

PART II · ENVIRONMENT TO DIRECT HIT TRACKER

ANTIM ASSURED 100+

Daily Current Affairs for UPSC Prelims & Mains

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MORNING EDITION · THEIAS AKADEMIA

"From News to Questions, From Questions to Selection"

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§1 Environment

State of India's Environment 2026 — Seven Planetary Boundaries Breached, Extreme Weather on 99% of Days

WHY IN NEWS

CSE and Down To Earth released the State of India's Environment 2026 report at the Anil Agarwal Dialogue, revealing India breached 7 of 9 planetary boundaries and recorded extreme weather on 99% of days in 2025.

PRELIMS FACTS

- 7 of 9 planetary boundaries breached: climate change, biosphere integrity, land system change, freshwater depletion, biogeochemical flows, novel entities, ocean acidification
- Extreme weather events in 2025: 331 out of 334 days (99%) — floods, heatwaves, cyclones, cold waves
- Ocean acidification rose 30–40% since industrial era; threatening coral reefs and fisheries
- India's non-fossil fuel capacity: 53.21% of total installed generation (exceeded 50% NDC target)

BACKGROUND

Published annually since 1982, the SoE report uses official government data to track India's performance on environment, agriculture, public health, and human development against domestic and global targets.

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Planetary boundaries framework: Rockström et al. (2009) — "safe operating space for humanity"; India's breaches signal systemic ecological overshoot
- Climate-health nexus: extreme weather's economic cost through agriculture, health, and displacement must be integrated into GDP measurements
- Policy gap: India's climate targets being met on energy; but land, water and biodiversity commitments lag significantly

UPSC SYLLABUS MAPPING

GS3: Environment & Conservation

GS3: Disaster Management

PYQ Linkage: GS3 2021: "Discuss India's vulnerability to climate change with reference to key sectors."

The "planetary boundaries" framework was originally proposed by:

(a) UNEP in 2002 (b) Rockström et al. in 2009 (c) IPCC in 2014 (d) CBD Secretariat in 2010

Answer: (b) Rockström et al. in 2009

Johan Rockström and colleagues introduced the planetary boundaries concept in 2009, identifying 9 Earth-system processes with limits beyond which global ecological stability is threatened.

Q. "India's environmental performance is bifurcated — ahead on energy transition, dangerously behind on biodiversity and land-use." Examine in the light of SoE 2026 report. (250 words)

GS3

PYQ-Linked

Planetary Boundaries

Extreme Weather

CSE

 **AKADEMIA TEACHING HOOK**

When 99% of India's days see extreme weather, "disaster management" is no longer a section in the syllabus — it is the national condition. The SoE 2026 report is not a warning; it is a report card of failure. Use this data in GS1, GS3 answers, and Mains essays.

§2 Places in News

PLACES IN NEWS — 09 JUN 2026 | ANTIM ASSURED 100+



- ① New Delhi (PMRC Scheme; RBI MPC) ● ② Visakhapatnam (IONS 9th Conclave) ● ③ Geneva (WTO Environment Week)
- ④ Bahawalpur, Pakistan (Op Sindoor strikes) ● ⑤ Canberra (India-Australia Defence MoU)
- ⑥ Guwahati/Assam (Mission Senehjori)

① New Delhi, India

Why in News: PMRC Scheme 2026 launched; RBI MPC held; Carbon Credit WTO showcase.

- Capital of India; seat of Union Government
- PMRC Portal opened 1 June 2026 for global Indian researchers
- RBI Headquarters: Mumbai; MPC decisions apply nationwide
- **Prelims:** PIN: India's administrative capital ≠ financial capital (Mumbai)

② Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

Why in News: Host of 9th IONS Chiefs' Conclave; India assumes IONS Chairmanship 2026–28.

- India's largest naval command on the Eastern Seaboard (Eastern Naval Command)
- Home to INS Circars (Naval Air Station) and submarine facilities
- IONS founded 2008; India chairs for the first time since founding year

- **Prelims:** Eastern Naval Command HQ = Visakhapatnam; Western = Mumbai; Southern = Kochi

③ Geneva, Switzerland

Why in News: India showcased CCTS and renewable energy standards at WTO Trade & Environment Week.

