

# THE PALA CIVIL TIMES



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## P2. NATIONAL



### Demography panel may study SIR exclusions, seeks details from govt. -

SIR exercise across 13 states have deleted around 6.5 crore names from electoral rolls

## P4. SCIENCE



### AIIMS Delhi study shows how air pollutants breach placental barriers -

It sheds light on how delhi's air quality issue is harming foetuses

## P8. ECONOMICS



### Extreme heat tests India's record milk production -

India's small farm owner's in trouble as milk production gets affected by heat conditions

## P9. INTERNATIONAL



### Venezuela's Rodriguez arrives today on India visit, to meet PM -

Bilateral talks to focus on energy.

## Editor's Note

In today's edition of The Pala Civil Times, we bring you discussions on some of the most relevant developments across national, economic, and international affairs.

On the national front, we examine the newly constituted Demographic Panel, the land pooling model as an alternative to conventional land acquisition, and the opportunities and environmental challenges associated with India's rapidly expanding data centre infrastructure. Our decoded editorials explore how the latest JEE Advanced results highlight the potential of girls to excel in competitive examinations when structural barriers are reduced. We also analyse the significance of the revised Index of Industrial Production (IIP) and the advantages offered by the new series.

In the economic section, we discuss the emerging challenge posed by rising temperatures and heat stress to India's dairy sector, a vital source of rural livelihoods and agricultural growth.

The international section focuses on the upcoming visit of Venezuela's Acting President to India and its implications for energy cooperation, bilateral relations, and evolving geopolitical dynamics.

As always, readers are encouraged to carefully analyse these developments and note their broader implications for examinations and public policy.

## Editorials Decoded

### The Indian EXPRESS

#### Girls rewrite JEE script. Campus must keep pace



The rise in female JEE qualifiers demonstrates the transformative impact of greater access, inclusion, and institutional support in STEM education.

### BusinessLine

#### Index of improvement



Revised IIP will work as a better policy guide to watch India's economic activities.



## Demography panel may study SIR exclusions, seeks details from govt.

The High-Level Committee on Demographic Changes, chaired by retired **Supreme Court judge Prakash Prabhakar Navlekar**, held its first meeting after being notified by the Union Home Ministry in May 2026. A key issue before the panel is the exclusion of voters during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls conducted across 13 States and Union Territories. The committee has sought information from various government departments and is expected to examine the circumstances surrounding these deletions.

### Why SIR Matters

The SIR exercise has resulted in the deletion of around **6.5 crore names**, nearly 11% of the 58.88 crore electors covered in the revision. The process relies on documentary verification, placing the burden of proof on voters. While deletions include deceased persons and migrants, a large number of exclusions have been challenged before judicial authorities. The Supreme Court has also directed that cases involving suspected non-citizens be referred to competent authorities under the Citizenship Act.

### Why SIR Matters

The committee was originally announced in August 2025. It was eventually notified by the Union Home Ministry in May 2026 and has been tasked with submitting its report within one year, extendable by six months. Besides its chairperson, the panel includes the Census Commissioner, retired civil servants, and security experts. Its creation reflects the government's growing focus on **demographic trends, illegal immigration, and population governance**. The panel is expected to provide evidence-based recommendations for addressing emerging demographic challenges.



### Key Issues Under Examination

The committee will study demographic changes arising from illegal immigration and other abnormal factors. It will examine possible drivers such as cross-border movements, economic opportunities, settlement patterns, and socio-environmental conditions. The panel will also analyse structural population shifts among communities where trends differ significantly from broader demographic patterns. Additionally, it will assess existing mechanisms for identifying illegal immigrants and recommend improvements in border management, population monitoring, and stabilisation measures.

### The Road Ahead

The committee's recommendations are expected to shape a permanent and institutionalised framework for the legal, fair, and time-bound identification, detention, and deportation of illegal immigrants. Its findings gain added importance because India's next Census is scheduled for completion in 2027.

