



VEDANTA COACHING ACADEMY
& LIBRARY

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

THE HINDU ANALYSIS

5 June 2026

Curated from The Hindu — UPSC Prelims & Mains Focus

TOPICS COVERED TODAY

- 1 Great Nicobar Island Project — The 'Strategic' Question **GS 3**
- 2 Funding India's Climate Future — A Trillion-Dollar Question **GS 3**
- 3 The Power of Mangroves over Seawalls (EbA) **GS 3**
- 4 Critical Minerals Global Supply Chain Observatory **GS 3**
- 5 Fire and Furore — Urban Fire Safety **GS 3**
- 6 Data Hygiene — Census Re-verification **GS 2**
- 7 Food Planet Prize 2026 & Navachar Mantra Initiative **PRELIMS**
- 8 Prelims Practice — 12 Complex MCQs **MCQ**

1 Great Nicobar Island Project — The 'Strategic' Question

GS 3 · Environment / Infrastructure

The Hindu, Pg 1

WHY IN NEWS

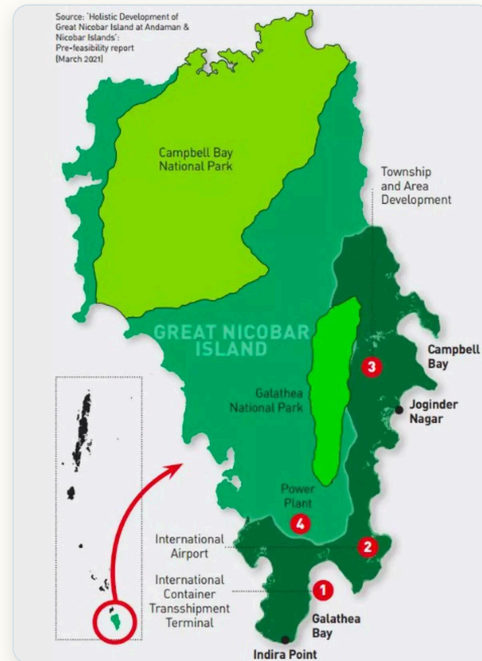
The **Public Investment Board (PIB)**, a Finance Ministry body, had in **August 2024** termed the proposed **International Container Transshipment Port (ICTP)** at Galathea Bay as lacking "strategic objectives". A year later, the same project was formally notified as a "**strategic project**" by the Ministry of Defence (per a March 2026 meeting record).

The Core Controversy

- The "strategic" label has been the Centre's ground, since at least **2022**, for not making public the report of the **High Powered Committee (HPC)** on the project's cumulative environmental impact.
- It has also been used to deny **Right to Information (RTI)** requests on environmental clearances.
- The ₹81,000-crore project is increasingly being cast in a **maritime-security lens**, centred on the threat from China.

About the Project

- Conceived by **NITI Aayog** and launched in **2021**; aligns with India's **Maritime Vision 2030** and **Amrit Kaal Vision 2047**.
- Four components: **ICTP**, a **township**, an **international airport**, a **gas-powered power plant** (plus a tourism zone).
- The island is roughly equidistant from **Colombo, Port Klang and Singapore**, placing India at the centre of regional sea trade.



Great Nicobar Island development sites — ICTP (Galathea Bay), Airport, Township & Power Plant. Source: Pre-feasibility report (March 2021).

Geography & Ecology — Prelims Pointers

★ Andaman & Nicobar Islands

- Consist of **836 islands**, divided into the Andaman group (north) and Nicobar group (south) by the **Ten Degree Channel** (~150 km wide).
- **Great Nicobar** is the largest island of the Nicobar group, hosting **Indira Point** — the southernmost point of India, ~90 nautical miles from Sumatra (Indonesia).

★ Ecological Significance

- Home to two national parks: **Campbell Bay National Park** and **Galathea Bay National Park**.
- Contains the **Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve**, included in the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme in **2013**.

