief Minister appealed to the Naxalites to

shun violence and join the mainstream and reiterated Union Home Minister Amit Shah's assertion that Naxalism would be eliminated from the State by March 2026.

The Opposition Congress in the State also congratulated the forces, with its spokesperson Sushil Anand Shukla claiming that the confidence building measures taken by the previous Congress government in the State had allowed the forces to set up their camps and gain a foothold in Naxal areas. He also said there should not be any questions raised about the encounter by villagers as has been the case in the past incidents.

In a late-night release, the police said there was the possibility of recovery of three to four more bodies.

Naxalism in India

- ➔ The term Naxalism derives its name from the village Naxalbari of West Bengal.
- ➔ It originated as rebellion against local landlords who bashed a peasant over a land dispute. The rebellion was initiated in 1967, with an objective of rightful redistribution of the land to working peasants under the leadership of Kanu Sanyal and Jagan Santhal.
- ➔ Started in West Bengal, the movement has spread across the Eastern India; in less developed areas of states such as Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.
- ➔ It is considered that Naxals support Maoist political sentiments and ideology.

- ➔ Maoism is a form of communism developed by Mao Tse Tung. It is a doctrine to capture State power through a combination of armed insurgency, mass mobilization and strategic alliances.

Causes

- ➔ **Tribal discontent:**

- The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 deprives tribals, who depend on forest produce for their living, from even cutting a bark.
- Massive displacement of tribal population in the naxalism-affected states due to development projects, mining operations and other reasons.

- ➔ **Easy Target for Maoists:** Such people who do not have any source of living are taken into naxalism by Maoists.

- Maoists provide arms and ammunitions and money to such people.

- ➔ **Gaps in the socio-economic system of the country.**

- Government measuring its success on the basis of number of violent attacks rather than the development done in the naxal-affected areas.
- Absence of strong technical intelligence to fight with naxalites.
- Infrastructural problems, for instance, some villages are not yet connected properly with any communication network.

- ➔ **No Follow-Up from administration:** It is seen that even after police takes hold of a region, administration fails to provide essential services to the people of that region.

- ➔ Confusion over tackling naxalism as a social issue or as a security threat.

- ➔ State governments considering naxalism as the central government's issue and thus are not taking any initiatives to fight it.

Steps taken by the Government

- ➔ **Operation Green Hunt:** It was started in 2010 and massive deployment of security forces was done in the naxal-affected areas.

- From 223 districts that were affected due to naxalism in the year 2010, the number has come down to 90 in nine years.
- The government even started 'Relief and Rehabilitation Policy' for bringing naxalites into mainstream.
- Members of Central Committee Politburo of communist parties have either been killed or arrested.

- ➔ **Aspirational Districts Programme:** Launched in 2018, it aims to rapidly transform the districts that have shown relatively lesser progress in key social areas.

- Continuous efforts of government have reduced the frequency of violent attacks in the naxalism-affected regions.

UPSC Mains PYQ : 2020

Ques: What are the determinants of left-wing extremism in the Eastern part of India? What strategy should the Government of India, civil administration and security forces adopt to counter the threat in the affected areas?

Page 01 : GS 2 : International relations

In the first such visit in nearly a decade, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar will travel to Islamabad to attend the Heads of Government meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on October 15 and 16.

- According to the Ministry of External Affairs, "Mr. Jaishankar's visit was "mainly" for the SCO grouping's meeting, given India's focus on "regional cooperation mechanisms". No bilateral meetings on the sidelines have been decided thus far.
- The invitation to the SCO meeting was sent to Prime Minister Narendra Modi by the Pakistan government last month.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization

- The membership of SCO has expanded since 2001, and it currently has eight member states.
- **1996:** 'Shanghai Five' established by Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan.
- **2001:** After adding Uzbekistan in 2001, the Shanghai Five was renamed the SCO.
- **2015:** At Ufa, Russia, the SCO decided to admit India and Pakistan as full members.
- **2016:** India and Pakistan signed the memorandum of obligations in Tashkent (Uzbekistan), thereby starting the formal process of joining the SCO as full members.
- **2017:** At Astana, India and Pakistan officially joined SCO as full members
- **2021:** It was announced that Iran would become a full member of the SCO.

Members	China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Iran, and Uzbekistan
Observers	Afghanistan, Belarus, and Mongolia
Dialogue Partners	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Egypt, Nepal, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia

Significance

- **Areas of Cooperation:** The SCO has mainly focused on regional security issues, its fight against regional terrorism, ethnic

Jaishankar will travel to Pakistan for SCO meeting

Subhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

In the first such visit in nearly a decade, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar will travel to Islamabad to attend the Heads of Government meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on October 15 and 16, the Centre announced on Friday.

The Ministry of External Affairs said Mr. Jaishankar's visit was "mainly" for the SCO grouping's meeting, given India's focus on "regional cooperation mechanisms". No bilateral meetings on the sidelines have been decided thus far, it added.

The last time an Indian External Affairs Minister travelled to Pakistan was Sushma Swaraj in 2015 for the Heart of Asia conference and bilateral talks.

"Mr. Jaishankar will be leading India's delegation to the SCO meeting," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal told presspersons at a briefing. "As and when the programme develops, the visit develops, we will keep you informed," he said, when asked if there was any request from Pakistan for a bilateral meeting with its Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar.

According to sources, it is also unclear whether Mr. Jaishankar will stay in Islamabad overnight, as he may return to New Delhi the same day.

Mr. Jaishankar may arrive for the formal SCO meeting on October 16 and return to New Delhi the same day.

Officials said the External Affairs Minister's visit was based on "reciprocity", given that despite bilateral tensions, Pakistan had sent its then-Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto to attend the SCO Foreign Ministers' meeting in Goa in May 2023.

It is also significant that



S. Jaishankar

Minister pledges help to Sri Lanka

COLOMBO

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Friday met Sri Lanka's new President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, and pledged India's "full support" to the nation's economic recovery. » PAGE 4

the Narendra Modi-led government is sending a Minister for an SCO conference, but has refused to attend the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) summit, due to be held in Pakistan since 2016.

