## 1. India AI Mission: Government Launches 'BHASHINI-Plus' for Sovereign Generative AI, Source: PIB (Press Information Bureau)

**Context:** As part of the ambitious India AI Mission, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has launched 'BHASHINI-Plus', a large-scale initiative to develop India's own foundational Large Language Models (LLMs) and sovereign Generative AI capabilities. The program aims to create powerful AI models that are trained on diverse Indian datasets and are fine-tuned to understand the nation's unique linguistic and cultural context. This move is seen as a strategic step to reduce dependency on foreign-developed AI models and to ensure that India's digital future is shaped by its technological prowess.



**Significance**

- 'BHASHINI-Plus' builds upon the success of the National Language Translation Mission (Bhashini), which has created vast datasets in 22 scheduled Indian languages.
- The new initiative will leverage these datasets to train multi-lingual and multi-modal foundational models.
- The government announced a public-private partnership model for this project, inviting leading Indian academic institutions like the IITs and private technology companies to collaborate.
- A significant part of the ₹10,372 crore outlay for the India AI Mission will be dedicated to providing subsidized access to high-performance computing infrastructure for these partners.
- The goal is to develop a suite of models, ranging from small, specialized models for specific government services to large, general-purpose models that can power a new generation of AI applications.

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## Analysis

The Union Minister for IT emphasized that the focus of 'BHASHINI-Plus' is not just technological development but also responsible and ethical AI. The models will be developed with built-in safeguards to prevent bias, misinformation, and misuse. The government plans to use these sovereign AI models to enhance public service delivery, creating applications for education, healthcare, agriculture, and judicial processes that can interact with citizens in their native languages. This initiative is expected to democratize access to AI and spur innovation, creating a vibrant ecosystem of AI startups and researchers focused on solving India-specific problems.
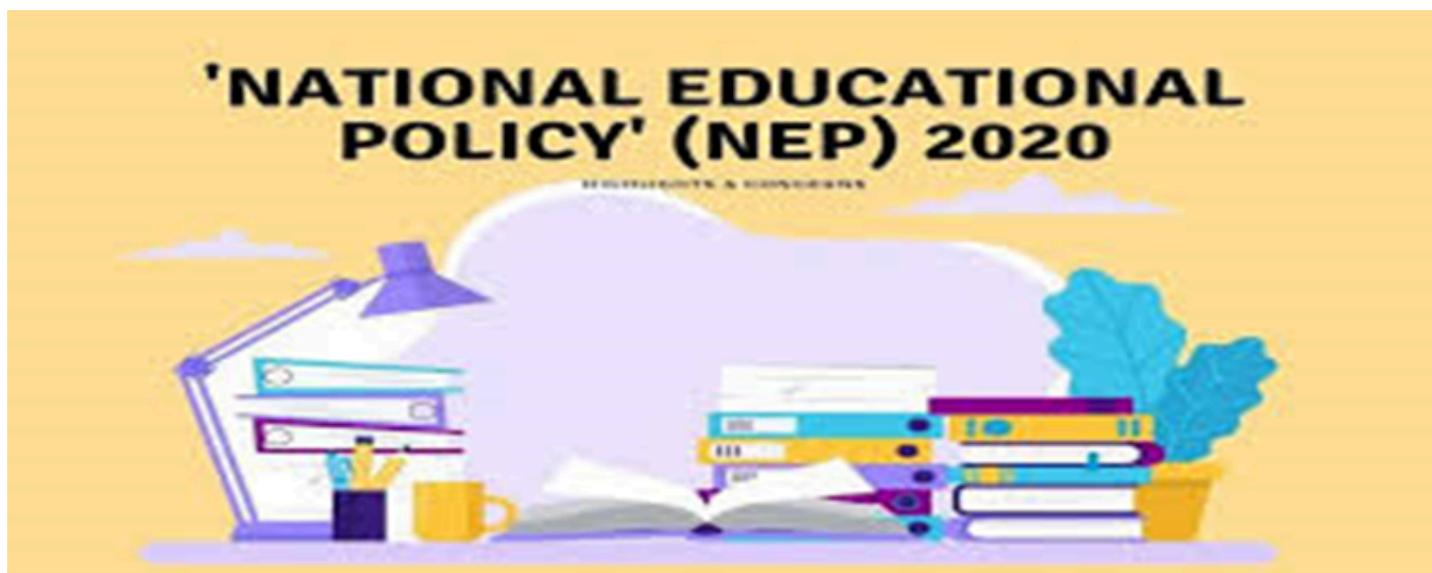
## UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