★ Tribal Profile & Safeguards

- Indigenous communities: **Shompen** and **Nicobarese** (plus a few thousand non-tribal settlers). Other regional tribes: **Onge** and **Great Andamanese**.
- Mandatory consultation with tribal welfare bodies (AAJVS, Ministry of Tribal Affairs) per the **Jarawa (2004)** and **Shompen (2015)** Policies; NCST consulted under **Article 338A(9)**.
- **Safeguards claimed:** 8 wildlife corridors; compensatory afforestation planned in **Haryana** (as the islands already have over 75% forest cover — a point critics contest).

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. The Great Nicobar Island Development Project represents India's strategic ambitions in the Indian Ocean Region, but it has also triggered concerns regarding ecological sustainability and tribal rights. Critically examine the opportunities and challenges associated with the project, and suggest measures to balance strategic development with environmental conservation.

GS Paper III · Environment & Infrastructure · (15 Marks, 250 Words)

2

Funding India's Climate Future — A Trillion-Dollar Question

GS 3 · Economy / Environment

The Hindu, Pg 8

WHY IN NEWS

On **World Environment Day (June 5)**, the scale of India's green-financing challenge is in focus: India needs **₹162.5 trillion (~\$2.5 trillion) by 2030** to meet its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs); achieving **net-zero by 2070** is estimated at **\$10.1 trillion** — nearly three times India's current GDP.

The Financing Gap

- Decarbonising four sectors — **steel, cement, power and road transport** (over half of India's emissions) — needs **\$467 billion** extra capex (2022–2030), ~\$54 bn/year (1.3% of GDP).
- Developing economies need **\$5–6 trillion** for climate action by 2030. The developed world's **\$100 bn/year** Paris pledge was missed.
- The **Baku New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG)** commits **\$300 billion by 2035** — which India considers insufficient. RBI estimates India needs **~2.5% of GDP** annually in green finance till 2030.

India's Progress & the Way Forward

- By end-2024, India issued **\$55.9 billion** in green/social/sustainability debt — a **186% rise since 2021**; green debt is 83% of the total. Sovereign green bonds worth **₹477 billion** issued.
- **RBI's 2025 Climate Finance Directions** require banks to integrate climate risk; eligible green activities can qualify as **Priority Sector Lending (PSL)**.
- FM announced a **Climate Finance Taxonomy** in Budget 2024-25 — the foundation for curbing greenwashing and standardising "green" classification.
- Way forward: enact the **Climate Finance Taxonomy**, move from enabling to **mandating** green finance, set up a **State Climate Finance Facility** (via NABARD), and scale sovereign green bonds within the SLR framework.

3 The Power of Mangroves over Seawalls

GS 3 · Environment / Ecology

The Hindu, Pg 9

WHY IN NEWS

When **Cyclone Dana** made landfall near **Bhitarkanika (Odisha)**, mangroves provided protection that costly coastal infrastructure often struggles to deliver. The article argues for **Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA)** over hard "grey" structures like seawalls and embankments.

EbA vs. Hard Infrastructure

- India's **11,000-km coastline** and ~250 million coastal residents face rising seas, saline intrusion and intensifying cyclones.
- Coastal States spent **₹2,641 crore** on hard protection over a decade, while the **National Coastal Mission** budget fell from ₹195 cr (2022-23) to ₹50 cr (2024-25).
- **EbA** uses biodiversity (mangroves, seagrasses, coral reefs) as natural buffers — e.g. Sundarbans women restored **4,600 hectares** of mangroves, blunting cyclones Amphan and Yaas.
- **Why classification matters:** EbA is often buried inside sectoral programmes (like the **MISHTI** scheme), under-recognised as adaptation; clear classification helps monitor and fund it.



Major mangrove sites in India. As per ISFR 2023, India's mangrove cover is ~4,992 sq km (0.15% of geographical area).

★ **Mangroves — Prelims Essentials**

- Salt-tolerant trees/shrubs of **tropical & subtropical** tidal coasts; cannot survive freezing temperatures.
- **Adaptations:** pneumatophores (Avicennia) for respiration, prop roots (Rhizophora) for stability, salt-secreting glands, and **viviparity** (seeds germinate on the tree).
- **Global cover order:** Asia > Africa > North & Central America > South America. Indonesia, Brazil, Nigeria, Mexico & Australia hold ~47% of global cover.
- **India (ISFR 2021 order):** West Bengal > Gujarat > A&N Islands > Andhra Pradesh > Maharashtra.
- The **Sundarbans** is the world's largest contiguous mangrove forest; **Bhitarkanika** is the second largest in India.
- Protected under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986** & Coastal Zone Regulations. UNESCO observes **July 26** as the International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem.

