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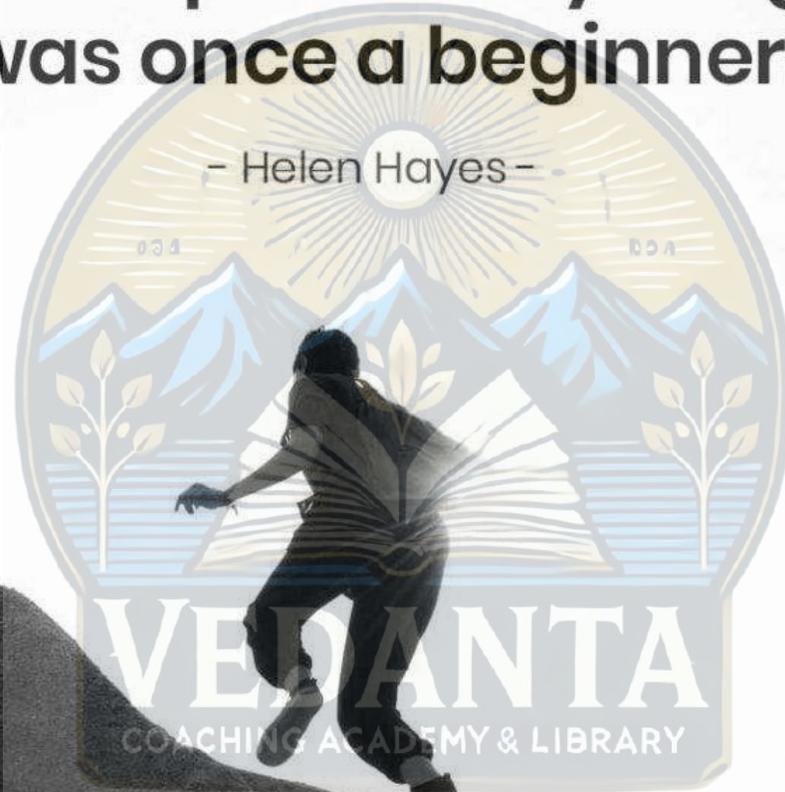
PM welcomes Putin - Page No.12 , GS 2

Hornbill Festival - Prelims Fact

**National Commission for Backward Classes – Prelims
Fact**

**The expert in anything
was once a beginner.**

- Helen Hayes -



PM welcomes Putin at airport in warm gesture, hails India-Russia partnership

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Putin arrives in Delhi for his first state visit to India since beginning of war in Ukraine, attends private dinner with Modi at the latter's official residence; Rajnath Singh meets Russian Defence Minister on sidelines, says ties rooted in 'mutual trust'

Kallol Bhattacharjee
Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

In a special gesture, Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomed Russian President Vladimir Putin upon his arrival at the Air Force Station, Palam on Thursday evening, ahead of the India-Russia annual summit scheduled for Friday. This is Mr. Putin's first state visit to India since the beginning of the war in Ukraine.

"Delighted to welcome my friend, President Putin to India. Looking forward to our interactions later this evening and tomorrow. India-Russia friendship is a time-tested one that has greatly benefited our people," said Prime Minister Modi after greeting Mr. Putin on the tarmac of AFS Palam.

Mr. Putin's first engagement started with a private dinner with Mr. Modi at the latter's official residence at 7 Lok Kalyan Marg. The



Kremlin connect: Narendra Modi and Vladimir Putin as they depart Palam Air Force Base, marking the start of the latter's two-day visit to India on Thursday. (Right) Rajnath Singh welcomes his Russian counterpart Andrei Belousov. AFP, SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Russian leader will receive a ceremonial reception at the forecourt of the Rashtrapati Bhavan at 11 a.m. on Friday, which will be followed by a visit to Rajghat, where he will lay a wreath at the memorial to Mahatma Gandhi.

The 23rd India-Russia annual summit will commence at 11.50 a.m. at Hyderabad House, to be followed by press state-

ments by Mr. Modi and Mr. Putin.

Several members of Mr. Putin's official delegation reached New Delhi hours before his arrival. Russian Defence Minister Andrei Belousov met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday evening.