Responding to a question about the recent meeting between the new Bangladesh leader Muhammad Yunus and Pakistan Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, where Mr. Yunus called for a "revival" of the eight-nation SAARC process, the spokesperson alleged that it was Pakistan that was "stalling SAARC", not India.

"One particular country has a particular way of doing things, which is stalling SAARC," said Mr. Jaiswal, referring to Pakistan's refusal to move forward on India's suggestions for a Motor Vehicle Agreement (MVA) and South Asian electricity grid initiatives.

The invitation to the SCO meeting was sent to Prime Minister Narendra Modi by the Pakistan government last month.

separatism, and religious extremism, and promoted regional development.

- ➔ **Accommodating large population and world GDP:** It covers 40% of the global population, nearly 20% of the global GDP and 22% of the world's land mass.
- ➔ **Strategic significance:** The SCO has the potential to act as a catalyst for achieving regional integration among Asian countries and promoting stability across borders. Additionally, the SCO's efforts can foster improved connectivity throughout its area.
- ➔ **Bulwark against terrorism and drug trafficking:** It has focused not only on counter-terrorism but also on drug trafficking, military cooperation, and economic collaboration.
- ➔ **Comparison with QUAD:** SCO has displayed a much greater capacity to advance shared military and security goals through its range of initiatives such as "Peace Mission" drills that involve all members than the reformed Quad has been able to do thus far.

Importance and relevance of SCO for India

- ➔ **Counter-terrorism:** The SCO focuses on counter-terrorism and security cooperation, which is a key concern for India, given its long-standing conflict with Pakistan and the increasing threat of terrorism in the region.
- ➔ **Regional stability:** As a member of the SCO, India has the opportunity to contribute to the maintenance of regional stability and security in Central Asia and beyond.
- ➔ **Connectivity:** The SCO has emphasized connectivity and infrastructure development, which aligns with India's own priorities of enhancing connectivity with its neighbors and improving its own infrastructure.
- ➔ **Economic cooperation:** The SCO will help India to enhance economic cooperation with member countries, which could potentially lead to greater access to markets, technology, and investment opportunities.
- ➔ **Multilateral diplomacy:** The SCO provides India with a platform to engage in multilateral diplomacy and deepen its engagement with member countries.
- ➔ **Boosting relations with Central Asia:** SCO is a potential platform to advance India's Connect Central Asia policy.



UPSC Prelims PYQ : 2022

Ques : Consider the following:

1. Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
2. Missile Technology Control Regime
3. Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

India is a member of which of the above?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (d)



External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Friday met Sri Lanka's newly elected President Anura Kumara Dissanayake in Colombo and pledged India's "full support" to the island nation's economic recovery and growth.

Jaishankar meets Dissanayake, pledges India's support for economic recovery

The External Affairs Minister is the 'first high-level foreign dignitary' to visit Sri Lanka after the leftist leader assumed office; the leaders discuss key issues such as India's security interests, fisheries conflicts, and the political settlement of Sri Lankan Tamils; they extend invitations for bilateral visits

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Friday met Sri Lanka's newly elected President Anura Kumara Dissanayake in Colombo and pledged India's "full support" to the island nation's economic recovery and growth. His discussions with the Sri Lankan leadership covered India's security interests, the persisting fisheries conflict, and the pending political settlement of Sri Lanka's Tamils, according to official statements issued by both sides.

Mr. Jaishankar, on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, extended an invitation to Mr. Dissanayake to visit India at a mutually convenient date. Mr. Dissanayake, too, extended an invitation to Mr. Modi to visit Sri Lanka, the President's office said.

The visit assumes significance, coming barely a fortnight after Sri Lankans elected leftist leader Mr. Dissanayake as their new President, the first to be held after the country's 2022 economic crisis. Sri



Sri Lankan president Anura Kumara Dissanayake and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar during their meeting on Friday. AP

Lanka's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Mr. Jaishankar was the "first high-level foreign dignitary" to visit Sri Lanka after Mr. Dissanayake assumed office.

'Full support'

"Dr. Jaishankar reaffirmed India's full support for Sri Lanka's economic rehabilitation, highlighting India's commitment to assisting in tourism, investment, electricity, energy services, and the dairy industry. He emphasised that Sri Lanka could leverage India's vast market to boost its economic recovery," the presidential media division said

following the meeting, adding that Mr. Dissanayake expressed his appreciation for India's support – totalling nearly \$4 billion – when the island nation faced a crushing financial meltdown two years ago.

Mr. Jaishankar highlighted ongoing India-backed initiatives in the field of energy production and transmission, fuel and LNG supply, solar electrification of religious places, connectivity, digital public infrastructure, health and dairy development. He highlighted that they would contribute to economic sustainability and

provide new streams of revenue, the External Affairs Ministry said in a statement.

The readouts from both sides did not mention the controversial Adani power project in Sri Lanka's Northern Province, which is currently mired in a court battle following stiff opposition from locals and environmentalists. Mr. Dissanayake had in the past questioned its approval, outside of a tender process, and the former government's power purchasing agreement with the company, which he contended was not in Sri Lanka's favour. However, New Delhi's statement following Friday's meeting said Mr. Dissanayake referred to the "potential of export of renewable energy to India, which could help reduce production costs in Sri Lanka and create additional resources".

Collaboration in the island's vital tourism sector was discussed, with Mr. Jaishankar offering to expand the flow of Indian tourists.

Mr. Jaishankar discussed matters of India's

security interest in the region. Across meetings, the Sri Lankan leadership assured the top Indian official that they were mindful of India's security concerns and would not allow their territory to be used in a manner inimical to India's security interests, the statements indicated.

Mr. Jaishankar reiterated India's support for "the aspirations of all communities, including Tamils, for equality, justice, dignity, peace while maintaining the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Sri Lanka".

The full and effective implementation of the 13th Amendment of its Constitution and the early conduct of Provincial Council elections will facilitate these objectives, the statement said.

Mr. Dissanayake who, according to this office discussed "areas of mutual interest, including fisheries and promoting national unity" with Mr. Jaishankar, promised in his poll manifesto to deliver a political settlement to the Tamils through a new Constitution. His government has said efforts would begin af-

ter the parliamentary elections.