- **GS Paper 3 (Science and Technology):** Awareness in the fields of IT, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology, and issues relating to intellectual property rights. Science and Technology- developments and their applications and effects in everyday life.

## 2. NEP 2020 Review: UGC Panel Highlights Uneven Implementation Across States
**Source: The Hindu**

**Context:** A high-level review committee constituted by the University Grants Commission (UGC) has submitted its five-year progress report on the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. While the report applauds the transformative vision of the policy and highlights significant progress in areas like the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) and the introduction of multi-disciplinary curricula, it also points to "significant unevenness" in the pace and quality of implementation across different states and universities.



**Significance**

- The report notes that central universities and institutions of national importance have been at the forefront of adopting NEP reforms, such as the four-year undergraduate program with multiple entry/exit options and the establishment of research and development cells.
- However, many state universities are struggling with the transition due to a lack of financial resources, inadequate faculty training, and administrative inertia.
- The panel observed that the goal of achieving a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 50% in higher education by 2035 requires a more concerted effort, particularly in bridging the urban-rural and gender divides.

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## Analysis

- A key concern raised in the report is the slow progress in establishing the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) as a single regulator to replace the UGC, AICTE, and NCTE.
- The legislative process for this crucial reform is yet to be completed, creating ambiguity for institutions.
- The report strongly recommends fast-tracking the HECI bill.
- It also calls for a substantial increase in public funding for education to 6% of GDP, as envisioned in the policy, to support the necessary infrastructure upgrades and faculty recruitment.
- The panel has proposed a 'mentorship model' where leading universities handhold and guide other institutions in their respective regions to ensure more uniform and effective implementation of the NEP's transformative goals across the country.

**UPSC Syllabus Correlation:**

**GS Paper 2 (Social Justice & Governance):** Issues relating to the development and management of the Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources. Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors.

## 3. Mumbai Braces for High Tide Amidst Incessant Rains; NDRF on High Alert
**Source: Hindustan Times**

**Context:** Mumbai continues to be battered by incessant heavy rainfall, with the city recording over 200 mm of rain in the last 24 hours. The situation is expected to worsen as the city braces for a high tide of 4.6 meters, scheduled for later this afternoon. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) are on high alert, with teams prepositioned in low-lying and flood-prone areas like Hindmata, Andheri, and Sion. The confluence of heavy rain and high tide is a major concern as it severely hampers the drainage of stormwater into the sea, leading to widespread waterlogging.



**Significance**

- Commuter services have been severely affected.
- The suburban train network, the city's lifeline, is running with significant delays on all three lines —Western, Central, and Harbour—due to waterlogged tracks at several locations.
- The BMC has advised citizens to avoid venturing out unless absolutely necessary.
- Many arterial roads, including the Western Express Highway, are experiencing massive traffic jams.
- The municipal corporation has activated all its 24 ward-level control rooms and has deployed over 300 de-watering pumps at chronic flooding spots.

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**Analysis**

- This annual monsoon challenge underscores the persistent problem of urban flooding in Mumbai, exacerbated by rapid and often unplanned urbanization, encroachment on natural drainage channels like the Mithi River, and the increasing frequency of extreme weather events due to climate change.
- While the BMC has undertaken several projects, including the construction of large underground holding ponds and the up-gradation of British-era storm-water drains, experts argue that these measures are insufficient without a holistic approach that includes protecting mangroves, increasing permeable surfaces, and enforcing stricter construction regulations.
- The recurring crisis highlights the urgent need for climate-resilient urban planning and robust disaster management infrastructure in India's coastal megacities.