- WTO HQ located in Geneva; WTO established 1 January 1995
- India is a founding member of WTO; 164 current members
- WTO dispute settlement mechanism headquartered here
- **Prelims:** WTO ≠ UNCTAD (Geneva); IMF/World Bank = Washington D.C.

④ Bahawalpur, Pakistan

Why in News: One of 9 targets of Operation Sindoor (May 2025); Rampage missile deployed.

- City in Punjab Province, Pakistan; historically linked to terrorist infrastructure
- Rampage supersonic missile used — range ~150 km; su-30MKI launched
- Operation Sindoor: 9 terror camps struck in coordinated precision strike
- **Prelims:** Pakistan's Punjab = administrative province; India's Punjab = state

⑤ Canberra, Australia

Why in News: India-Australia 2nd Defence Ministers' Dialogue outcomes; new MoU on defence articles.

- Canberra: federal capital of Australia (not Sydney or Melbourne)
- Australia: member of Five Eyes, AUKUS, QUAD, and Commonwealth
- India-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership signed May 2020
- **Prelims:** AUKUS = Australia + UK + USA; QUAD includes India, Australia, USA, Japan

⑥ Guwahati/Assam, India

Why in News: Mission Senehjori launched to develop Muga silk sector into global luxury ecosystem.

- Assam: only state in world producing Muga silk (golden silk, endemic to Brahmaputra valley)
- Muga silk: one of three main silk varieties from Assam; others = Eri (Ahimsa silk), Pat silk
- Mission Senehjori: named after Assamese word for "golden"; targets luxury textile markets
- **Prelims:** GI tag: Muga silk (Assam); Banarasi, Mysore, Kanchipuram silks also GI-tagged

§3 Ethics & Integrity Cases

Case 1 — Political Pressure on Environmental Clearances

News context: SoE 2026 reveals 7 planetary boundaries breached; reports suggest infrastructure projects receive fast-tracked environmental clearances under political pressure.

ETHICAL ISSUES:

Conflict between development imperatives and long-term ecological responsibility; abuse of regulatory process; intergenerational justice.

VALUES:

Probity, accountability, sustainable governance.

GS4 MAPPING:

Ethical concerns in public administration; conflict of interest; attitude toward environment. **Use in answers:** Frame through the lens of "tragedy of the commons" — individual short-term gains vs. collective long-term loss.

Case 2 — Defence Procurement Transparency (Post-Operation Sindoor)

News context: Rampage missile domestic production fast-tracked; questions arise around procurement timelines and vendor selection processes in emergency defence contracts.

ETHICAL ISSUES:

Probity vs. urgency in strategic procurement; potential for cronyism under emergency powers; transparency deficit in defence spending.

VALUES:

Integrity, accountability, public interest over private gain.

GS4 MAPPING:

Ethical dilemmas in public service; whistle-blower protection; conflict of interest in procurement. **Use in answers:** Argue that emergency cannot become a permanent cover for bypassing procurement norms.

Case 3 — Brain Drain and the Ethics of Talent Retention (PMRC Scheme)

News context: PMRC Scheme invites Indian-origin global scientists back; raises question: is it ethical to leverage diaspora talent without addressing systemic issues driving the original brain drain?

ETHICAL ISSUES:

Reciprocity — can India attract talent while failing to fix academic freedom, research funding, and bureaucratic red tape?

VALUES:

Fairness, compassion, systemic justice.

GS4 MAPPING:

Emotional intelligence; moral duty of a public servant to create enabling environments. **Use in answers:** Distinguish between policy-as-PR vs. policy-as-structural-reform.

Case 4 — Maritime Governance and Shared Ocean Responsibility (IONS)

News context: India's IONS chairmanship signals leadership of IOR maritime governance; ethical responsibility toward smaller island nations, fisherfolk, and climate-vulnerable coastal communities.

ETHICAL ISSUES:

Power asymmetry in multilateral forums; duty of care toward vulnerable maritime communities; climate justice.

VALUES:

Leadership with humility, compassion, global citizenship (Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam).

GS4 MAPPING:

Attitude, emotional intelligence, public service values, ethical leadership. **Use in answers:** India's maritime leadership is not just strategic — it carries a moral responsibility toward 2.5 billion IOR people.

§4 Prelims MCQs — 09 June 2026

Q.1 MODERATE

The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) was established in which year, and by which country?