Release of fishermen

Mr. Jaishankar also raised concerns pertaining to Indian fishermen who are detained in Sri Lanka. "He pressed for their early release, as well as of their boats, and reconsideration of the heavy fines imposed on them," the Indian statement said.

For many years, war-affected Sri Lankan Tamil fishermen have been urging fishermen in Tamil Nadu to refrain from using the bottom-trawling fishing method that is known to severely deplete the marine ecosystem. However, the Indian fishermen, from Tamil Nadu's coastal districts, are frequently arrested by Sri Lanka for fishing illegally in the country's territorial waters, that too using the destructive fishing method. A total of 50 Indian fishermen from Mayiladuthurai, Pudukkottai, and Nagapattinam were released on Friday. They would be repatriated from Sri Lanka to Tamil Nadu later this week, the Indian High Commission said.

- His discussions with the Sri Lankan leadership covered India's security interests, the persisting fisheries conflict, and the pending political settlement of Sri Lanka's Tamils, according to official statements issued by both sides.
- Mr. Jaishankar, on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, extended an invitation to Mr. Dissanayake to visit India at a mutually convenient date. Mr. Dissanayake, too, extended an invitation to Mr. Modi to visit Sri Lanka, the President's office said.

- The visit assumes significance, coming barely a fortnight after Sri Lankans elected leftist leader Mr. Dissanayake as their new President, the first to be held after the country's 2022 economic crisis.
- Sri Lanka's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Mr. Jaishankar was the "first high-level foreign dignitary" to visit Sri Lanka after Mr. Dissanayake assumed office.

Relations Between India and Sri Lanka

➤ Historical Ties:

- India and Sri Lanka have a long history of cultural, religious, and trade ties dating back to ancient times.
- There are strong cultural ties between the two countries, with many Sri Lankans tracing their heritage to India. Buddhism, which originated in India, is also an important religion in Sri Lanka.

➤ Financial Assistance from India:

- India provided approximately USD 4 billion worth of aid to Sri Lanka during an unprecedented economic crisis, which was crucial for the country to survive the crisis.
- Sri Lanka was hit by a catastrophic financial crisis in 2022, the worst since its independence from Britain in 1948, due to a severe paucity of foreign exchange reserves.

➤ Role in Debt Restructuring:

- India has played a role in collaborating with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and creditors to help Sri Lanka in restructuring its debt.
- India became the first country to hand over its letter of support for financing and debt restructuring of Sri Lanka.

➤ Joint Vision for Connectivity:

- Both countries have agreed on a joint vision that emphasises comprehensive connectivity, including People to People connectivity, renewable energy cooperation, logistics, port connectivity, and grid connectivity for electricity trade.

➤ Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement (ETCA):

- Both countries are exploring the possibility of an ETCA to integrate their economies and foster development.

➤ Agreement on a Multi-Project Petroleum Pipeline:

- Both India and Sri Lanka have agreed to establish a multi-product petroleum pipeline from the southern part of India to Sri Lanka.
- This pipeline aims to ensure an affordable and reliable supply of energy resources to Sri Lanka. Recognition of energy's critical role in economic development and progress is driving the focus on establishing the petroleum pipeline.

➤ Adoption of India's UPI:

- Sri Lanka has now adopted India's UPI service, which is a significant step towards enhancing fintech connectivity between the two countries.
- The use of rupee for trade settlement is further helping Sri Lanka's economy. These are concrete steps to help Sri Lanka's economic recovery and growth.

➤ Economic Ties:

Daily News Analysis

- India is Sri Lanka's third largest export destination, after the US and UK. More than 60% of Sri Lanka's exports enjoy the benefits of the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement. India is also a major investor in Sri Lanka.
- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from India amounted to around USD 1.7 billion over the years from 2005 to 2019.

➤ **Defence:**

- India and Sri Lanka conduct joint military (Mitra Shakti) and Naval exercise (SLINEX).

➤ **Participation in Groupings:**

- Sri Lanka is also a member of groupings like BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) and SAARC in which India plays a leading role.

➤ **Tourism:**

- In 2022, India was the largest source of tourists for Sri Lanka with over 100,000 tourists.

Significance of India and Sri Lanka Relations

➤ **Focus on Regional Development:**

- India's progress is intricately linked with its neighbouring nations, and Sri Lanka aims to enhance its own growth by integrating with the Southern economy, in South Asia.

➤ **Geographical Location:**

- Sri Lanka, positioned near India's southern coast across the Palk Strait, holds a crucial role in the relationship between the two nations.
- The Indian Ocean is a strategically important waterway for trade and military operations, and Sri Lanka's location at the crossroads of major shipping lanes makes it a critical point of control for India.

➤ **Ease of Doing Business & Tourism:**

- The enhancement of digital payment systems across the two nations will promote economic integration and simplify business transactions between India and Sri Lanka.
- This advancement will not only streamline trade but also improve connectivity for tourism exchanges between the two nations.

UPSC Mains PYQ : 2022

Ques : 'India is an age-old friend of Sri Lanka.' Discuss India's role in the recent crisis in Sri Lanka in the light of the preceding statement.

The Chenchus, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group in Andhra Pradesh, face significant socioeconomic challenges due to reliance on traditional livelihoods and changes in government employment schemes.

➔ Their struggle highlights the urgent need for tailored interventions to improve their living conditions and economic integration.



Forgotten in the forest: An elderly man, belonging to the Chenchu tribe, posing with his bow and arrow, in Panikulam village in Dantam mandal of Prakasam district. Traditionally a hunter-gatherer tribe, the Chenchus now rely on subsistence farming for a living, along with forest produce.

A tribe out of time

The Chenchus of Panikulam have lived in the dense Nallamala forests for centuries, their existence intertwined with the wilderness around them. However, their inability to keep up with the relentless pace of modernisation has led to dwindling work opportunities under the MGNREGS. Sellore Sravani writes how the Chenchus, caught between an ancestral past and an uncertain future, are grappling with isolation, poverty, and an erosion of their traditional way of life.

Sitting under a tree on a rock woven from leaves and logs, Saseel Kishik, eight weeks shy of his first birthday, sits weakly when asked about what he's going to have for lunch.