**UPSC Syllabus Correlation:**

**GS Paper 3 (Disaster Management):** Disaster and disaster management.
**GS Paper 1 (Geography):** Important Geophysical phenomena; Urbanization, their problems and their remedies.

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## 4. J&K Security Review: Centre Vows 'Zero Tolerance' After Recent Terror Incidents, Source: Indian Express, Source: Hindustan Times

**Context:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah today chaired a high-level security review meeting on Jammu and Kashmir in New Delhi, following a recent spate of terrorist attacks in the Jammu region. The meeting was attended by the National Security Advisor, the Lieutenant Governor of J&K, the Army Chief, and the heads of intelligence agencies and central armed police forces. The Home Minister directed security forces to intensify counter-terrorism operations and adopt a "zero-tolerance" policy towards terrorism.



**Significance**

- The focus of the meeting was the recent shift in terrorist activities towards the Rajouri-Poonch sector in the Jammu division, which has witnessed several attacks on security forces and civilians over the past year.
- The Home Minister stressed the need for seamless coordination between the Indian Army, J&K Police, and central agencies to dismantle the terror ecosystem in these areas.
- He called for strengthening the intelligence network on the ground and leveraging technology for better surveillance and real-time monitoring of border areas to prevent infiltration from across the Line of Control.
- The strategy discussed reportedly involves proactive "area domination" and targeted operations based on specific intelligence inputs.

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**Analysis**

- The meeting also reviewed the security arrangements for the ongoing Amarnath Yatra and the upcoming assembly elections, which are anticipated to be held later this year.
- The Home Minister reiterated the government's commitment to restoring lasting peace and ushering in an era of development in the Union Territory.
- He stated that the successes achieved in curbing terrorism and stone-pelting in the Kashmir Valley must be replicated in the Jammu region.
- The security establishment believes that these desperate attacks are an attempt by terror handlers from across the border to disrupt the prevailing atmosphere of peace and the significant tourist footfall that the region has been witnessing.

**UPSC Syllabus Correlation:**

**GS Paper 3 (Internal Security):** Linkages between development and spread of extremism; Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security; Security challenges and their management in border areas.

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## 5. Digital Personal Data Protection Act: First Penalty Notice Issued to Social Media Firm,   Source: Economic Times

**Context:** The Data Protection Board of India (DPBI) has issued its first-ever penalty notice under the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023. The notice has been sent to a prominent global social media platform for an alleged data breach that impacted thousands of Indian users. This action marks a significant step in the enforcement of India's new data privacy regime, which came into full effect earlier this year after the notification of its rules.



### Significance

The DPBI initiated an inquiry following a significant data breach reported by the platform in April 2025. The breach allegedly exposed the personal data of users, including names, email addresses, and phone numbers. The notice issued by the Board calls upon the company to explain why a penalty should not be levied for its failure to implement "reasonable security safeguards" to prevent the breach, as mandated under Section 8(5) of the DPDP Act. Under the Act, the DPBI has the power to impose penalties of up to ₹250 crore for such a breach. The company has been given 21 days to respond to the notice.

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**Analysis**

This landmark action by the DPBI is being closely watched by the entire technology industry in India. It serves as a strong signal that the government is serious about enforcing data protection norms and holding data fiduciaries accountable. The DPDP Act places significant obligations on companies, including obtaining clear and informed consent from users before processing their data, appointing a Data Protection Officer, and notifying the Board and affected users in the event of a breach. Legal experts believe this case will set a crucial precedent for how the DPBI interprets key provisions of the Act, such as what constitutes "reasonable security safeguards" and the quantum of penalties for non-compliance. It is expected to push companies to strengthen their data governance and cybersecurity practices.

**UPSC Syllabus Correlation:**

**GS Paper 2 (Polity and Governance):** Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

**GS Paper 3 (Science and Technology):** Awareness in the fields of IT, Computers; Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges.