MANGROVES

*Diverse group of salt-tolerant plant communities found in the (tropical/subtropical) coastal intertidal zone *

- CHARACTERISTICS**
 - Survive under hostile environments (high salt, low oxygen)
 - Their roots (**pneumatophores**) absorb oxygen from atmosphere
 - Thick succulent leaves to store fresh water
- MANGROVE COVER**
 - Global: Asia > Africa > North and Central America > S America
 - India (ISFR 2021): West Bengal > Gujarat > A&N Islands > Andhra Pradesh > Maharashtra
 - Sundarbans – World's largest single patch of Mangrove forests**
- CONSERVATION MEASURES**

Global	India
Inclusion of Mangroves in Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks	National Mangrove Committee (1976)
Mangroves for the Future Initiative (IUCN & UNDP)	Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes (MISHTI) (Union Budget 2023-24)
Mangrove Alliance for Climate (UNFCCC COP27)	
- SIGNIFICANCE**
 - Stabilise the coastline and reduce soil erosion
 - Protection against cyclones
 - Improve water quality by absorbing nutrients
 - Important carbon sink
- THREATS**
 - Commercialisation of coastal areas
 - Emergence of shrimp farms
 - Temperature fluctuations (Mangroves can't survive freezing temperatures)

International Day for Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem – July 26 (UNESCO)

Mangroves at a glance — characteristics, significance, threats and conservation measures (MISHTI, National Mangrove Committee, Mangrove Alliance for Climate).

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Climate change is increasingly emerging as a major threat to global and national food security. Examine the impact of climate change on the four pillars of food security — availability, access, utilization and stability — and suggest policy measures to build a climate-resilient food system in India.

GS Paper III · Environment & Agriculture · (15 Marks, 250 Words)

4

Critical Minerals Global Supply Chain Observatory (GSCO)

GS 3 · Economy / Sci-Tech

The Hindu, Pg 12

WHY IN NEWS

India and the **United Kingdom** formally launched the **Critical Minerals Global Supply Chain Observatory (GSCO)** to expand cooperation and technology-sharing in critical minerals.

Key Features

- A **data-driven platform** to monitor and analyse global critical-mineral supply chains.
- Jointly operated by India's **Technology Innovation in Exploration & Mining Foundation (TEXMiN)**, **IIT (ISM) Dhanbad** and the **UK's University of Cambridge**.
- Builds on the recently firmed-up India–UK **comprehensive trade deal** and the **defence industrial road map**.
- Aims to strengthen critical-mineral supply chains, support clean-energy transitions and build resilient global supply chains.

★ Context — Why Critical Minerals Matter

- Minerals like **lithium, cobalt, nickel, graphite and rare earths** are essential for EVs, batteries, semiconductors and clean-energy tech.
- Global supply is highly **concentrated** (notably China in processing), making diversified, resilient supply chains a strategic priority.
- Complements India's **National Critical Mineral Mission** and the **Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (KABIL)** efforts for overseas mineral assets.

5

Fire and Furore — Urban Fire Safety

GS 3 · Disaster Management

The Hindu, Pg 8 (Editorial)

WHY IN NEWS

A B&B fire in Delhi on **June 3** (many victims were medical tourists) and an ICU fire at a **Muzaffarpur hospital** on June 4 (four lives lost) have again exposed how poor compliance and weak enforcement drive deadly urban fires.

Recurring Vulnerabilities

- From the **Uphaar Cinema fire (1997)** to the **Arpora nightclub fire (2025)**, the same failures recur: overcrowding, blocked escape routes, unapproved interior modifications, poor compliance and weak enforcement.
- **Single entry/exit points:** many setups use one staircase for both entry and exit, making evacuation near-impossible.
- **Weak enforcement:** corrupt or lax inspections let illegal hotels, coaching centres and small factories operate without fire clearance.
- **Awareness deficit:** managers, staff and tenants are rarely trained in emergency protocols, leading to panic and stampedes.