"The uncle," he replies. A thin meal of rice and puchhadu — a simple chutney made from chilla, a natural, and onion — has remained the family's staple diet for years now. "This is our food for 25 days in a month. We cannot afford anything beyond that. Where is the money?" Kishik asks, shaking his head at the thought of buying fruits or vegetables from the market. His very laugh speaks of a life where even the simplest comforts are out of reach.

Kishik lives in a hamlet called Panikulam in the forest mandal of Prakasam district. The hamlet is home to the Chenchus, said to be the oldest aboriginal, Dravid-speaking tribe and the most vulnerable of the 17 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in undivided Andhra Pradesh.

Around 25 kilometres away is Dornala, a small town at the edge of the Nallamala forest in Prakasam district. A phoxop for Sri Ramamounda Dore, Dornala has had a growth spurt in the past two decades with hotels and eateries coming up. Dornala is the nearest go-to place for the Chenchu villages, including Panikulam. The contrast between the town and the hamlet of Panikulam is stark, more than what meets the eye.

Most of the dwellings in Panikulam are single-room thatched huts, simple and sparse, with conical or square roofs and rounded bases. Of the few pucca houses built under the Indira Awaaz Yojana scheme, many are in disrepair. The only sturdy structure in this hamlet is the Anganwadi, where a single female teacher educates around 10 children.

While Dornala thrives with an expanding number of citizens in its surrounding, life for the Chenchus seems to be moving in the opposite direction, with development passing them by.

"Ever since we stopped working under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGS) in 2022, life has become much harder," Kishik explains. "The wages I earn as an agricultural labourer aren't enough to support a family of 22," says Kishik, who doesn't remember his exact age, though his Aadhaar card lists him as 50. Both he and his wife talk whatever work they can find, earning ₹250 each per day.

But it's still not enough. "We need the 'karnam puri' (MGNREGS) to be brought back," he says, a statement that is being echoed by other younger men and women of the village.

Left behind

However, the issue is quite complex. The Chenchus, who have traditionally lived their way of life, possess only a rudimentary understanding of modern society and find it difficult to adapt to the world that exists outside their village. "Most Chenchus lack post-industrialisation skills. They are still living in a pre-agricultural setup. To work up with modern society, they need to learn agricultural skills, and then must come to terms with

industrialisation," explains Chakrabarti Rudhira, a senior researcher with IIT Bombay, a confluence of activists and academics that has extensively studied the impact that MGNREGS has had on the tribe for years.

Chenchus are characterised by extremely low literacy rates, a subsistence economy, and a stagnant or declining population. The total Chenchu population in Andhra Pradesh stands at 28,342.

"The Chenchus are heavily dependent on the forest for food and other necessities. This deep reliance has made it difficult for them to migrate to other areas and has isolated them from the outside world. As many live deep within the forest, numerous development programmes, including MGNREGS, have struggled to reach them," says Mr. Chakrabarti.

In response, the A.P. government launched the MGNREGS Chenchu Special Project in 2009, aimed at alleviating poverty and improving their socioeconomic conditions. Locally, the Chenchus refer to it as "Karnam puri, uparathi karnam" (15 days of guaranteed work or ITIA puri/ITIA work).

The project was carefully tailored to the specific needs of the Chenchus, taking into account their physical strength, food inaccessibility, accessibility challenges, lifestyle, and cultural practices. Managed by the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), the special initiative provided 180 days of employment per individual, compared to the standard 100 days per household in other areas. Chenchus were able to work 15 days each month, year-round, on individual or community land.

It thought out wrong

However, in December 2022, the Union government decided to bring all State-specific Management Information Systems (MIS), the operating software for MGNREGS, under the Centrally controlled MIS, which standardised MGNREGS operations nationwide.

"This aligned the Chenchu Special Project with the broader national framework, which meant that policies in place for a person outside applied to Chenchus as well. This move of the government has had a devastating impact on the Chenchus, because of the reduction of employment days for them, removal of work cessation and shift to bank-based payments," explains Mr. Chakrabarti.

"A reason behind the disillusionment among the Chenchus with the new system of MGNREGS could be the insistence on first obtaining Aadhaar and then linking it to one's bank account and job card for disbursal of wages. With most Chenchus being non-literate, two were proposed to be introduced by all the red tape," Mr. Chakrabarti says, adding that the Chenchu Special Project was specifically aimed at helping the Chenchus overcome such hurdles.

"Earlier, Chenchus in 125 villages (villages across the three districts) were going for MGNREGS work. But now, no one is interested in coming. We are also demanding that the special project be revived," said the ITIA Sravani Project Officer.

As per a Socio-Economic Survey taken up by the A.P. government in 2020-21, the project generated 60 lakh person days of employment between 2009 and 2021.

But now, most of the people in Panikulam are MGNREGS and village panchayat members in Prakasam district have stopped going for MGNREGS work. As per the data collected by IIT Bombay, only about 1,500 of the 4,000 enrolled households are taking up work access Aamir, Dornala, and Yerragallapalem mandals are major centres for the villagers to the uncertainty surrounding the wage disbursement process. Kishik, like most others here, cannot read or write. As Panikulamians, most of the 25 families do not have a mobile phone or two-wheeler and more than 70 people, including children, do not have Aadhaar cards. Without Aadhaar, they are excluded from the Public Distribution System (PDS) as well as the Ayushman health insurance scheme.

Starting from January 1, 2023, the Aadhaar-based payment system (ABPS) was made mandatory for payment of wages to workers under MGNREGS. Now, the national framework requires a job-seeker to get their job card seeded with their Aadhaar card and then link their Aadhaar card with their bank account. This has become an overwhelming, daunting task for the Chenchus.

"Earlier, most of us would work under the scheme because such work was handed out to us every month. Now, we don't even know if wages are being deposited in our accounts. No one explains what's happening. Those who have bank accounts fear being cheated since they cannot read or write. Bankers often get irritated when we keep asking

ANURAM VENKATARAM
businessman

to our accounts. No one explains what's happening. Those who have bank accounts fear being cheated since they cannot read or write. Bankers often get irritated when we keep asking," Kishik says.