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**6. Centre Launches 'Voice of Global South 3.0' Summit to Champion Developing World's Concerns, Source: The Hindu**

**Context:** Building on the momentum of its G20 Presidency, India today launched the third edition of the 'Voice of the Global South Summit' in a virtual format. The summit, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, brings together leaders and ministers from over 125 developing countries to deliberate on pressing global challenges, including climate finance, debt sustainability, food and energy security, and the reform of multilateral institutions. The initiative reinforces India's role as a leading voice and a "bridge" between the developed world and the Global South.



**Significance**

- In his inaugural address, Prime Minister Modi emphasized that the collective voice of the Global South is crucial for shaping a more equitable and inclusive global order.
- He stated that the challenges faced by developing nations are often unique and cannot be addressed by "one-size-fits-all" solutions imposed by the global North.
- He called for a fundamental reform of global governance architecture, including the UN Security Council and Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), to make them more representative and responsive to the needs of the 21st century.
- The summit is structured around several thematic sessions, focusing on areas like digital public infrastructure, sustainable development, and healthcare cooperation.

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**Analysis**

- This summit is strategically timed ahead of the upcoming UN General Assembly and G20 leaders' summit.
- India aims to consolidate the perspectives and priorities of the Global South to present a unified front at these international forums.
- The outcomes of the summit will be compiled into a comprehensive document that will be shared with the G7 and other global bodies.
- Diplomats see this as a continuation of India's foreign policy objective of "Vishwa Bandhu" (universal friend), positioning itself as a consensus-builder on the world stage.
- The initiative also serves to counter China's growing influence in the developing world by offering a more democratic and collaborative model of partnership.
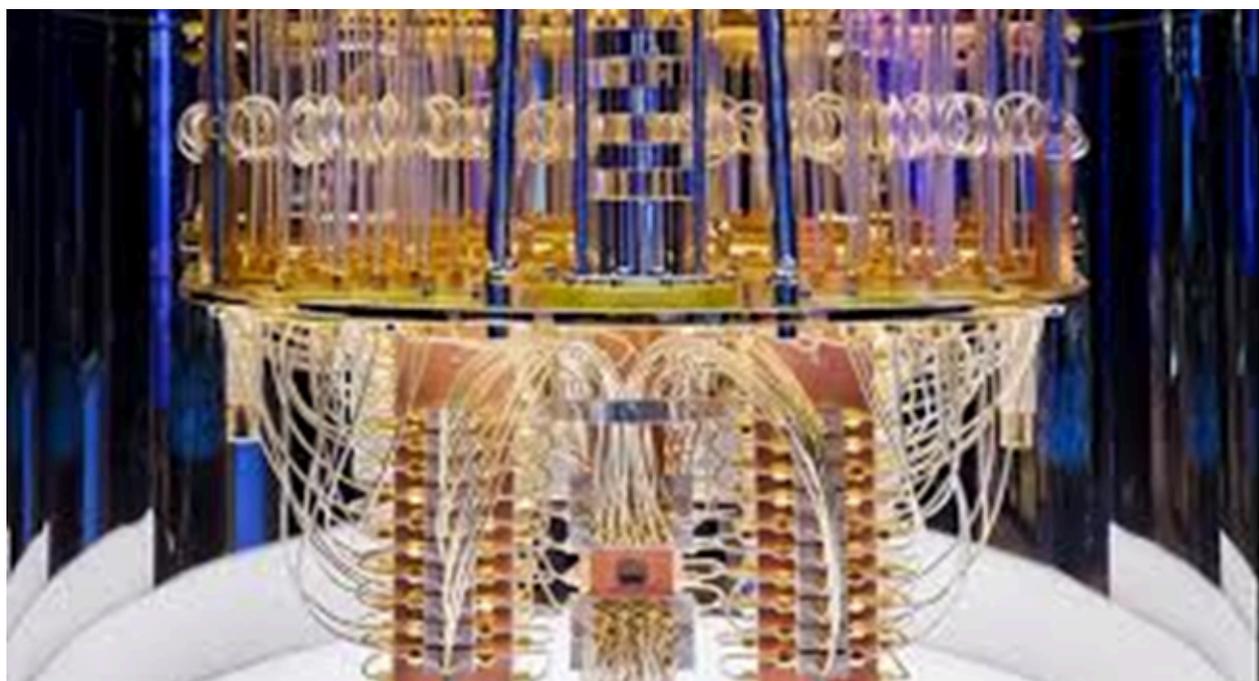
**UPSC Syllabus Correlation:**

**GS Paper 2 (International Relations):** Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests; Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.