Both Ministers reiterated that the bilateral partnership is rooted in deep mutual trust, shared prin-

ciples, and long-standing respect, the Ministry of Defence said.

Mr. Singh further underscored India's commitment to strengthening its indigenous defence manufacturing ecosystem under the Atmanirbhar Bharat vision, highlighting new avenues for bilateral collaboration in advanced and niche technologies, the Ministry said.

Mr. Singh emphasised that India aims at boosting both domestic capability and defence exports.

The Hindu had earlier reported that the two sides are expected to sign a number of agreements on Friday, including one on mobility that will indicate Russia's greater willingness to open its labour market for Indian blue-collar workers.



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Mains Question

- In the backdrop of India's growing ties with the West and Russia's strategic tilt towards China, assess whether the traditional India–Russia partnership can retain its strategic relevance. Substantiate with recent developments.
- पश्चिम देशों के साथ भारत की बढ़ती साझेदारियों और रूस के चीन की ओर रणनीतिक झुकाव के बीच, क्या परंपरागत भारत–रूस संबंध अपनी रणनीतिक प्रासंगिकता बनाए रख सकते हैं? हालिया घटनाओं के संदर्भ में विवेचन कीजिए।

New Delhi's relative isolation, India's tryst with terror

The current period might well be viewed, or termed, as India's moment of reckoning. For one, India today – and despite its highly regarded diplomatic skills – increasingly appears more like an 'outlier' than a major player in world affairs. It has been virtually sitting on the sidelines when it comes to issues involving peace and order in different regions of the globe, especially in West Asia and Europe. It is also a virtual onlooker as far as the emerging situation in the Indo-Pacific is concerned. Seldom indeed has India faced a situation of this kind.

If this was not bad enough, the entire South Asian region in which India is situated, appears to be in turmoil at present. Afghanistan and Nepal are among the countries on India's periphery that appear to be most affected, but from the Maldives to Myanmar and further afield, India can hardly count on many friends and allies. This is a frightening scenario given that each day produces a range of new threats, including cyber.

Hostility from west to east

Currently, India has to contend with two openly hostile powers on its western and eastern flanks – Pakistan and Bangladesh, respectively. In the case of Pakistan, the threat level has been going up steadily, with a growing cacophony of voices being heard in that country to teach India a proper lesson. What is aggravating the situation further is the approval of the 27th Constitutional Amendment Bill by Pakistan's Joint Parliamentary Committee of the Senate and National Assembly, which has altered the precarious balance between civil and military authority in that country.

Also, a recent amendment has introduced the concept of a new 'Chief of Defence Forces', elevating Field Marshal Asim Munir as the nation's military supremo, and the commander-in-chief of all three services, having sole control over Pakistan's nuclear assets. The amendment has invested Field Marshal Munir with absolute authority to deal with enemies (such as India), removing the fig leaf of parliamentary restraint and posing a real threat to India on its western flank. Military dictatorships in Pakistan, as elsewhere, have traditionally proved to be extremely hostile to a democratic India, and the rise and rise of Field Marshal Asim Munir, with unfettered authority, represents a significant and direct threat to a democratic India.

That such concerns are well merited, and that military dictators tend to be short sighted, is well known. Concentration of power encourages strategic adventurism. This, in turn, increases the chances of miscalculation in crises. Also, and in keeping with the general trend among military regimes, there is likely to be a tendency to turn local conflicts into spheres of proxy competition and inter-state confrontation. Hence, prospects of a lasting peace with Pakistan are unlikely. On the other hand, the risk of conflict has enhanced



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significantly. Thus, it would be wise for India not to ignore the possibility of yet another conflict with Pakistan in the near future and be prepared for all eventualities. This may as yet be in the realm of speculation, but the danger must not be ignored.

India's Pakistan problem is compounded by the fact that the interim government in Bangladesh to India's east, is proving unfriendly, if not openly hostile, to it. To add to India's discomfiture, Bangladesh is currently displaying a willingness to establish warmer relations with Pakistan. In a first, a Pakistan navy ship visited Bangladesh after almost a half-a-century and this is expected to help Pakistan re-establish its presence in the Bay of Bengal. This has serious security implications for India.