Except for one or two people, no one in this habitation has a mobile phone. The only way they can find out if money has been deposited is to visit a bank in Dornala, which is 25-30 km away, at least three times a month.

"While Panikulamians go to banks in the plains, many Chenchu gamlans are situated within the Nagarjuna Srisaigram Tiger Reserve (NSTTR) and are deep in the forest, making trips to Dornala expensive.

Bhuvan Venkatesam, a Chenchu from Marripalem, located deep in the forest, shares that the Chenchus struggle to find work for most of the year.

"At best, we get work for six months when farmers hire us for the chilli or cotton fields. Sometimes they ask us to tend cattle, which pays us about ₹2,000 per day. But we don't do that every day; it's only twice a week," she says, adding that in October, November, and December, they have nothing to do.

However, and have more

When asked why some people do not have Aadhaar cards, activists said many do not have birth certificates. The whole process of getting a birth certificate itself is quite tedious, it is learnt.

"Even so, we are not comfortable with our payments being deposited into bank accounts. There are many people in our tribe with the same name. Apart from me, there are two other women named Bhuvan Venkatesam. Once a village payment was wrongly credited into the account of another person with the same name, their since then, we have been wary of the whole thing," Venkatesam shares.

Traditionally, the Chenchus have been foragers in the Chenchu of Andhra Pradesh, utilising the forest economy, gathering leafy vegetables, medicinal herbs, and roots for consumption, while earning income from selling Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) like gum, honey, squashes, and beads to the Girijan Cooperative Corporation (GCC). However, IIT Bombay activists report that restrictions on their movement in the forest and the collection of forest produce have increased recently due to wildlife conservation laws.

"We sell our produce at the GCC, but the returns are insufficient. We also sell along the Sri Sathya Sai road or at the Venkateswara," says Venkatesam, who struggles to feed her family of six, including four children. While she has a ration card allowing her to receive 35 kg of PDS per month, she finds it inadequate.

P. Srinivas has, former Deputy District Medical and Health Officer of ITIA for Srisaigram, recalls "About 25 years ago, when we visited the gamlan for work, we were fed various curries made from leafy vegetables found in the forest. As many as 23 types of leaves were used in cooking. Each night, a family member would venture into the forest with bags to hunt small animals like rabbits and peacocks for the next day's meal. Those days, we neither had these animals in the forest nor do the Chenchus utilize leaves as they once did."

This situation has led to a higher incidence of nutritional deficiencies among children. "Child marriages and consanguineous marriages are common in the community. These factors have made them more susceptible to stifle child anaemia and thalassemia, with high infant and maternal mortality rates," says P. Srinivas.

Venkatesam recalls how they used to spend money on milk and kurdha before the project was halted. She even managed to save enough to buy a TV and some gold, she smiles. Unfortunately, her brother broke the TV as a drunken fit, and now she has no money to repair it.

"We are called the protectors of the forest, yet ironically, we are being excluded from it in the name of tiger conservation," laments Bhuvan Venkatesam, another elder from Bilgampudi, a village deep in the forest. He notes that while the elders at least had access to forest produce, the youth are left with neither the forest nor any means of earning a livelihood.

The Chenchu received patina under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, commonly known as the Forest Rights Act (FRA). During their time in MGNREGS work, those who had received patina were tasked with clearing land, creating trenches, and removing species.

The project aimed to transform the tribe from hunter-gatherers to producers. Under the special project, many Chenchus worked on their own land and received government funds for purchasing pesticides and seeds. However, with its discontinuation, they are unsure how to irrigate their land.

Meanwhile, with depleted forests, irregular incomes, limited transportation, and a lack of electricity in some gamlans, the Chenchus stare at an uncertain future.

Chenchus Tribe

- The Chenchus are one of the oldest aboriginal tribes in India, primarily located in Andhra Pradesh.
- They are categorised as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG).
- Traditionally, the Chenchus are foragers, relying on the forest for food and non-timber forest products.
- The tribe has extremely low literacy rates and faces socio-economic challenges.
- The population of Chenchus in Andhra Pradesh is approximately 28,349.
- They possess a rudimentary understanding of modern society, making adaptation difficult.
- The tribe is heavily dependent on the forest, which has historically been both their source of livelihood and sustenance.

Problems Faced by the Chenchus Tribe

- **Economic Vulnerability:** Reliance on low-wage agricultural labor with insufficient income to support families.
- **Loss of Employment:** Discontinuation of the MGNREGS Chenchu Special Project led to reduced work opportunities and income insecurity.
- **Aadhaar-Linked Challenges:** Mandatory Aadhaar registration for wage payments creates barriers due to low literacy and lack of access to technology.
- **Health Issues:** Nutritional deficiencies, high infant and maternal mortality rates, and prevalence of genetic disorders.
- **Forest Access Restrictions:** Conservation laws limit their access to forest resources, impacting their traditional livelihood practices.
- **Housing and Infrastructure:** Deteriorating living conditions with inadequate housing, lack of electricity, and poor transportation facilities.
- **Cultural Displacement:** Difficulty in transitioning from a traditional hunter-gatherer lifestyle to modern agricultural practices.

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)

- Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) are marginalised tribal communities in India characterised by low development indicators, pre-agricultural livelihoods, and declining populations. Identified by the government, there are 75 PVTGs across 18 states and one union territory.
- They face severe socio-economic challenges, such as limited access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure.
- Special programs under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, like the Development of PVTGs Scheme, aim to uplift these communities through targeted interventions in health, education, and livelihood.



UPSC Prelims PYQ : 2013

Ques : Under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, who shall be the authority to initiate the process for determining the nature and extent of individual or community forest rights or both?