### Practice questions

Q.) With reference to the High-Level Committee on Demographic Changes constituted by the Union Government, consider the following statements:

1. It has been constituted to study demographic changes arising from illegal immigration and other abnormal factors.
2. The committee is chaired by a serving judge of the Supreme Court.
3. It has been tasked with recommending mechanisms for the identification, detention, and deportation of illegal immigrants.

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

### PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) Discuss the main objectives of Population Education and point out the measures to achieve them in India in detail. (GS 1 – 2021)

### RELEVANCE

**GS II : Salient features of the Representation of People's Act.; Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability**

## India's Data Centre Expansion: Opportunities and Challenges

India is rapidly expanding data centre infrastructure as part of its AI and data sovereignty agenda, reflected in initiatives such as Andhra Pradesh's push to emerge as a major AI and data centre hub. While domestic storage and processing of data can reduce dependence on foreign infrastructure and strengthen digital capabilities, large-scale expansion also raises significant environmental concerns that require careful policy attention.

### Rising Energy Demand & Carbon Footprint

Data centres are highly energy-intensive facilities. According to the IEA, their electricity consumption has been increasing by about 12% annually since 2017, with nearly 60% of demand still met through fossil fuels. As states compete to attract AI investments, greater dependence on thermal power could increase greenhouse gas emissions, complicate climate commitments, and place additional stress on already constrained energy systems.

### Water Stress in a Climate-Vulnerable Country

AI-driven data centres require enormous quantities of water for cooling operations. Global consumption is estimated at around 560 billion litres annually and may exceed 1.2 trillion litres by 2030. For regions such as Andhra Pradesh and other water-stressed parts of India, rapid data centre growth could intensify competition for water between industry, agriculture, and households, particularly during periods of drought and heat stress.

### E-Waste: The Emerging Environmental Challenge

The frequent replacement of GPUs, servers, and AI hardware generates vast amounts of e-waste. Generative AI alone could create up to five million metric tonnes of accumulated e-waste by 2030. India already struggles with inadequate recycling capacity and a large informal recycling sector, resulting in groundwater contamination, air pollution, and hazardous exposure from improper disposal of electronic components.



### Policy Imperatives for Sustainable Expansion

The environmental costs of data centres extend beyond isolated issues and form a "triple threat" of emissions, water consumption, and e-waste generation. Therefore, initiatives in Andhra Pradesh and elsewhere should be accompanied by mandatory Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), verified recycling systems, renewable energy integration, water-efficient cooling technologies, and stronger environmental safeguards. Sustainable digital infrastructure is essential if India's pursuit of data sovereignty is to avoid creating long-term ecological liabilities.

### Practice questions

**Q. India's growing emphasis on attracting AI-driven data centres is primarily motivated by which of the following considerations?**

1. Strengthening data sovereignty and reducing dependence on foreign digital infrastructure.
2. Promoting AI-led economic growth and digital investments.
3. The inherently low environmental footprint of data centres.
4. Expanding domestic data storage and processing capacity.

**Select the correct answer using the code below:**

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1, 2 and 4 only
- (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

### RELEVANCE

**GS III : Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics; Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation**

### PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



**Q.)** Achieving sustainable growth with emphasis on environmental protection could come into conflict with poor people's needs in a country like India - Comment. (GS I - 2025)

## How land pooling solves acquisition woes

Rajasthan has announced its first land pooling scheme to facilitate the acquisition of land required for roads, urban infrastructure, and development projects. The initiative reflects a broader shift among Indian States towards alternative land assembly mechanisms that reduce dependence on compulsory land acquisition. With urbanisation accelerating and infrastructure demands rising, States are increasingly exploring land pooling and Town Planning (TP) schemes as more efficient and participatory methods of securing land while balancing the interests of both governments and landowners.

### Why Land Pooling is Needed

The growing interest in land pooling stems from the limitations of conventional land acquisition, particularly after the enactment of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (LARR Act). While the Act strengthened landowners' rights through higher compensation, rehabilitation, and resettlement provisions, it also increased the financial and procedural costs of acquisition. As a result, large infrastructure projects often face delays, litigation, and funding constraints, creating a widening gap between planned development and actual implementation.