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**7. National Quantum Mission: First Quantum Computing Lab Inaugurated at TIFR**
Source: PIB (Press Information Bureau)

**Context:** The Union Minister for Science and Technology today inaugurated the country's first dedicated Quantum Computing and Communications Lab at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai. The lab has been established under the aegis of the National Quantum Mission (NQM), a ₹6,003 crore initiative approved in 2023 to foster R&D and create a vibrant ecosystem in quantum technologies. This state-of-the-art facility is a critical piece of infrastructure that will accelerate India's ambition to become a global leader in this disruptive field.



**Significance**

- The newly inaugurated lab is equipped with advanced cryogenic systems, precision laser and microwave control systems, and indigenously developed superconducting quantum processors.
- Scientists at TIFR will use this facility to work towards the Mission's target of developing intermediate-scale quantum computers with 50-100 physical qubits in the next five years.
- The lab will also focus on developing quantum algorithms for applications in drug discovery, materials science, financial modeling, and national security.
- A key objective is to build a fault-tolerant quantum computer in the long run.

**Analysis**

The National Quantum Mission is structured around four thematic hubs (T-Hubs) focusing on Quantum Computing, Quantum Communication, Quantum Sensing & Metrology, and Quantum Materials & Devices. The TIFR lab is part of the Quantum Computing T-Hub. The Minister highlighted that the mission is not just about scientific research but also about creating a skilled workforce and fostering collaborations between academia, R&D labs, and industry. The development of secure quantum communication channels, with a targeted range of 2000 km, is another high-priority area for the mission, given its immense strategic importance for the defense and banking sectors. This lab's inauguration marks a tangible step forward in translating the NQM's ambitious vision into reality.

**UPSC Syllabus Correlation:**

**GS Paper 3 (Science and Technology):** Science and Technology- developments and their applications and effects in everyday life; Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology. Awareness in the fields of quantum technology.

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## 8. Report on Financial Inclusion Shows PMJDY Accounts Cross 60 Crore Mark
**Source: Economic Times**

**Context:** A new report released by the Ministry of Finance today reveals that the total number of accounts opened under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) has crossed the 60 crore mark, a significant milestone in India's journey towards comprehensive financial inclusion. Launched in 2014, the flagship scheme has successfully brought a vast majority of the unbanked population into the formal financial system. The report, titled 'Jan Dhan: A Decade of Financial Empowerment', highlights the scheme's evolution from a simple bank account opening drive to a robust platform for delivering Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) and other financial services.



**Significance**

- According to the data, the total deposits in PMJDY accounts now stand at an impressive ₹2.5 lakh crore.
- A notable trend highlighted in the report is the increasing active usage of these accounts.
- The percentage of zero-balance accounts has fallen to a historic low of 6%, down from over 50% in the initial years, indicating that account holders are now actively using them for savings, remittances, and receiving government benefits.
- The report also notes that over 55% of the account holders are women, underscoring the scheme's role in promoting women's economic empowerment.
- The issuance of RuPay debit cards to PMJDY account holders has also crossed 45 crore, facilitating digital transactions and reducing reliance on cash.

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**Analysis**

The Finance Minister, while releasing the report, stated that PMJDY has formed the "bedrock" of the government's JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) trinity, which has enabled a transparent and leakage-proof delivery of welfare schemes like PM-KISAN, MGNREGA wages, and LPG subsidies. The next phase of the mission, termed 'Jan Dhan 2.0', will focus on moving from "every household to every adult" coverage and enhancing the delivery of micro-credit, micro-insurance, and pension products like the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) through these accounts.