Hence, a mixture of ideological posturing and military governance on India's western and eastern flanks has raised diplomatic temperatures across the region. It could have serious and adverse consequences, if not properly handled. Extreme vigilance and careful manoeuvring is called for.

The surfacing of 'urban terror'

Compounding India's problems at this time is the return of 'urban terror' after a gap of several years, though in a different mould, and by a whole new set of indigenous actors. It is only fair to think that in the highly disparate world that we live in, and in the circumstances prevailing today, terror is merely a hand's length away from everyday existence. Yet, till recently, urban terrorism on a significant scale had taken a back seat after the 2008 terror attacks in Mumbai sponsored by Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed in collusion with elements of the Pakistan military establishment.

During the past two decades, sporadic terror attacks had been reported in certain urban pockets, but the latest module of urban terror – extending from Jammu and Kashmir to Faridabad and Delhi, and involving medical practitioners and doctors (most of whom had connections to the Al-Falah university, Faridabad, Haryana) reveals a new chapter in India's tryst with terrorism.

The latest terror module, comprising almost only medical practitioners, draws inspiration from, and harps back to the destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya (in 1992). It fundamentally differs from the terror attacks witnessed in Mumbai (and certain other pockets) during 1992-1993 in the wake of the Babri Masjid demolition, which were mainly carried out by 'lumpen' elements.

That more than three decades after the destruction of the Babri Masjid, terror still finds supporters and that too among the educated elite. That is it more so among groups, such as doctors, is highly disturbing. It reveals that religious terrorism is not only alive but still active.

Also, its newest disciples represent some of the best and brightest elements of a community. This

is a quantitative and qualitative leap as far as the annals of terror are concerned.

Details of the terror module, which extends from Srinagar to Faridabad to Delhi, have been widely aired. But what should cause more serious and deep concern is that they could accumulate nearly 3,000 kilograms of explosive material and also safely hide it in two houses. Further, it is alarming that a car laden with explosives could escape the police dragnet around India's capital city, Delhi, and trigger an explosion in the vicinity of Red Fort in the heart of Delhi. This reveals either extremely careful planning at one level, or total ineptness on the part of the authorities, on another. Worse still, while the 1993 terror explosions were carried out by 'lumpen elements' and the 2008 Mumbai attacks were directly sponsored by Pakistan, the latest incidents were of an entirely different character.

These were organised by a group of medical professionals, some of whom were perhaps not even born when the destruction of the Babri Masjid took place, revealing a major fault line in India's multi-cultural, multi-religious society. Far more than the details of the terror module that are being revealed through painstaking investigation, it is this aspect, and the aspect of revenge, which has been the catalyst for some of the best and brightest in a community, which should be seen as a blot on India's civilisational journey and progress.

The moot point is whether the latest incident represents mere disenchantment and anger against the nation state, or something more fundamental. It has been India's belief, and as claimed by the Union Home Minister in Parliament, that no local had joined a terrorist group in Jammu and Kashmir in recent times.

This myth has been exploded. Investigations have revealed that this is an entirely local terrorist module, which had been using encrypted channels for indoctrination, coordination, fund movements and logistics. Another aspect is that funds were being raised by professional and academic networks under the guise of social/charitable causes. There are other reports that the groups were in touch with elements in Pakistan. The links of the group also seem to extend beyond Pakistan to the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye.

The need for vigil

Given the new perilous external dimension to India's security, a hostile Pakistan and Bangladesh on its western and eastern borders, and the fact that much of West and South Asia are in turmoil, India needs to be careful that the situation does not lead to the fostering of religious fascism on a more extended scale. Given India's tolerance and acceptance of disparate religious beliefs, this may seem unlikely. But eternal vigilance (or diligence) is the price that needs to be paid to ensure that the situation does not deteriorate further, necessitating cause for alarm.

The country is having to deal with being an onlooker in world affairs, and also the fault lines in its multi-cultural, multi-religious society

Content.