### How Land Pooling and TP Schemes Work

Under land pooling, landowners voluntarily contribute a portion of their land for infrastructure development and receive the remaining land back as serviced and reconstituted plots. In the Town Planning (TP) model, widely used in Gujarat and Maharashtra, about 25–40% of land is pooled for roads, parks, public amenities, and affordable housing, while 60–75% is returned to owners. Because infrastructure increases land values, owners benefit from appreciation while governments avoid large upfront acquisition costs and displacement-related challenges.

### Practice questions

With reference to land pooling schemes, consider the following statements:

1. Landowners voluntarily contribute a portion of their land for infrastructure development.
2. Landowners receive a part of their land back as serviced and more valuable plots.
3. The model completely eliminates the need for any contribution of land towards public infrastructure.

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

**RELEVANCE GS III : Land reforms in India.**

### Lessons from State Experiences

Gujarat have implemented TP schemes for nearly a century and planned over 1,000 sq. km of urban areas through this mechanism. Maharashtra has recently revived the model in Pune and the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. Guwahati demonstrated the importance of institutional flexibility by simplifying land record issues and reducing land contributions to improve acceptance. Rajasthan is similarly adapting land valuation mechanisms and sharing part of the development cost to make the scheme more attractive and equitable.



### Future Challenges and Way Forward

The success of land pooling will depend on more than statutory provisions alone. States such as Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, and Delhi must build trust among landowners, clearly communicate benefits, and tailor schemes to local realities. Key requirements include clear legal frameworks, digitised land records, transparent valuation methods, flexible land contribution norms, and equitable cost-sharing arrangements. If implemented effectively, land pooling can help bridge India's growing infrastructure and urban development needs.

### PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 has come into effect from 1st January, 2014. What are the key issues which would get addressed with the Act in place? What implications would it have on industrialization and agriculture in India? (GS III – 2014)

## AIIMS Delhi study shows how air pollutants breach placental barriers and affect fetuses

An ICMR-funded study by AIIMS Delhi, published in the journal EMBO Molecular Medicine, has mapped the complete biological pathway through which urban air pollution affects foetal development. The research provides detailed molecular evidence showing how fine particulate matter crosses the placental barrier, triggers inflammation, and disrupts crucial growth processes. The findings strengthen scientific understanding of how exposure to polluted air during pregnancy can produce adverse birth outcomes and potentially influence health well beyond infancy.

### How Pollution Harms the Foetus

The study found that PM2.5 and PM10 particles induce oxidative stress and inflammatory responses within the placenta. These processes suppress the expression of IGF1, a key protein responsible for maintaining placental balance and supporting embryonic growth. Reduced IGF1 levels impair placental development, nutrient exchange, blood-vessel formation, and foetal growth. Researchers also observed epigenetic alterations, suggesting that pollution exposure can permanently influence gene activity and developmental pathways before birth.

### Particulate Matter: Health Effects


Particulate matter is composed of carbonaceous materials, inorganic compounds, and trace metals. It originates from both natural processes and human activities such as vehicle emissions, industrial combustion, power generation, and household fuel use. Due to their extremely small size and large surface area, these particles bypass natural respiratory defences, penetrate deep into the lungs, and enter circulation. They are associated with respiratory, cardiovascular, and systemic health disorders.

### Way Forward

The findings highlight the need to integrate pollution monitoring into prenatal healthcare and strengthen efforts to reduce ambient air pollution. Researchers suggest risk-mitigation measures such as masks and antioxidant-rich diets, while emphasizing that long-term solutions require multidimensional pollution control strategies. The study also reinforces the importance of adhering to air-quality standards and protecting vulnerable populations.

**BRAIN BOOSTERS** #146 01-01-2026

Did You Know?



