

Mains Exam Practice (MEP): Questions of the Day

1. "With increasing investments and initiatives in sports, Analyse the potential of Bihar in producing national and international level athletes. What challenges need to be addressed to achieve this goal?" [BPSC GS 1: Section II](38 Marks)
2. "Analyze the objectives and outcomes of Nitish Kumar's Pragati Yatra in Bihar. How does it contribute to governance and public welfare?" [BPSC GS 1: Section II] (19 Marks)
3. "What are the implications of the Fiscal Health Index 2025 rankings for India's regional development? Discuss the challenges faced by lower-ranked states in achieving fiscal sustainability." [BPSC GS 1: Section II] (19 Marks)

Bihar Special

Sportstar Focus Bihar Conclave



Why in the news?

- ❖ Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar felicitated athletes and para-athletes for their achievements and contributions to their respective sporting disciplines, during the **Sportstar Focus Bihar Conclave** held at the Taj City Centre in Patna on January 24, 2025.
- ❖ The players felicitated included Paralympic silver medallist Deepa Malik, Olympic bronze medal-winning boxer Vijender Singh, double Olympic bronze medallist P.R. Sreejesh, double Paralympic medallist Sharad Kumar, six-time Winter Olympian Shiva Keshavan, and Indian women's hockey team head coach Harendra Singh.
- ❖ The sporting stars were honoured with a shawl and a cased silverfish.

Two special awards

- ❖ Decathlete Jai Prakash Singh won the Unsung Champion award and teenage chess talent Md. Reyan bagged the Young Achiever honour. Both were awarded a cash prize of ₹50,000 each.

National Affairs

International Conference on Solar Physics in Bengaluru

Why in the news?

More than 200 solar physicists from India and abroad gathered in Bengaluru for the conference on 'Sun, Space Weather, and Solar-Stellar Connections',

- ❖ Organized by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (KSO).
- ❖ **Conference Themes:** Topics included solar magnetism, energetic phenomena, and heliosphere, with sessions aimed at fostering global collaboration in solar research.
- ❖ The event, held from 20-24 January 2025, attracted 205 participants, including students and international researchers, highlighting India's growing leadership in solar astrophysics.



Key Highlights:

- ❖ **KSO's Legacy:** The Kodaikanal Solar Observatory has been instrumental in solar research and is celebrated for its contributions to solar physics.
- ❖ **Future Initiatives:** Discussions on the National Large Solar Telescope in Ladakh and India's contributions to the Aditya-L1 mission.
- ❖ **International Perspectives:** Experts like Prof. John Leibacher and Prof. S.P. Rajaguru emphasized KSO's global significance and international support for the telescope project.
- ❖ **Public Engagement:** A public talk on the sun by Prof. Nat Gopalswamy from NASA was also organized at CHRIST University.

The Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (KSO) of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, a cornerstone of Indian astronomy, established in 1899, has been at the forefront of solar research.

Polity And Governance

Hamara Samvidhan – Hamara Swabhiman Campaign

Why in the news?

A regional event under the 'Hamara Samvidhan Hamara Swabhiman' campaign was held on 21 January 2025 at Parmarth Triveni Pushp, Prayagraj, commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Indian Constitution.

- ❖ **Organisers:** Hosted by the Department of Justice under the DISHA scheme.
- ❖ The event highlighted the symbolic connection of the Ganga-Jamuna-Saraswati Sangam to the unity of India's Legislature, Executive, and Judiciary.
- ❖ The 'Hamara Samvidhan Hamara Samman' campaign, which was officially launched by the Hon'ble Vice President of India on 24th January 2024 at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi.

International Relations

Renaming of Gulf of Mexico and Denali

Why in the news?

On 24 January 2025, the Trump administration's Interior Department officially renamed the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America and reverted Alaska's highest peak, Denali, back to its former name, Mount McKinley, honoring former U.S. President William McKinley.

- ❖ Denali, meaning "tall" in the Koyukon Indigenous language, had been renamed in 1975 at Alaska's request.



Economy

"Fiscal Health Index 2025"

Why in the news?

The 16th Finance Commission, Dr Arvind Panagariya, launched the inaugural issue of NITI Aayog's report titled "Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2025" on 24th January 2025 in New Delhi.

- ❖ The report provides a comprehensive assessment of the fiscal health of 18 major States, based on five key sub-indices: Quality of Expenditure, Revenue Mobilisation, Fiscal Prudence, Debt Index, and Debt Sustainability, along with insights into state-specific challenges and areas for improvement.



Ranking:

- ❖ Odisha ranks first among 18 major States with a score of 67.8, followed by Chhattisgarh (55.2) and Goa (53.6).
- ❖ States with strong fiscal health excel in revenue mobilization, expenditure management, and debt sustainability.
- ❖ Jharkhand shows improvement in fiscal prudence, while Karnataka faces a decline due to weaker expenditure quality and debt management.
- ❖ The rankings are based on a composite fiscal index comprising five sub-indices: quality of expenditure, revenue mobilization, fiscal prudence, debt index, and debt sustainability.