- (a) State Forest Department
- (b) District Collector/Deputy Commissioner
- (c) Tahsildar/Block Development Officer/Mandal Revenue Officer
- (d) Gram Sabha

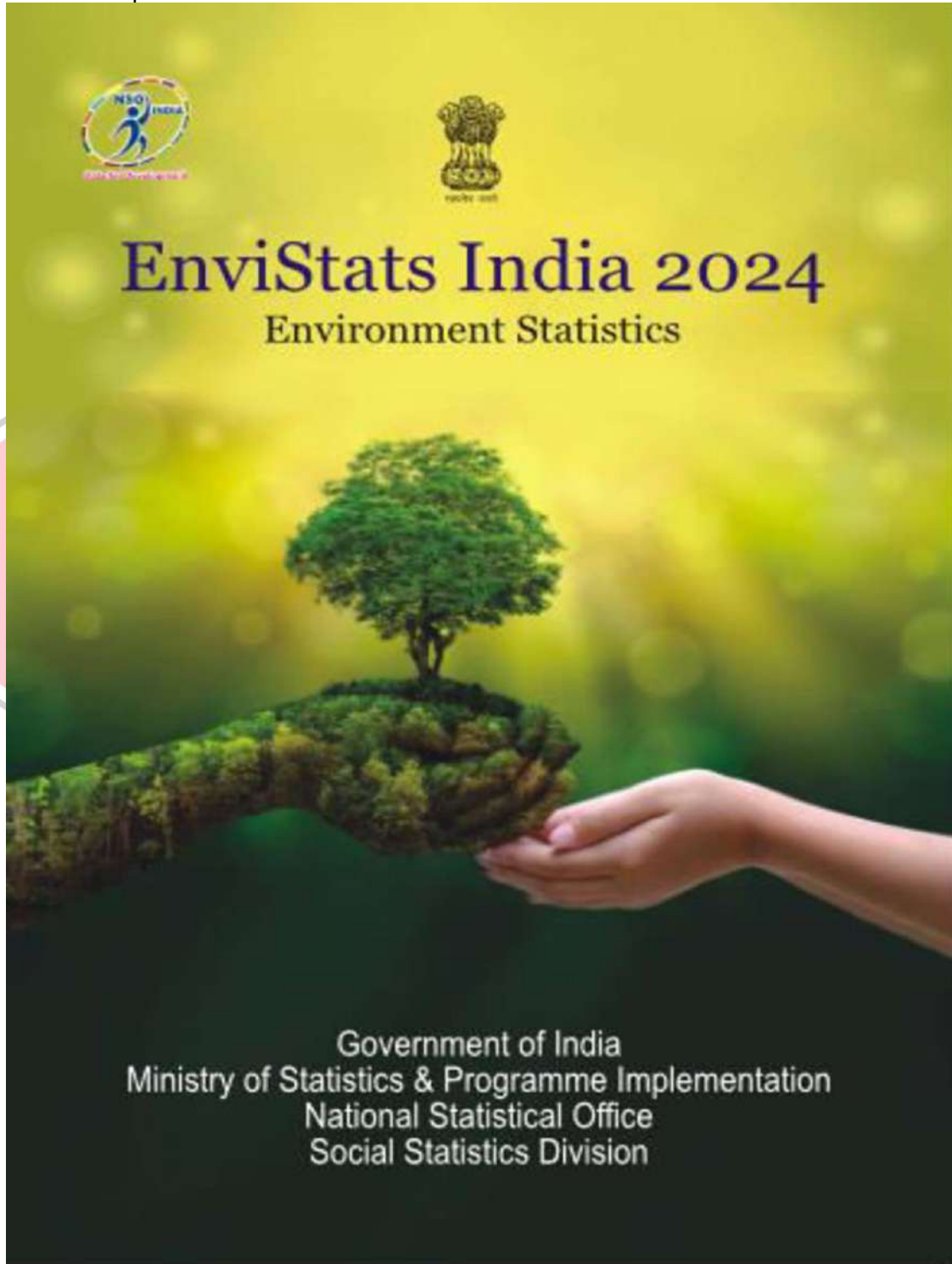
Ans: (d)





Report In News : EnviStats India 2024

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) compiled and released the 7th consecutive issue of the publication "EnviStats India 2024: Environment Accounts".



About EnviStats India 2024:

- It is compiled in accordance with the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA).
- The current publication which is seventh in the series covers Energy Accounts, Ocean Accounts, Soil Nutrient Index and Biodiversity.

Highlights EnviStats India 2024

- There has been around 72% increase in the number and around 16% increase in area for the Total Protected Area during the period 2000 to 2023.
- The coverage of Mangroves, which is an important sub-ecosystem of the ocean ecosystem has increased around 8% over the years 2013 to 2021.
- The report also includes the taxonomic faunal and floral diversity of India, the status of the Leopard and Snow leopard and information on Genetic Conservation using data from the stakeholder Ministries/agencies.
- Also, the Species Richness of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened species by taxonomic groups has been compiled using spatial datasets from IUCN.

What is System of Environmental-Economic Accounting?

- It is an agreed international statistical standard for describing the interaction between the economy and the environment, as well as the stocks and changes in stocks of environmental assets
- It aims to integrate perspectives from other disciplines and, where relevant, provide an improved body of information for environmental economic accounts.
- There are two sides of SEEA—the SEEA-Central Framework (SEEA-CF) and the SEEA-Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA-EA)
 - **SEEA-Central Framework:** It focuses on the individual components of the environment that provide material and space for all economic activities.
 - **SEEA-Ecosystem Accounting:** It is a complementary framework of SEEA-CF and constitutes an integrated and comprehensive statistical framework for organising data about habitats and landscapes, measuring the ecosystem services, tracking changes in the ecosystem assets and linking this information to economic and other human activity.

Kerala urgently needs to identify risk zones

On July 30, two villages, Mundakkai and Chooralma, in the Wayanad district of Kerala, were hit by landslides. On October 4, while noting that the disaster ranked among the deadliest in India, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said that 231 people had died and 41 remained missing. The catastrophic event has once again exposed our helplessness in the face of nature's fury. At the same time, it has raised questions about our approach to disaster management not only in the area of Wayanad that was affected this time and that has suffered a few deadly landslides over the last four decades, but for the State as a whole.

No longer relatively disaster-free
With the sea to its west and the Western Ghats to its east, Kerala used to be considered a relatively disaster-free zone. Its development activities have taken place on this premise. Settlements are distributed throughout the State, from the coastline to the steep hill slopes. Kerala is perhaps the only State where human settlements have sprung up along the coastal line. Though the forest boundary is frozen, there are encroachments by the people and for development projects. Along with settlements, roads and other infrastructure have been built with complete disregard for natural drainage and slope stability. The average population density of the parts of the Western Ghats in Kerala is well above the all-India average.