**PM 2.5**

- Why in news?** Delhi recorded its highest PM 2.5 level (since December 2018) of 392.65 µg/m<sup>3</sup> on December 14, 2025.
- PM2.5 refers to particles less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter.
- PM 2.5 is composed mainly of carbon particles, inorganic compounds (sulfate, nitrate, and ammonium), and trace metal compounds (iron, aluminium, nickel, copper, zinc, and lead).
- Major sources : Vehicular emission, Industrial combustion plants, conventional power generation and Commercial and residential combustion.
- Impacts : Oxidative stress, irritation of the airways, coughing, difficulty in breathing, and decreased lung function.

375 SUCCESS STORIES

### Evidence from Human and Animal Studies

The research combined rodent experiments with delivery records from 994 women in highly polluted Delhi and relatively cleaner Deoghar. PM2.5 exposure was identified as a significant risk factor for low birth weight and increased incidence of preeclampsia. Animal studies revealed smaller placentas, reduced litter sizes, and substantially lower birth weights. Offspring also exhibited impaired motor coordination, heightened anxiety, and abnormal stress responses, indicating that developmental damage caused by pollution may extend into later stages of life.

### RELEVANCE :

**GS III : Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.**

### PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) What are the key features of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) initiated by the government of India? (GS III – 2020)

Q. Describe the key points of the revised Global Air Quality Guidelines (AQGs) recently released by the World Health Organisation (WHO). How are these different from its last update in 2005? What changes in India's National Clean Air Programme are required to achieve revised standards? (GS III – 2021)

## Girls rewrite JEE script. Campus must keep pace (Indian Express : 03-06-2026)

For the first time, more than 10,000 girls have qualified for admission to IITs and other premier engineering institutions through JEE Advanced 2026. Nearly one in four female candidates who appeared for the examination qualified, reflecting a sharp improvement in women's representation in elite engineering education. The number of successful female candidates has increased by almost 89% since 2019, highlighting the growing participation of women in STEM fields and demonstrating the impact of sustained efforts to improve gender inclusion.

### Role of Policy Interventions

A major driver of this progress has been the Supernumerary Seats Scheme (SSS), introduced in 2018 to improve female representation in IIT B.Tech. programmes. Under the scheme, additional seats equivalent to 20% of the existing intake were created exclusively for women, without reducing seats available to male candidates. The reform addressed a situation where female enrolment in IITs remained around 8%, despite women constituting nearly 20% of JEE Advanced qualifiers. Evidence also showed that women consistently performed strongly after admission, often achieving higher academic outcomes than their male peers.

### Persistent Structural Barriers

Despite recent gains, women continue to face structural barriers that limit participation in engineering education. These include **unequal access to coaching, societal expectations regarding career choices, mobility and safety concerns, and a disproportionate burden of domestic responsibilities**. Such factors often discourage women from pursuing engineering even when they possess the required academic ability. The persistence of these constraints explains why female enrolment in engineering and technology remains significantly below its potential despite growing educational opportunities.

### Evidence that Gender Gaps Can Be Reduced

The experience of medical education demonstrates that gender disparities are not permanent. According to **AISHE 2021-22, only 28.8% of female students pursued engineering and technology**, whereas women have achieved near parity in medical education. **In NEET UG 2024, female candidates outnumbered male candidates among both registrants and qualifiers**. Women are increasingly entering specialised fields such as cardiology, oncology, and neurology, and are expected to constitute a substantial share of future surgeons. This suggests that supportive institutional environments can significantly narrow gender gaps.



### The Next Phase: Inclusion Beyond Access

The challenge now extends beyond admission to ensuring that women thrive throughout their educational and professional journeys. Engineering institutions must strengthen support systems through **safe hostels, mentoring programmes, leadership opportunities, gender-sensitive grievance mechanisms, and inclusive academic cultures**. Attention must also be paid to reducing attrition and career interruptions that affect women later in life. The JEE Advanced 2026 outcome therefore represents not only a success in expanding access but also an opportunity to redefine excellence and inclusion within India's engineering ecosystem.

#### PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) Distinguish between gender equality, gender equity, and women's empowerment. Why is it important to take gender concerns into account in programme design and implementation? (GS 1 - 2024)

Q.) Skill development programmes have succeeded in increasing human resources supply to various sectors. In the context of the statement analyse the linkages between education, skill and employment. (GS II - 2023)

#### RELEVANCE

**GS II : Issues relating to development and management of Health, Education, Human Resources.**

## Index of improvement (TH BusinessLine : 03-06-2026)

The first Index of Industrial Production (IIP) release based on the revised 2022-23 base year recorded industrial growth of 4.9% in April 2026. This was lower than the 5.7% growth recorded in April of the previous year but higher than 3.2% in March 2026. Sector-wise, manufacturing grew by 6.2%, electricity and gas supply by 4.9%, and water supply, sewerage and waste management by 6.6%, while mining and quarrying contracted by 5.1%.

### What Drove Industrial Performance?

Industrial growth was primarily supported by strong manufacturing activity and resilient domestic demand. Sectors such as motor vehicles, electrical equipment, computers, and machinery emerged as major contributors. Recovery in chemical manufacturing suggested easing shortages of industrial inputs linked to the West Asia conflict. Indicators such as automobile sales, electricity demand, and retail credit pointed to healthy domestic economic activity. However, mining sector weakness and rising input costs prevented stronger overall industrial expansion.

### Methodological Change: What Has Changed in the New IIP?

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has revised the IIP base year from 2011-12 to 2022-23, marking the tenth revision since the index was first compiled in 1937. The new basket covers 1,042 products mapped to 463 item groups, compared to 837 products and 407 groups earlier. It introduces 120 new item groups, adds a separate category for water supply, sewerage and waste management, and provides finer classifications for renewables, minerals, gas supply, and other emerging sectors.

The first release of the new series of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) will present index values from April 2023 onwards, including the Quick Estimates for April 2026.

The release will feature:

- All-India General Index of Industrial Production
- Sector-wise indices for:
  - Mining & Quarrying
  - Manufacturing
  - Electricity & Gas Supply
  - Water Supply, Sewerage & Waste Management
- Mining & Quarrying sector includes sub-indices for fuel minerals, metallic minerals, and non-metallic minerals.
- Manufacturing sector indices at the 2-digit level of NIC-2025
- Electricity sector includes sub-indices for power generation from renewable and non-renewable sources.
- Indices based on Use-based Classification
- Linking Factor to link the old series with new series

### Economic Interpretation: What Does the New Data Suggest?

The revised IIP presents a more contemporary picture of India's industrial structure and indicates that the economy has remained relatively resilient despite geopolitical uncertainties. Manufacturing-led growth and recovery in chemicals production suggest that disruptions arising from the West Asia conflict have been limited. At the same time, April data should be interpreted cautiously because comparisons with older series are imperfect. Nevertheless, the new index better captures structural shifts in industry and evolving patterns of production.

### Future Improvements

Experts have suggested several reforms to improve the usefulness of the IIP. These include deseasonalising the index to remove seasonal distortions, integrating data from the unorganised sector, and using GST-based business registries to capture changes in industrial activity more quickly. The development of a Producer Price Index (PPI) is also considered essential for constructing accurate deflators. Such improvements would enhance the reliability of industrial statistics and strengthen evidence-based policymaking.

### PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) Faster economic growth requires increased share of the manufacturing sector in GDP, particularly of MSMEs. Comment on the present policies of the Government in this regard (GS III - 2023)

Q.) Explain the difference between computing methodology of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) before the year 2015 and after the year 2015. (GS III - 2021)

### RELEVANCE

GS III : Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, growth, development

## Extreme heat tests India's record milk production

India is the world's largest producer and consumer of milk, accounting for nearly one-fourth of global milk production. The sector contributes about 5% of GDP and supports over 80 million farmers, with production largely driven by smallholder households owning two to five animals. Cooperative networks, government support, improved breeding practices, animal healthcare, and better market linkages have enabled milk production to rise by over 63% during the last decade, making dairying a critical pillar of rural livelihoods and food security.