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- **It has been virtually sitting on the sidelines when it comes to issues involving peace and order in different regions of the globe, especially in West Asia and Europe.**
- **It is also a virtual onlooker as far as the emerging situation in the Indo-Pacific is concerned. Seldom indeed has India faced a situation of this kind.**
- **If this was not bad enough, the entire South Asian region in which India is situated, appears to be in turmoil at present.**
- **Afghanistan and Nepal are among the countries on India's periphery that appear to be most affected, but from the Maldives to Myanmar and further afield, India can hardly count on many friends and allies.**

Fact

- **Hostility from west to east**
- **Given the new perilous external dimension to India's security, a hostile Pakistan and Bangladesh on its western and eastern borders, and the fact that much of West and South Asia are in turmoil, India needs to be careful that the situation does not lead to the fostering of religious fascism on a more extended scale.**
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Mains Question

- India's foreign policy is increasingly shaped by the dual imperative of managing complex relations with its immediate neighbours while simultaneously deepening strategic partnerships with major Western and global powers. Analyse how India balances these parallel priorities and the challenges that arise in this evolving geopolitical landscape.
- भारत की विदेश नीति आज पड़ोसी देशों के साथ जटिल संबंधों के प्रबंधन तथा पश्चिमी एवं अन्य वैश्विक महाशक्तियों के साथ रणनीतिक साझेदारियों के विस्तार—इन दोनों समानांतर प्राथमिकताओं से आकार ले रही है। बदलते भू-राजनीतिक परिदृश्य में भारत इन प्राथमिकताओं के बीच किस प्रकार संतुलन स्थापित करता है तथा इससे उत्पन्न चुनौतियों का विश्लेषण कीजिए।

A day to pause and come down to earth

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Every year on December 5, the world pauses to acknowledge one of the most overlooked foundations of human civilisation: soil. World Soil Day, established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, is more than an environmental observance. It is a reminder of the silent and living resource that sustains life. For 2025, the theme, “Healthy Soils for Healthy Cities”, shifts the focus from the rural farmland to the concrete jungle, highlighting a critical truth – the ground beneath our cities is not mere dirt, but a dynamic ally in building a resilient urban future.

With over 56% of the global population now living in cities, urban environments are confronting unprecedented challenges, from food insecurity and pollution to devastating flooding and extreme heat. At the heart of the solution to these issues lies an often-forgotten ally: urban soil.

An unsung hero

When we think of soil, we picture farms. But our urban soils are silent, unsung heroes. They are living filters, natural sponges and carbon sinks that exist right beneath our parks, street trees and community gardens. Their health is directly linked to the resilience and well-being of our urban populations. A teaspoon of healthy soil contains more organisms than there are people on earth, and this vibrant ecosystem performs extraordinary services. These include: first, combating climate change and extreme heat – urban areas often become “heat islands”, several degrees warmer than their surroundings. Healthy soils, especially when covered with vegetation, absorb heat, sequester atmospheric carbon, and act as natural air conditioners in parks, community gardens, and green medians.



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World Soil Day is a reminder of the need to look after a life-sustaining and silent resource – soil

Second, preventing floods and managing water – as climate change intensifies rainfall, cities paved with concrete surfacing face frequent flooding. Healthy soil is a city’s first line of defence, acting like a sponge to absorb rainfall, filter it, and replenish groundwater supplies, unlike impermeable surfaces.

Third, supporting urban food systems and biodiversity – the rise of urban agriculture, from rooftop farms to backyard plots, relies entirely on fertile soil, shortening food chains and enhancing local resilience. These soil-based habitats also support a web of life, from earthworms and microbes to pollinators, which are essential for decomposition and plant growth.

Fourth, enhancing mental and physical well-being – contact with nature, or “Vitamin N,” in urban green spaces has been proven to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression. Gardening and time spent in green, soil-rich environments encourage physical activity and improve mental health. Despite its immense value, urban soil is among the most degraded natural resources. The FAO notes that nearly a third of the world’s soils are degraded, a problem magnified in cities. Urban soils face contamination from industrial waste, severe compaction from construction, loss of organic matter, and “sealing” by concrete and asphalt, which suffocates soil life. These pressures weaken plant growth, threaten food safety, and cripple the very ecosystems that make cities livable, making the theme of 2025 an urgent call to action.