The Way Forward

- The State must inculcate fire safety through **principled inspections, incentives and sanctions**, sustained as a matter of course.
- Move beyond political blame-games: the response must address both **incidental causes** and the **systemic factors** that preserve risk.
- Inconsistent convictions under penal provisions weaken deterrence — enforcement must be credible and consistent.

6

Data Hygiene — Census Re-verification

GS 2 · Governance

The Hindu, Pg 8 (Editorial)

WHY IN NEWS

Some **Census 2027** enumerators in **Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh** — where the first phase, the **Houselisting and Housing Census (HLO)**, is under way — have reportedly been advised to "revisit households and correct data discrepancies" and "not select options that may show the government in a poor light".

The Concern

- Re-verification is a legitimate part of any survey, but it must reflect reality accurately — **not manage perceptions**.
- Example flagged: where households lack toilets, enumerators were reportedly told to check if a toilet is "available nearby" to change the entry from "**open defecation**" to "**having access to latrine**".
- This raises concerns about **data integrity and reliability** for a crucial exercise, and risks conflict with **ODF / ODF Plus** classifications.

The Way Forward

- Policymakers must ensure Census data are **accurate and credible**, as welfare schemes are formulated on this basis.
- Authorities must recognise and resolve the **genuine difficulties** enumerators face.
- The Union government should be liberal in **enhancing allowances** (outlay ~₹11,718 crore) and send a clear message that **data sanitisation must not occur under the guise of re-verification**.

7

Prelims Bytes — Awards & Initiatives

PRELIMS · Schemes / Awards

The Hindu

★ The Food Planet Prize 2026

- Won by India's **Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming (APCNF)** programme, announced in **Båstad, Sweden**.
- The world's largest environmental award dedicated to **transforming global food systems**; established by Sweden's **Curt Bergfors Foundation**.
- It funds **early-stage, high-potential** projects (not legacy achievements); APCNF outperformed 1,000+ nominations across six continents.
- APCNF (launched 2016 by **Rythu Sadhikara Samstha**) now spans **1.8 million farming families** and 340,000 women's SHGs.

★ The Navachar Mantra Initiative

- A national initiative launched at **IIT Delhi** to identify, support and scale **grassroots innovations** from Tier-2, Tier-3 and rural India.
- A flagship scheme of the **Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE)**; implemented by **NIESBUD**.
- Targets citizens aged **18–55** in aspirational districts; flexible eligibility (no registered company or finished product needed).
- Six priority verticals: Agritech & Food Tech, HealthTech, EdTech & Skilling, Climate Action, Rural Commerce & Logistics, and MSME/Artisan Tech.
- 1-year structured incubation; portal applications open till **July 5, 2026**.

★ World Environment Day 2026

- Global host: **Azerbaijan (Baku)**; led by UNEP. Theme: "**Inspired by Nature. For Climate. For Our Future.**"
- WED was established by the UN General Assembly in **1972**, coinciding with the Stockholm Conference; first observed in 1973.

Prelims Practice — Complex MCQs

12 UPSC-style multi-statement questions drawn from today's analysis. Answers with explanations follow each set.

Q1

With reference to the Great Nicobar Island Project, consider the following statements:

1. The International Container Transshipment Port is proposed at Galathea Bay.
2. The project was conceived by NITI Aayog and launched in 2021.
3. Compensatory afforestation for the project is planned within the Andaman & Nicobar Islands themselves.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only — Compensatory afforestation is planned in Haryana, not within the islands.

Q2

Consider the following with reference to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands:

1. The Andaman and Nicobar groups are separated by the Ten Degree Channel.
2. Indira Point, the southernmost point of India, lies in the Great Nicobar Island.
3. The Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve was added to the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme in 2013.

How many of the statements above are correct?

- a Only one
- b Only two
- c All three
- d None

Answer: (c) All three — All statements are correct.

Q3

The Public Investment Board (PIB), in news regarding the Great Nicobar Project, is associated with which one of the following?