### Climate Change: An Emerging Challenge

Rising temperatures and recurring heat waves are exposing vulnerabilities within India's dairy economy. Heat stress reduces feed intake, lowers milk yield, affects fertility, increases premature births, and raises livestock management costs. Scientists have observed that extreme temperatures divert animal energy away from milk production and reproduction. Small farmers are particularly vulnerable because investments in cooling systems, ventilation, and heat-management infrastructure are often beyond their financial capacity, threatening both productivity and incomes.

### Government Initiatives for Dairy Development

The Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM), launched in 2014 and revised in 2025, remains the flagship programme for genetic improvement, indigenous breed conservation, and productivity enhancement. The scheme supports semen stations, artificial insemination networks, sex-sorted semen technology, and breed improvement programmes. Government interventions have contributed to significant improvements in milk production and bovine productivity across the country.

#### PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. Consider the following statements about the Rashtriya Gokul Mission:

I. It is important for the upliftment of rural poor, as majority of low producing indigenous animals are with small and marginal farmers and landless labourers.

II. It was initiated to promote indigenous cattle and buffalo rearing and conservation in a scientific and holistic manner.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) I only
- (b) II only
- (c) Both I and II
- (d) Neither I nor II

### Technology and White Revolution 2.0

The government has expanded advanced reproductive technologies through IVF laboratories, progeny testing programmes, breed multiplication farms, and the MAITRI network that delivers breeding services directly to farmers. Building on these efforts, White Revolution 2.0 seeks to strengthen dairy cooperatives, expand farmer participation, promote women's involvement, and increase milk procurement. The initiative also encourages sustainable practices through organic manure production, biogas generation, and improved utilisation of livestock by-products within a circular economy framework.

### Towards Climate-Resilient Dairy Development

While current programmes focus on productivity, breeding, and cooperative expansion, future dairy policies must increasingly incorporate climate resilience. Measures such as heat-tolerant breeds, climate-smart cattle shelters, improved fodder management, water conservation, livestock insurance, and early-warning systems will become essential. Integrating climate adaptation into existing dairy schemes can help protect smallholder farmers from rising temperatures while ensuring that India's dairy sector continues to support rural livelihoods, nutritional security, and sustainable agricultural growth.

#### Practice questions

Q. Which of the following best explains the strength of India's dairy sector?

- (a) Large corporate dairy farms dominate milk production.
- (b) Milk production is primarily driven by millions of smallholder farmers.
- (c) Most milk is produced through imports of high-yield cattle.
- (d) Dairy production is concentrated in a few metropolitan regions.

#### RELEVANCE

GS III : Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, growth, development

## Venezuela's Rodriguez arrives today on India visit, to meet PM

Venezuela's Acting President Delcy Rodríguez is on a five-day visit to India from June 3 to 7 for high-level bilateral discussions. She is accompanied by ministers handling foreign affairs, finance, science and technology, communication, and transportation. During the visit, she is expected to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and discuss the full spectrum of bilateral relations. The visit underscores the continued importance both countries attach to their partnership despite evolving geopolitical circumstances and changes in the international energy landscape.

### Political Context Behind the Visit

The visit assumes significance because it comes after the political transition in Venezuela following the capture of President Nicolás Maduro by U.S. forces in January 2026. Subsequently, Delcy Rodríguez, formerly the Vice-President, was appointed Acting President. India has officially referred to her as the Acting President, reflecting the unusual nature of the transition. The development has generated international debate, with several countries criticising the U.S. action and raising concerns regarding its legality and implications for Venezuela's political stability.