A blueprint for action

The “Healthy Soils for Healthy Cities” campaign is a blueprint for transforming our urban landscapes. It calls on municipal governments, planners, community groups, and every resident to become stewards of the ground beneath them.

Key actions include first, urban soil restoration and protection. Cities must prioritise rehabilitating degraded land through compost addition, soil testing and organic amendments. Limiting further soil sealing from new construction is equally critical to protect this non-renewable resource.

Second, promoting green infrastructure. We must replace concrete with soil-based solutions wherever possible. Soils under parks, rain gardens, and tree belts are not just aesthetic; they are vital infrastructure that reduces flooding and heat stress.

Third, championing urban agriculture. Community and backyard gardens are powerful tools for improving soil health while providing fresh food, recreation and social bonding. The theme encourages everyone to plant, even in containers on a balcony.

Fourth, embracing responsible soil management. This involves adopting eco-friendly practices such as reducing chemical fertilizers, minimising pesticide use, planting native species, and protecting topsoil with mulching.

Fifth, boosting soil literacy and composting. Schools are encouraged to host hands-on soil tests and workshops. Meanwhile, every household can contribute to this by composting kitchen waste, and turning organic residues into nutrient-rich food for urban soil.

The basis of healthy cities

On December 5 this year, the message is clear. The foundation of a resilient city is not just steel and concrete. It is living, breathing soil. By caring for the ground beneath our feet, we directly safeguard our cities, our health, and our shared future. Healthy cities depend on healthy soils, and healthy soils depend on informed, engaged communities.

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Cyber crackdown

Tackling digital arrest scams also needs global action

The Supreme Court's direction to the CBI to conduct a pan-India investigation into cyber-crimes, and "digital arrest" scams in particular, might seem extraordinary, as such directions normally require State government consent. But by doing so, the Court has acknowledged the severity of the menace that transcends State jurisdictions and boundaries. The Court's prioritisation of the "digital arrest" scam – fraudsters impersonate police or government officials in a video call, falsely accuse victims of crimes, and pressure them to transfer money to avoid arrest – is fully warranted. The government has estimated that this scam, which often targets senior citizens, has resulted in losses exceeding ₹3,000 crore. The Court has asked the CBI to target not just the scammers but also banking officials who facilitate the creation of "mule" accounts. This is necessary as these scams depend on a malleable financial architecture and therefore require the intervention of agencies such as the RBI, which has also been instructed by the Court to employ Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning to trace the "layering" of proceeds through multiple accounts. The Court has also asked online intermediaries to cooperate with the CBI, invoking the IT Rules 2021. The Court is also right in asking the CBI to investigate other scams such as investment schemes and part-time job scams, subsequently.

The severity of cyber frauds, as National Crime Records Bureau data indicate, has risen significantly. However, while the judiciary and domestic policing can address the symptoms within India, the problem has another dimension – it is also transnational. The burgeoning of "scam centres" – compounds where trafficked workers, unable to escape due to violence, confiscated documents or debt bondage, are forced to run online fraud operations – in conflict-ridden zones of Southeast Asia suggests that the solution requires robust international diplomacy. The U.S., for instance, has established a Scam Center Strike Force to tackle the issue. Furthermore, Myanmar remains a hotbed for these operations, primarily because the illegally ruling junta benefits from taxing the proceeds of such crimes. Tackling this requires moving beyond bilateral requests. New Delhi must act in cohesion with ASEAN and the UN to sanction the illegal regime and cut off the financial lifelines of these modern-day slavery sweatshops. Domestically, the battle must also be fought on the grounds of digital literacy and capacity. As daily life and governance become increasingly digitised, there remains a glaring deficit in cyber awareness among the population. States, local administrations, and the RBI must launch widespread awareness campaigns. Simultaneously, there is an urgent need to upgrade the digital capabilities of State police.