- (a) 2006, by USA
- (b) 2008, by India
- (c) 2010, by Australia
- (d) 2012, by France

Answer: (b) 2008, by India

IONS was established in 2008 under the Indian Navy's initiative during the first chiefs' conclave in New Delhi. India assumed its 2nd chairmanship at Visakhapatnam in February 2026.

Q.2 MODERATE

Consider the following statements about India's Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS): 1. It was enabled by the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Act, 2022. 2. It creates a national electronic carbon credit trading platform. 3. India's non-fossil fuel capacity has already exceeded its 2030 NDC target of 50%.

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

Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

All three statements are correct. India achieved 53.21% non-fossil fuel capacity by March 2026, surpassing the 50% NDC target nearly 5 years ahead of schedule.

Q.3 HARD

The "planetary boundaries" framework identifies how many processes whose stability is critical for Earth's safe operating space?

- (a) 7
- (b) 8
- (c) 9
- (d) 12

Answer: (c) 9

Rockström et al. (2009) defined 9 planetary boundaries. As per SoE 2026, India has breached 7 of these 9 boundaries, with only stratospheric ozone depletion and atmospheric aerosol loading within safe limits.

Q.4 EASY

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the RBI consists of how many members, and who nominates the external members?

- (a) 4 members; RBI nominates all
- (b) 6 members; 3 by RBI, 3 by Government of India
- (c) 7 members; 4 by Finance Ministry, 3 by RBI
- (d) 6 members; all nominated by Finance Ministry

Answer: (b)

MPC has 6 members — 3 internal (RBI Governor + 2 Deputy Governors' equivalents) and 3 external experts nominated by the Government of India. The RBI Governor chairs the committee.

Q.5 MODERATE

Which of the following is the CORRECT description of Muga silk?

1. It is produced exclusively in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam.
2. It is one of the three main silk varieties from Assam, along with Eri and Pat.
3. It has received a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

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

Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

All three are correct. Muga silk is golden-hued, endemic to Assam's Brahmaputra valley, one of three Assam silks (with Eri/Ahimsa and Pat), and holds a GI tag.

Q.6 MODERATE

The PMRC (Prime Minister Research Chair) Scheme 2026 is INCORRECT in which regard?

- (a) It targets Indian-origin researchers working abroad.
- (b) It is available only to Indian nationals, not OCI holders.
- (c) It covers 13 national priority sectors.
- (d) Host institutions must be NIRF-ranked.

Answer: (b)

OCI (Overseas Citizen of India) cardholders and Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) are eligible, not just Indian nationals — making (b) the incorrect statement.

Q.7 HARD

The Rampage missile used in Operation Sindoor is best described as:

- (a) A surface-to-air interceptor missile
- (b) A ballistic missile with nuclear capability
- (c) A supersonic air-to-surface missile with a range of ~150 km
- (d) An anti-ship cruise missile

Answer: (c)

Rampage is an Israeli supersonic air-to-surface strike missile with a range of approximately 150 km, designed for precision strikes on high-value ground targets. It was deployed from IAF Su-30MKI jets.

Q.8 MODERATE

Consider statements about the 73rd Constitutional Amendment: 1. It inserted the Eleventh Schedule listing 29 subjects for panchayat devolution. 2. It made reservation for women in panchayats mandatory (not less than 1/3rd). 3. The Gram Sabha is mentioned in the Constitution for the first time through this amendment.

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

Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

The 73rd Amendment (1992) inserted Part IX (Articles 243–243O) and the 11th Schedule (29 subjects), mandated not-less-than 1/3 women's reservation, and constitutionally recognised the Gram Sabha for the first time.

Q.9 EASY

The WTO was established on:

- (a) 1 January 1994
- (b) 1 January 1995
- (c) 15 April 1994
- (d) 1 May 2000

Answer: (b) 1 January 1995

WTO replaced GATT and was formally established on 1 January 1995 through the Marrakesh Agreement (signed 15 April 1994). Its headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland.

Q.10 HARD

The India-Australia Mutual Logistics Support Arrangement (MLSA) signed in 2020 enables:

- (a) Joint nuclear deterrence
- (b) Free trade in agricultural goods
- (c) Reciprocal access to military logistics facilities during exercises and operations
- (d) A common defence budget pool

Answer: (c)

MLSA allows both nations to use each other's military bases for logistics — fuel, maintenance, and supplies — during joint exercises and operations, strengthening the India-Australia defence partnership.