- a Ministry of Defence
- b Ministry of Finance
- c NITI Aayog
- d Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

Answer: (b) Ministry of Finance — The PIB is a Finance Ministry body that appraises large public investments.

Q4

With reference to India's climate finance, consider the following:

1. The Baku New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) commits \$300 billion by 2035.
2. A Climate Finance Taxonomy was announced in the Union Budget 2024-25.
3. Under RBI's 2025 framework, eligible green activities can qualify as Priority Sector Lending.

Which of the statements are correct?

- 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 statements are correct.

Q5

Consider the following statements about mangroves:

1. They exhibit viviparity, where seeds germinate while still attached to the parent tree.
2. Pneumatophores are specialised roots that aid respiration in waterlogged soil.
3. Mangroves can grow in both tropical and high-latitude temperate coasts.

Which of the statements are correct?

- a** 1 and 2 only
- b** 2 and 3 only
- c** 1 and 3 only
- d** 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only — Mangroves cannot survive freezing temperatures; they are restricted to tropical/subtropical coasts.

Q6

As per recent forest reports, arrange the following States/UTs in the correct descending order of mangrove cover:

1. West Bengal
2. Gujarat
3. Andhra Pradesh
4. Andaman & Nicobar Islands

- a** 1 > 2 > 4 > 3
- b** 1 > 3 > 2 > 4
- c** 2 > 1 > 3 > 4
- d** 1 > 2 > 3 > 4

Answer: (a) 1 > 2 > 4 > 3 — West Bengal > Gujarat > A&N Islands > Andhra Pradesh (ISFR 2021).

Q7

The term 'Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA)', often seen in news, is best described as:

- a** Building seawalls and embankments to resist storm surges
- b** Using biodiversity and ecosystem services such as mangroves and coral reefs to help people adapt to climate change
- c** Relocating coastal communities to higher inland regions
- d** A carbon-trading mechanism under the Paris Agreement

Answer: (b) — EbA uses natural ecosystems as buffers against climate impacts, unlike hard 'grey' infrastructure.

Q8

The MISHTI scheme, mentioned in the context of coastal adaptation, is associated with:

- a** Restoration and afforestation of mangroves
- b** Desalination of seawater for coastal towns
- c** Conservation of coral reefs in the Lakshadweep
- d** Solar power generation on coastal wetlands

Answer: (a) — MISHTI (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes) targets mangrove restoration across States.

Q9

Consider the following statements about the Critical Minerals Global Supply Chain Observatory (GSCO):

1. It was launched jointly by India and the United Kingdom.
2. It is operated in part by IIT (ISM) Dhanbad and the University of Cambridge.
3. Its purpose is to monitor and analyse global critical-mineral supply chains.

Which of the statements are correct?

- 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 statements are correct.

Q10

With reference to the Census in India, consider the following:

1. The first phase of the Census is the Houselisting and Housing Census (HLO).
2. ODF, ODF Plus and ODF Plus Model are classifications used for sanitation status.
3. The Census is conducted under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

Which of the statements are correct?

- a** 1 and 2 only
- b** 2 and 3 only
- c** 1 and 3 only
- d** 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only — The Census is conducted by the Office of the Registrar General under the Ministry of Home Affairs, not MoSPI.

Q11

The 'Food Planet Prize', recently won by an Indian programme, is:

1. Established by Sweden's Curt Bergfors Foundation.
2. Awarded to the Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming programme in 2026.
3. Focused mainly on honouring past legacy achievements in agriculture.

Which of the statements are correct?

- a** 1 and 2 only
- b** 2 and 3 only
- c** 1 and 3 only
- d** 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only — The prize intentionally funds early-stage, high-potential projects rather than legacy achievements.

Q12

Consider the following about the Navachar Mantra Initiative:

1. It is a flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
2. It is implemented by NIESBUD.
3. Applicants must possess a fully registered corporate entity to apply.

Which of the statements are correct?

- a** 1 and 2 only
- b** 2 and 3 only
- c** 1 and 3 only
- d** 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only — A registered entity or finished product is NOT required; early prototype-stage ideas are eligible.