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- **The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is a non-constitutional, non-statutory body.**
- **It derives power to investigate from the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946.**
- **It is the nodal Indian agency that coordinates investigations on behalf of Interpol Member countries.**
- **It functions under the Department of Personnel, Ministry of Personnel, Pension and Public Grievance.**

- **The CBI is headed by a director.**
- **He is assisted by a special director or an additional director and many joint directors, deputy inspector generals (DIG), superintendents of police (SP), and all other ranks of police.**
- **Appointment of CBI Director**
- **Before the Lokpal Act was legislated, the CBI director was appointed by the DSPE Act.**
- **Now, the Lokpal Act governs the appointment of the CBI director.**
- **The Centre appoints the director based on the recommendation of a search committee comprising:**
- **Prime Minister as the chairperson**
- **CJI (or SC judge) and**
- **Leader of the Opposition.**

- **The CBI must mandatorily obtain the consent of the concerned state government before investigating crime in a state.**
- **This is provided through Section 6 of The DSPE Act (“Consent of State Government to exercise of powers and jurisdiction”).**
- **The consent of the state government to CBI can be either case-specific or general.**
- **General consent is given to help the CBI seamlessly investigate corruption cases against central government employees in the concerned state.**
- **Otherwise, it would require consent in every case.**
- **States, including WB, Rajasthan, Kerala, and Maharashtra, have withdrawn the general consent.**
- **It means the CBI needs case-specific consent to register any fresh case against a Central Government official or a private person in these states.**
- **Withdrawal of general consent means that the CBI will not be able to register any fresh case involving central government officials or private persons in a particular state without the prior permission of that state.**

Freeze and thaw

Parliament should not be reduced to a political stage

The winter session of Parliament, that began on December 1, will have 15 sittings over a period of 19 days, and will conclude on December 19. The government maintains that it is willing to discuss any issue, but Prime Minister Narendra Modi has warned that Parliament should not be used for theatrics. The Opposition has pointed out that this is one of the shortest ever winter sessions, and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi has said that the government excludes him from the country's diplomatic engagements with foreign dignitaries, which is a deviation from the convention. Though there is no notable improvement in the hostile relationship between the government and the Opposition, the Vice-President of India, C.P. Radhakrishnan, is expected to ease some tension, in his role as Rajya Sabha Chairman. The government has lined up an ambitious legislative agenda, which has considerable political ramifications, with a number of 14 Bills in total. The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025, is one major piece of legislation that, as its Hindi title suggests, seeks to simplify the criminal justice system. The Higher Education Commission of India Bill, 2025, seeks to change the structure of higher education regulators such as the UGC. The Centre's unilateralism in the sector remains a bone of contention with States, and those issues are likely to be raised by the Opposition. The National Highways (Amendment) Bill, the Atomic Energy Bill, and the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill are some of the items on the legislative agenda. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has introduced the Health Security and National Security Cess Bill in the session, which repackages an ongoing cess on tobacco products.

Both Houses are also scheduled to discuss a motion on electoral reforms, in the background of the SIR of electoral rolls and debate the national song Vande Mataram to mark the 150th year of its composition. The SIR debate is expected to see the divergent views of the BJP and the Opposition with regard to electoral reforms. For the ruling party, enforcing a countrywide synchronised election schedule is a priority, while the Opposition is agitated over suspected malpractices in the preparation of electoral rolls and conduct of the polls. The Opposition has also sought debates on the national security situation after the Delhi blasts, farmers' problems in the background of concluded and ongoing trade negotiations, price rise, air pollution and use of federal agencies against political opponents. Both sides should use the session as an opportunity to reduce disagreements and clarify issues of governance.

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PARLIAMENT OVER THE DECADES

■ The number of sittings in the Lok Sabha has gone down from an average of 121 days a year between 1952-70 to 68 days since 2000.

■ The 17th Lok Sabha between 2019 and 2024 had the fewest sittings (274) for a full-term house.

■ The 17th Lok Sabha did not elect a Deputy Speaker for the entire term in what was a first for the lower house. The post remains vacant in the ongoing 18th Lok Sabha.