Q.11 MODERATE

Ocean acidification results primarily from:

- (a) Discharge of industrial effluents into the sea
- (b) Absorption of excess CO₂ from the atmosphere
- (c) Rising sea surface temperatures
- (d) Overfishing depleting marine vegetation

Answer: (b)

Oceans absorb about 30% of atmospheric CO₂; this dissolves to form carbonic acid, lowering pH — a process called ocean acidification. SoE 2026 notes a 30–40% increase in acidification since the industrial era.

Q.12 MODERATE

AUKUS, the trilateral security pact, involves which countries?

- (a) Australia, UAE, USA
- (b) Australia, UK, USA
- (c) Australia, UK, Singapore
- (d) Austria, UK, USA

Answer: (b) Australia, UK, USA

AUKUS (2021) involves Australia, United Kingdom, and the United States. It provides Australia with nuclear-powered submarine technology and is distinct from QUAD (which includes India).

Q.13 EASY

Which among the following is the headquarters of the Eastern Naval Command of India?

- (a) Mumbai
- (b) Kochi
- (c) Visakhapatnam
- (d) Port Blair

Answer: (c) Visakhapatnam

Eastern Naval Command is headquartered at Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh). Western Naval Command = Mumbai; Southern Naval Command = Kochi; Andaman & Nicobar Command = Port Blair (tri-service).

Q.14 HARD

The Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) evaluates gram panchayats on:

- (a) 5 thematic areas linked to MGNREGS outcomes
- (b) 9 thematic areas aligned with Localisation of SDGs
- (c) 12 Centrally Sponsored Scheme performance metrics
- (d) 7 NIRF-equivalent parameters for rural governance

Answer: (b)

PAI evaluates India's gram panchayats on 9 thematic areas aligned with the Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — making it the first comprehensive analytics-driven rural body evaluation framework in India.

Q.15 MODERATE

India's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) target for emissions intensity reduction by 2030 (from 2005 baseline) is:

- (a) 25–30%
- (b) 33–35%
- (c) 40–45%
- (d) 50%

Answer: (b) 33–35%

India's original NDC committed to reducing emissions intensity of GDP by 33–35% from 2005 levels by 2030. The SoE 2026 report confirms India already achieved 37.38% reduction by 2022 — surpassing this target.

§5 Mains Questions — 09 June 2026

GS2 — Governance

Q1. "The Panchayat Advancement Index represents the maturation of India's decentralisation experiment from constitutional promise to data-driven accountability." Critically examine. (250 words)

- 73rd Amendment: promise vs. performance gap — fiscal devolution without outcome tracking
- PAI architecture: 9 SDG-linked themes; analytics-driven; comparative ranking
- Limitations: data quality at panchayat level; digital divide in rural India
- Way forward: link PAI rankings to performance-based grants under Finance Commission

Keywords: 73rd Amendment, Gram Swaraj, Devolution, SDG Localisation, Accountability

GS3 — Environment

Q2. "India's climate ambitions on energy transition are commendable, but breaches in biodiversity, land, and water boundaries signal a deeper ecological crisis." Substantiate using recent data. (250 words)

- Non-fossil fuel capacity: 53.21% — exceeded NDC; emissions intensity down 37.38%
- Planetary boundaries breached: biosphere integrity, land system change, freshwater depletion
- SoE 2026: 99% days with extreme weather — systemic climate vulnerability
- Policy integration needed: land-use law reform, urban water governance, biodiversity finance

Keywords: Planetary Boundaries, NDC, Biodiversity, UNFCCC, Paris Agreement

GS2 — International Relations

Q3. "India's IONS chairmanship signals a strategic shift from bilateral maritime engagements to institutional leadership in the Indian Ocean Region." Discuss. (250 words)

- IONS: 33 nations, 3 working groups — HADR, Maritime Security, Info Sharing
- SAGAR doctrine operationalised through IONS institutional mechanisms
- IOS SAGAR + IMEX: capability building and interoperability with IOR navies
- Contrast with QUAD/AUKUS: India's IONS role is inclusive, non-confrontational