The natural advantage of being relatively disaster-free seems to be waning. In the last few decades, the intensity and frequency of disasters have increased. Kerala has three distinct geographic zones, and all three are facing disasters, especially floods and landslides. Coastal erosion, a regular phenomenon, has affected more than 250 kilometres of the total coastal length of 590 km in the State. Besides, sea surge has affected different parts of the coast. The lowlands and midlands suffer from floods. Parts of the lowlands surrounding the Vembanad lake get inundated during every monsoon. The World



Srikumar Chattopadhyay
Scientist (retired),
Centre for Earth
Science Studies,
Thiruvananthapuram



K. Soman
Scientist (retired),
Centre for Earth
Science Studies,
Thiruvananthapuram

Once landslide susceptibility maps surrounding population centres are ready, monitoring the triggering mechanism would ensure that timely warnings are provided

Meteorological Organization described the Kerala floods of 2018 as the 'floods of the century' and attributed the disaster to climate change. Landslides in the Western Ghats are also becoming regular during every monsoon.

Landslide inventory map needed
Wayanad, located to the east of the Western Ghats bordering the Mysore plateau, is characterised by deep gorges and ravines. Like the river Sharavati, the Chaliyar also originates in the eastern side of the Western Ghats. Both these rivers cut across the mountain range and debouch into the Arabian Sea, in spite of the easterly tilt of the Wayanad-Mysore plateaus. This can be attributed to the existence of tectonic factors. A spatial correlation exists between tremors and landslides. Incidences of fractures/cracks have been reported from Wayanad and Idukki post landslides. Tremors were felt in parts of Wayanad after the July landslide as well. Recurring incidences of landslides and the huge human and economic losses call for scientific re-appraisal of the causative factors, which are now being simplified and confined to parameters such as slope, soil thickness, rainfall intensity and duration, and land use change. The ongoing debates show that there is a gap in understanding the incidence of landslides in this region.

Global research in this field calls for a nuanced approach. We need a landslide inventory map of each region/area. To finalise zones susceptible to landslides, we can prepare a landslide susceptibility map factoring in the geological set up (lithology, structure and tectonics, rock composition, physico-mechanical properties), slope, soil characteristics, hydrologic parameters, drainage and infiltration, vegetation cover, human activities such as mining and quarrying, slope alteration, and agricultural activities. Once such maps surrounding population centres are ready, monitoring the triggering mechanism (rainfall or tremors in the case of Kerala) would ensure that timely warnings of landslides are provided, and lives saved. The State and trained local self-help groups can do this together.

Due to rapid warming of the Arabian Sea, there is an increased risk of extreme weather and climate events, such as floods, heat waves, and cyclones. The heat content of the Indian Ocean has risen rapidly since the 2000s. There has been an anomalous increase of 1.2°C in summer sea surface temperatures over the last 100 years in the generally cool western Indian Ocean (Arabian Sea). This has created an environment conducive for cyclogenesis (development or strengthening of cyclonic circulation in the atmosphere) in the Arabian Sea. The impact of these changes is being felt on Kerala. In 2017, Cyclone Ockhi hit the State. It was the most severe cyclonic storm to affect Kerala in recent memory.

On the whole, the 'safe operating space', a term coined by Johan Rockstrom and the group at the Stockholm Resilience Centre in the case of global environmental change, is shrinking in Kerala. The occurrence of staggered events of floods and landslides, and simultaneous landslides on either side of the hill ranges, as in Wayanad and Vilangad (Kozhikode district) this time, and at Puthumala (Wayanad district) and Kavalappara (Malappuram district) in 2019, also warrant elucidation.

A paradigm shift
Under these circumstances, there is a need for a paradigm shift in disaster management practices, which are mostly reactive, top-down, and revolve around rescue, relief, and rehabilitation. Globally, this has given way to a more proactive and comprehensive approach of addressing all aspects of a disaster cycle, such as preparedness, resilience, risk reduction, mitigation, reconstruction, recovery, response, and relief. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction provides guidelines for disaster risk reduction. It recognises the primary role of the State in disaster risk reduction but says that the State should share this responsibility with other stakeholders including local governments, the private sector, and communities. We need to understand the risk of disaster, strengthen disaster risk governance to manage the risk of disaster; invest in disaster risk reduction for resilience; and enhance disaster preparedness for effective response to 'build back better'.

First, Kerala needs to work out disaster risk zones based on multiple criteria covering both physical and social components within a social ecological frame with the help of subject experts and generate a permanent database. As landslides and floods follow watershed boundaries, the disaster risk zones must be translated according to the watersheds/river basins. Second, Kerala needs the people's participation in preparing disaster risk maps. Given its experience in the People's Plan Campaign, it is important for Kerala to introduce a community-based disaster risk management in which at-risk communities are actively engaged in identifying, analysing, planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating disaster risk reduction initiatives. This would provide opportunities for strengthening communication, discussion, and learning within the community and between the community and the local and Central government. It would also ensure a bottom-up approach, help reduce tension and potential conflicts and pave the way to integrate disaster risk management in local level development. A quadruple helix model involving community and social organisations, academia/research institutes, the government, and business and industry may be useful.



GS Paper 03 : Disaster Management

(UPSC CSE (M) GS-3 2021): Differentiate the causes of landslides in the Himalayan region and Western Ghats. (150 w/10m)

UPSC Mains Practice Question : Discuss the challenges faced by Kerala in managing natural disasters like landslides and floods. Suggest measures to enhance disaster preparedness and resilience through community involvement. (250 w/15m)

Context :

- The article discusses the increasing vulnerability of Kerala to natural disasters, particularly landslides and floods, due to unplanned development, climate change, and environmental degradation
- It emphasises the need for proactive disaster management and community-based risk reduction strategies.

Introduction

- Landslides in Wayanad district of Kerala have exposed the State's vulnerability to natural disasters.
- The recent event, ranking among the deadliest in India, has prompted a reassessment of disaster management approaches in Kerala.