2004-2024 in a nutshell

14th Lok Sabha (2004-2009):

Sittings	332 days
Time utilised	87%
Bills passed	248
Bills sent to committees	60%

15th Lok Sabha (2009-2014):

Sittings	356 days
Time utilised	61%
Bills passed	179
Bills sent to committees	71%

16th Lok Sabha (2014-2019):

Sittings	331 days
Time utilised	84%
Bills passed	133
Bills sent to committees	25%

17th Lok Sabha (2019-2024):

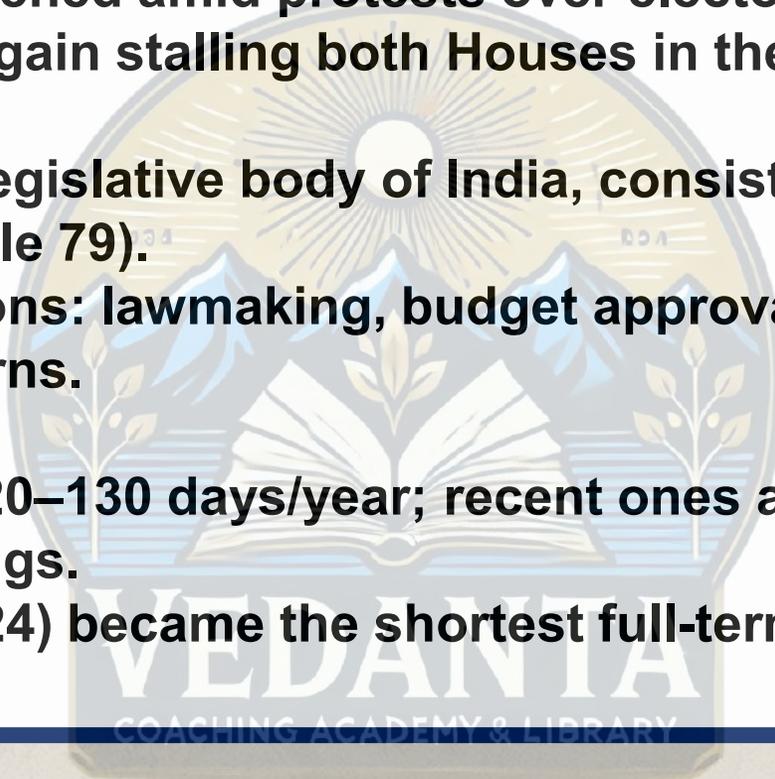
Sittings	274 days
Time utilised	88%
Bills passed	179
Bills sent to committees	16%