Keywords: IONS, SAGAR, IOR, Maritime Multilateralism, Naval Diplomacy

GS3 — Defence

Q4. "Operation Sindoor has become the inflection point for India's Atma Nirbhar Bharat in defence manufacturing." Critically analyse. (250 words)

- Combat-proven case: Rampage's success demonstrated readiness gap in domestic stockpiles
- Indigenisation roadmap: SKD → CKD → full domestic assembly (3 phases, 2026–2028)
- DRDO–IAI model: technology transfer with IP protection — scalable framework
- Challenge: export control regimes (MTCR, Wassenaar) limit tech transfer from Israel

Keywords: Atma Nirbhar, Operation Sindoor, DRDO, Make in India Defence, Technology Transfer

GS3 — Economy

Q5. "India's monetary policy cannot insulate itself from geopolitical shocks — the West Asia conflict illustrates the limits of domestic macroeconomic management." Examine. (250 words)

- ATF price surge: ₹60.50 → ₹142/litre in 2 months due to US-Iran war
- MPC dilemma: inflation risk (imported) vs. growth support (domestic)
- Fiscal response: ₹10,000 cr allocation — subsidies vs. market pricing debate
- Structural solution: green energy self-sufficiency reduces imported inflation vulnerability

Keywords: MPC, Imported Inflation, Monetary Policy, ATF, Energy Security

GS3 — Science & Technology

Q6. "The PMRC Scheme 2026 is a necessary but insufficient step toward making India a global research hub." Critically examine. (250 words)

- Positive: attracts Indian diaspora talent; ₹14 crore incentives; 13 priority sectors
- Limitation: does not address systemic issues — academic freedom, red tape, low base funding
- Historical lesson: previous Brain Gain schemes failed without systemic reform
- Way forward: link PMRC to ANRF, increase DST R&D budget (currently <0.7% of GDP)

Keywords: Brain Drain, PMRC, ANRF, R&D Investment, NEP 2020

§6 Answer Writing Value Addition

Quote Bank — 09 June 2026

Quote	Speaker	Use in
"We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children."	Native American proverb	GS3 Environment, GS4 Ethics

"The ocean is the planet's life support system."	Sylvia Earle, Oceanographer	GS3 Maritime, IONS answers
"Science knows no country, because knowledge belongs to humanity."	Louis Pasteur	GS3 S&T, PMRC scheme answers
"A nation that destroys its soils destroys itself."	Franklin D. Roosevelt	GS3 Land degradation, Environment

Key Data Points — Quick Reference

Topic	Data	Source
Extreme Weather Days (2025)	331 of 334 days (99%)	SoE 2026, CSE
Non-Fossil Fuel Capacity	53.21% (March 2026)	MoEF / WTO Presentation
Emissions Intensity Reduction	37.38% (2005–2022)	India NDC Progress Report
RBI Repo Rate	5.25% (June 2026)	RBI MPC
IONS Member Countries	33 nations	PIB / Indian Navy
PMRC Benefits per Fellow	Up to ₹14 crore	PIB / Dept. of Higher Education
Rampage Missile Range	~150 km (supersonic)	IDRW / Business Standard
ATF Price Surge (2026)	₹60.50 → ₹142/litre	MoPNG / India.com

Key Acts, Committees & Reports

Item	Relevance
Energy Conservation (Amendment) Act, 2022	CCTS and Indian Carbon Market legal basis
73rd Constitutional Amendment, 1992	Panchayati Raj, 11th Schedule, PAI context
State of India's Environment 2026 (CSE)	Planetary boundaries, extreme weather data
PMRC Scheme 2026 (Min. of Education)	Reverse brain drain, R&D ecosystem
India's NDC (Updated, 2022)	45% emissions intensity target, 50% non-fossil fuel

2

POLITY & GOVERNANCE
CARDS

2

IR CARDS

1

DEFENCE CARDS

1

S&T CARDS

1

ECONOMY CARDS

1

ENVIRONMENT CARDS

15

PRELIMS MCQS

6

MAINS QUESTIONS

4

ETHICS CASES

6

PLACES IN NEWS

8

KEY DATA POINTS

4

QUOTES FOR ANSWERS

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7

QUESTIONS FROM
A SINGLE DOCUMENT

6

QUESTIONS FROM
A SINGLE CLASS

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