Kerala's Shifting Disaster Risk

- Kerala, previously considered a relatively disaster-free zone, has seen increased frequency and intensity of disasters.
- Settlements spread from coastal areas to steep hill slopes, with infrastructure built without considering natural drainage and slope stability.
- Coastal erosion affects more than 250 km of Kerala's 590 km coastline, while the lowlands face recurring floods.
- Landslides in the Western Ghats and increased extreme weather events are attributed to climate change and rapid warming of the Arabian Sea.

Need for Landslide Inventory Map

- Wayanad, characterised by deep gorges and ravines, is vulnerable to landslides, with tremors often preceding such events.
- A scientific reappraisal of landslide causes is needed, as the understanding remains incomplete.

- Kerala requires a landslide inventory map to identify zones prone to landslides, considering factors like geology, soil characteristics, and human activities.
- This would facilitate better monitoring of triggering mechanisms like rainfall or tremors, allowing timely warnings.

Impact of Climate Change

- Warming of the Arabian Sea has increased the risk of extreme weather events in Kerala, such as floods, heatwaves, and cyclones.
- Rising sea temperatures have made the region conducive to cyclogenesis, which impacts Kerala's weather patterns.
- Events like Cyclone Ockhi highlight the growing impact of climate change on Kerala's vulnerability.

Need for a Paradigm Shift in Disaster Management

- Kerala's disaster management practices are reactive, focusing on rescue, relief, and rehabilitation.
- A shift to proactive practices is needed, as suggested by the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- Kerala should define disaster risk zones based on multiple physical and social criteria, covering watersheds/river basins.

Community-Based Disaster Risk Management

- People's participation is essential in preparing disaster risk maps and ensuring effective disaster risk management.
- The introduction of community-based disaster risk management in Kerala can strengthen community involvement and integrate disaster risk management into local development.
- A quadruple helix model, involving community organisations, academia, government, and industry, can enhance resilience and response to disasters.

Way forward

- First, Kerala needs to work out disaster risk zones based on multiple criteria covering both physical and social components within a social ecological frame with the help of subject experts and generate a permanent database. As landslides and floods follow watershed boundaries, the disaster risk zones must be translated according to the watersheds/river basins.
- Second, Kerala needs the people's participation in preparing disaster risk maps. Given its experience in the People's Plan Campaign, it is important for Kerala to introduce a community-based disaster risk management in which at-risk communities are actively engaged in identifying, analysing, planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating disaster risk reduction initiatives.
- This would provide opportunities for strengthening communication, discussion, and learning within the community and between the community and the local and Central government. It would also ensure a bottom-up approach, help reduce tension and potential conflicts and pave the way to integrate disaster risk management in local level development.

- ▶ A quadruple helix model involving community and social organisations, academia/research institutes, the government, and business and industry may be useful.

The Landslide Atlas of India by ISRO:

- ▶ India is among the top 5 landslide-prone countries globally.
- ▶ Others are China, US, Italy and Switzerland.
- ▶ In India, about 0.42 million sq. km (12.6% of land area) is prone to landslide hazard.
- ▶ Reported landslides in India are distributed as follows:
 - 66.5% in the Northwestern Himalayas
 - 18.8% in the Northeastern Himalayas
 - 14.7% in the Western Ghats
- ▶ As per the Geological Survey of India, the economic loss due to landslides may amount to as much as 1% to 2% of the Gross National Product (GNP) in many developing countries

Major Landslide-Prone Areas in India:

- ▶ The Northeastern Region (comprising about 50% of the total landslide-prone areas)
- ▶ Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu & Kashmir along the Himalayas.
- ▶ Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu along the Western Ghats
- ▶ The Araku region in Andhra Pradesh along the Eastern Ghats.
- ▶ Nearly 17,000 sq km of area in Kerala, mostly on the western side of the Western Ghats, is mapped as landslide-prone.

Major Landslides in India

- ▶ Kedarnath, Uttarakhand in 2013
- ▶ Pettimudi, Kerala in 2020
- ▶ Mumbai, Maharashtra in 2021
- ▶ Tupal, Manipur in 2022
- ▶ Raigarh, Maharashtra in 2023
- ▶ Aizawl, Mizoram in 2024
- ▶ Shirur, Karnataka in 2024

How do Landslides in the Western Ghats Differ from Those in the Himalayan Region?

Region	Causes
Western Ghats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concentrated rainfall ▪ Overburdening of hills ▪ Mining and quarrying

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anthropogenic activities such as agricultural activities, windmill projects, etc. ▪ Forest fragmentation with dense vegetation on thin soil
Himalayas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High seismicity due to plate tectonic movement ▪ Easily erodible sedimentary rocks ▪ Young and energetic rivers (Ex: <u>Ganga</u>, Yamuna, Jhelum etc.) with high erodibility ▪ Heavy downpour and snowfall ▪ Anthropogenic factors such as deforestation, jhum cultivation, road construction, etc.

Recommendations of Various Committees on Western Ghats

➔ Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel, 2011 (Headed by Madhav Gadgil):

- All of the Western Ghats be declared as Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESA)
- with only limited development allowed in graded zones.
- Classify the Western Ghats into ESA 1, 2 and 3 with ESA-1 having a high priority where almost all developmental activities are restricted.
- Specified the system of governance to be a bottom-to-top approach (right from Gram sabhas) rather than a top-to-bottom approach.
- Western Ghats Ecology Authority (WGEA) to be constituted as a statutory authority under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, with the powers under Section 3 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- The report was criticised for being more environment-friendly and not in tune with the ground realities.

➔ Kasturirangan Committee, 2013: It sought to balance the development and environmental protection in contrast to the Gadgil report:

- Instead of the total area of Western Ghats, only 37% of the total area to be brought under ESA.
- Complete ban on mining, quarrying and sand mining in ESAs.
- No thermal power projects to be allowed and hydropower projects be allowed only after detailed study.
- Red industries i.e. which are highly polluting to be strictly banned.



- Exclusion of inhabited regions and plantations from the purview of ESAs making it a pro-farmer approach.