**UPSC Syllabus Correlation:**

**GS Paper 2 (Social Justice & Governance):** Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; Government policies and interventions.

**GS Paper 3 (Indian Economy):** Inclusive growth and issues arising from it; Government Budgeting.

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## 9. Operation PRAHAR-V: MHA Reports Significant Decline in LWE Violence, Red Corridor Shrinks Further, Source: Indian Express

**Context:** The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) today released its annual report on the Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) situation in the country, revealing a significant and sustained decline in violence. The report states that LWE-related violent incidents have dropped by over 30% in the past year, reaching an all-time low. The geographical spread of Maoist influence has also contracted considerably, with the number of "most affected" districts now reduced to below 25, a sharp fall from 90 such districts a decade ago.



### Significance

- The MHA attributed this success to its multi-pronged strategy combining resolute security action with targeted development interventions.
- A senior MHA official credited the recent successes to 'Operation PRAHAR-V', a series of coordinated, intelligence-based operations conducted by Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) like the CRPF and state police forces.
- These operations have led to the neutralization of several key Maoist leaders and the surrender of a large number of cadres.
- The report specifically highlights major successes in the erstwhile strongholds of Bastar in Chhattisgarh and the Andhra-Odisha Border (AOB) region, where security forces have established new camps in core areas, disrupting Maoist supply lines and recruitment drives.

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**Analysis**

- Alongside the security offensive, the development push has been critical.
- The report notes the accelerated construction of over 10,000 km of roads, the installation of over 4,000 mobile towers to improve connectivity, and the establishment of new schools, including Eklavya Model Residential Schools, and healthcare centers in LWE-affected regions.
- These initiatives have helped win the trust of the local population and integrate them into the economic mainstream.
- While celebrating the progress, the MHA report cautions that the threat is not yet over.
- It calls for continued vigilance against attempts by Maoist outfits to regroup and emphasizes the need to tackle their urban networks and propaganda machinery.

**UPSC Syllabus Correlation:**

**GS Paper 3 (Internal Security):** Linkages between development and spread of extremism; Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security; Security challenges and their management in border areas; various Security forces and agencies and their mandate.

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## 10. Varanasi's Historic Ghats and Old Cityscape Receive UNESCO World Heritage Status, Source: The Hindu

**Context:** In a moment of immense national pride, the historic city of Varanasi, with its iconic riverfront ghats, has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The decision was taken at the 47th session of the World Heritage Committee, currently underway in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The inscription, under the category of a "cultural landscape," recognizes the "Outstanding Universal Value" (OUV) of Varanasi as one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities and a unique center of living traditions, pilgrimage, and spiritual knowledge.



### Significance

- The successful nomination, titled "The Historic City and Ghats of Varanasi," was spearheaded by the Ministry of Culture and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).
- The comprehensive dossier presented to the committee detailed the city's unique symbiotic relationship between its tangible heritage—the 84 ghats, the temples, the historic palaces, and the labyrinthine lanes (galis)—and its intangible heritage, including ancient rituals, music, arts, and crafts that have been practiced for centuries.
- The inscription acknowledges the river Ganga as the central axis of this cultural landscape, which has shaped the city's physical form and spiritual identity.

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## Analysis

- The UNESCO recognition is expected to provide a major impetus to international tourism and place Varanasi firmly on the global cultural map.
- More importantly, it brings a renewed focus on the conservation and sustainable management of this ancient city.
- The inscription comes with a responsibility to protect the site's OUV from the pressures of modern urbanization, pollution, and unregulated development.
- The government, along with state and local authorities, will now be required to implement a robust management plan, as outlined in the dossier, to balance heritage preservation with the needs of the local community and pilgrims.
- Conservationists have hailed the move as a critical step that will hopefully channel international expertise and funds towards preserving the fragile and invaluable heritage of Varanasi for future generations.

**UPSC Syllabus Correlation:**

**GS Paper 1 (Art and Culture):** Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of Art Forms, literature, and Architecture from ancient to modern times; Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India. Heritage conservation.

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