Science And Technology

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)

Why in the news?

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is gearing up for the **100th launch** from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh, which is scheduled to take place on January 29 with the launch of the GSLV-F15 NVS-02 mission.

- ❖ The GSLV-F15, with its indigenous cryogenic stage, will place the NVS-02 satellite in a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit.
- ❖ The launch is scheduled to take place from the spaceport's second launch pad.
- ❖ The NVS-02 is the second satellite in the NVS series and part of India's Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC).

Defence And Security

Advanced Battlefield Surveillance System 'SANJAY'

Why in the news?

Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** inaugurated the Battlefield Surveillance System (BSS) on 24 January 2025 in New Delhi, marking a significant step in modernizing the Indian Army's surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities.

- ❖ **Development:** Jointly developed by the Indian Army and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) under the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiative at a cost of ₹2,402 crore.
- ❖ **Deployment:** To be rolled out in three phases between March and October 2025 to Brigades, Divisions, and Corps of the Indian Army.

About SANJAY

- ❖ SANJAY, an advanced surveillance system, integrates data from ground and aerial sensors to provide a unified, real-time battlefield view via the Army Data and Satellite Communication Networks.



Features:

- ❖ Ensures battlefield transparency and real-time decision-making.
- ❖ Equipped with cutting-edge sensors and analytics for enhanced Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities.
- ❖ Supports conventional and sub-conventional operations within a network-centric warfare environment.

Index and Report

Global Firepower Index 2025

Why in the news?

India has been ranked as having the 4th most powerful military in the world after the United States of America, Russia and China by the Global Firepower Index 2025.

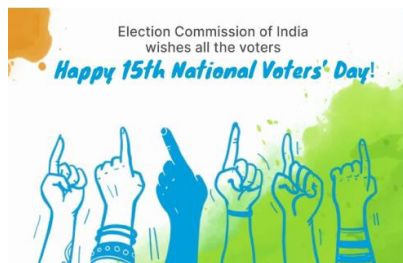
- ❖ Bhutan was ranked at the bottom of the index at 145th position. Pakistan which was ranked 9th in 2024 dropped to 12th position in the 2025 ranking.
- ❖ The Global Firepower Index has been released by Globalfirepower.com annually since 2006.

About India in Global Firepower Index 2025

- ❖ India was ranked in the 4th position with a score of 0.1184. A score of 0.0000 is an ideal score that denotes perfect military strength which no country possesses.
- ❖ The top-ranked country, the United States of America, got a score of 0.0744.
- ❖ India was ranked number 1 in the world in the Population Reaching Military age annually.
- ❖ India was ranked second in the world in population, available manpower, vehicles, roadways etc.
- ❖ India secured a poor rank in oil consumption, natural gas consumption, coal consumption, external borders and external debts.
- ❖ India was ranked 145th in the world in terms of Helicopter Carrier strength and Mine warfare capability at sea.

Important Days/ Dates

National Voters' Day 2025



Why in the news?

Every year on January 25 (15th National Voters' Day) India celebrates National Voters' Day which marks the foundation of the Election Commission of India (ECI) in 1950.

- ❖ This special day, observed since 2011, aims to encourage voter participation and raise awareness about the importance of voting.
- ❖ The theme for National Voters' Day 2025 is 'Nothing like voting, I vote for sure'.

News in Short

- ❖ India has named **Jitendra Pal Singh**, currently the point-person for Iran and Pakistan, and the Special Envoy to Afghanistan, which is its next Ambassador to Israel.

- ❖ The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is set to showcase "Pralay", an Indigenous short-range quasi-ballistic missile, at the Republic Day parade in New Delhi on 26 Jan 2025.
- ❖ Reliance Industries, led by Mukesh Ambani, plans to construct the world's largest data center in **Jamnagar, Gujarat**.
 - This venture includes purchasing AI semiconductors from NVIDIA to build AI infra in India.
- ❖ Chess World champion **D Gukesh** dethroned compatriot Arjun Erigiasi to become the highest-ranked Indian chess player, at **fourth**, in the latest FIDE rankings on 23 Jan 2025.
 - Gukesh, 18, achieved the feat when he logged his second victory in the Tata Steel Tournament in Wijk Aan Zee (Netherlands) defeating Vincent Keymer of Germany.

❖ Arshdeep Singh surpassed Yuzvendra Chahal to become India's leading wicket-taker in T20Is with 97 wickets in 61 matches, achieving the feat during the first T20I against England on 22 January 2025.

❖ To commemorate the 300th birth anniversary of Devi Ahilyabai, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav convened a cabinet meeting in Maheshwar on 24 Jan 2025 and announced a liquor ban in 17 religious cities across the state.



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