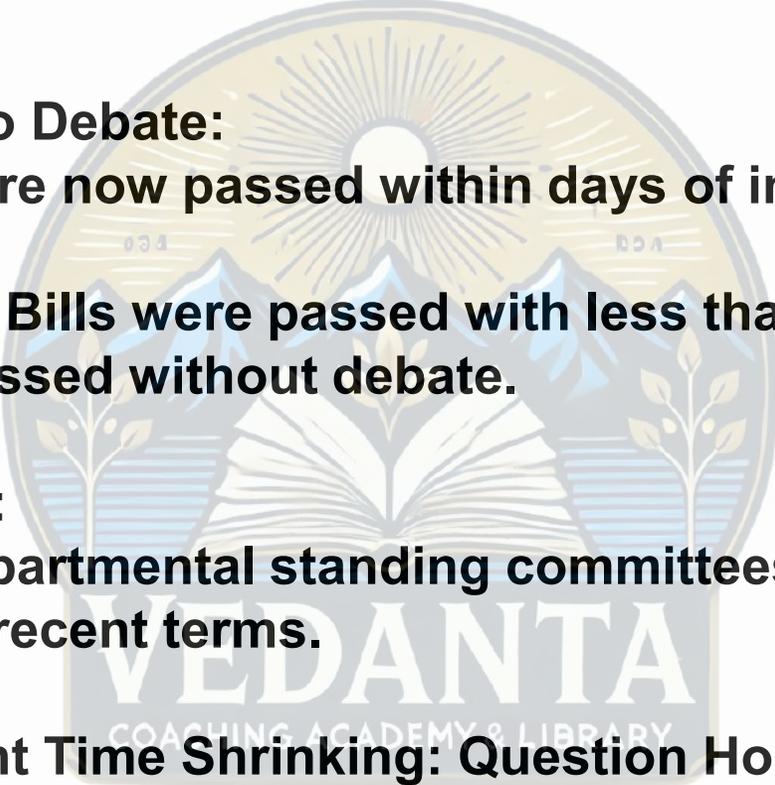
Worst washouts in the last two decades

Winter Session of 2010	Lok Sabha 5%	Rajya Sabha 2%
Winter Session of 2013	Lok Sabha 8%	Rajya Sabha 19%
Winter Session of 2016	Lok Sabha 15%	Rajya Sabha 18%
Budget Session of 2014	Lok Sabha 21%	Rajya Sabha 27%
Budget Session of 2018	Lok Sabha 21%	Rajya Sabha 27%

Content.

- **The 2025 Winter Session opened amid protests over electoral roll revision and a sharply curtailed sitting schedule, again stalling both Houses in the first days.**
- **Parliament is the supreme legislative body of India, consisting of the President, Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha (Article 79).**
- **It performs four core functions: lawmaking, budget approval, executive accountability, and voicing people's concerns.**
- **Early Lok Sabhas met for 120–130 days/year; recent ones average 55–70 days/year, with some years barely ~60 sittings.**
- **The 17th Lok Sabha (2019–24) became the shortest full-term House since 1952 in terms of days sat.**



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- **Disruption has become an accepted “strategy”:** prolonged slogan-shouting, entering the Well, adjournments.
 - **Bills Passed with Little or No Debate:**
 - **A significant share of Bills are now passed within days of introduction, often in the midst of din.**
 - **In recent Lok Sabhas, many Bills were passed with less than an hour of discussion, and large parts of the Budget passed without debate.**
 - **Drop in Committee Scrutiny:**
 - **Share of Bills referred to departmental standing committees has fallen from 60–70% earlier to well below 30% in recent terms.**
 - **Question Hour and Oversight Time Shrinking:** Question Hour often runs for only half or less of its scheduled time due to adjournments.



Hornbill Festival

Content.

- **A premier cultural festival of Nagaland, known as the “Festival of Festivals,” celebrating the heritage, traditions, and artistic expressions of all major Naga tribes.**
- **Celebrated in:**
- **Held annually from December 1–10 at Kisama Heritage Village, near Kohima in Nagaland.**

History:

- **Started in 2000 by the Government of Nagaland to promote inter-tribal unity, preserve indigenous culture, and boost tourism.**
- **Named after the Hornbill, a revered bird in Naga folklore symbolising valour, beauty, and tradition.**





Hornbill Festival

- **The Great Indian Hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*), also known as the Concave-Casqued Hornbill, is a large bird found in the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia.**
- **It primarily inhabits evergreen and moist deciduous forests.**
- **It thrives in the canopy of tall trees in the Western Ghats, northeastern states, and the Himalayas.**
- **It is the state bird of Arunachal Pradesh and Kerala. India hosts nine hornbill species, with the northeast having the highest diversity.**
- **Protection Status**
- **IUCN: Vulnerable**
- **WPA, 1972: Schedule 1**





National Commission for Backward Classes

Content.

- **A constitutional body under Article 338B, mandated to safeguard the rights and ensure the welfare of Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBCs).**
- **Established in:**
- **Originally created under the NCBC Act, 1993, it gained constitutional status in 2018 through the 102nd Constitutional Amendment, which inserted Articles 338B and 342A.**
- **Aim: To advise, monitor, investigate, and recommend matters related to SEBC inclusion/exclusion, welfare safeguards, socio-economic advancement, and violations of rights.**
- **5 members: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and three Members.**
- **Appointed by the President of India by warrant under his hand and seal.**

Functions:

- **Investigate and monitor implementation of Constitutional safeguards for SEBCs.**
- **Inquire into complaints of rights violations or misuse of reservation benefits.**
- **Evaluate socio-economic development programs for backward classes and advise governments.**
- **Ensure mandatory consultation by Union & States on policy matters affecting SEBCs.**
- **Submit annual and special reports to the President, which are tabled in Parliament and State Legislatures.**



Thank You!