### India-Venezuela Bilateral Relations

India and Venezuela have maintained longstanding relations, particularly in areas such as energy, trade, investment, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, transportation, and renewable energy. Rodríguez herself has visited India multiple times in different official capacities, reflecting sustained engagement between the two countries. Indian public sector enterprises have invested in Venezuela's energy sector, while both sides continue to explore new avenues of cooperation. The current visit is expected to further strengthen bilateral ties and identify opportunities for expanding economic and strategic collaboration.

### Energy Cooperation and Oil Trade

Energy remains the most important pillar of India-Venezuela relations. Prior to the imposition of U.S. sanctions in 2019, Venezuela was among India's major crude oil suppliers, with bilateral trade heavily driven by petroleum imports. Although sanctions disrupted oil purchases, temporary relaxations and specific waivers enabled limited resumption of trade. More recently, India's imports of Venezuelan crude have increased again, particularly as disruptions in West Asia and concerns surrounding the Strait of Hormuz have encouraged diversification of energy supply sources.



### Strategic Significance and Future Outlook

The visit highlights India's broader strategy of maintaining diversified energy partnerships and strengthening engagement with resource-rich countries. As global energy markets face uncertainty due to sanctions, conflicts, and supply-chain disruptions, Venezuela remains a potentially important partner for India's energy security. Beyond oil, cooperation in investment, technology, healthcare, and renewable energy offers additional opportunities. The visit therefore reflects not only bilateral goodwill but also India's pursuit of strategic autonomy and resilient economic partnerships in an increasingly volatile geopolitical environment.

### PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. "Energy security constitutes the dominant kingpin of India's foreign policy, and is linked with India's overarching influence in Middle Eastern countries." How would you integrate energy security with India's foreign policy trajectories in the coming years? (GS III - 2025)

### RELEVANCE

**GS II : Bilateral, regional and global groupings involving India and/or affecting India's interests.**

## Practice Questions and answers

Q.) India's growing emphasis on attracting AI-driven data centres is primarily motivated by which of the following considerations?

1. Strengthening data sovereignty and reducing dependence on foreign digital infrastructure.
2. Promoting AI-led economic growth and digital investments.
3. The inherently low environmental footprint of data centres.
4. Expanding domestic data storage and processing capacity.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1, 2 and 4 only
- (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

**Answer: (b) 1, 2 and 4 only**

**Statement 1 is correct** – India seeks greater control over data generated within its borders and aims to reduce reliance on foreign-owned data infrastructure.

**Statement 2 is correct** – Data centres provide the computing backbone for AI, cloud services, and digital industries, attracting investment and supporting economic growth.

**Statement 3 is incorrect** – Data centres are resource-intensive, consuming large amounts of electricity and water while generating significant e-waste.

**Statement 4 is correct** – More domestic data centres enable local storage and processing of data, improving digital infrastructure and reducing dependence on overseas facilities.

Q.) With reference to the High-Level Committee on Demographic Changes constituted by the Union Government, consider the following statements:

1. It has been constituted to study demographic changes arising from illegal immigration and other abnormal factors.
2. The committee is chaired by a serving judge of the Supreme Court.
3. It has been tasked with recommending mechanisms for the identification, detention, and deportation of illegal immigrants.

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: (c) 1 and 3 only**

**Statement 1 is Correct** – The committee's primary mandate is to study demographic changes arising from illegal immigration and other abnormal causes.

**Statement 2 is Incorrect** – The committee is chaired by retired Supreme Court judge Prakash Prabhakar Navlekar, not a serving judge.

**Statement 3 is Correct** – It has been asked to recommend a permanent mechanism for the legal, fair, and time-bound identification, detention, and deportation of illegal immigrants.

## Practice Questions and answers

Q.) With reference to land pooling schemes, consider the following statements:

1. Landowners voluntarily contribute a portion of their land for infrastructure development.
2. Landowners receive a part of their land back as serviced and more valuable plots.
3. The model completely eliminates the need for any contribution of land towards public infrastructure.

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**

**Statement 1 is correct** – Land pooling is based on the voluntary contribution of land by owners for roads, parks, public amenities, and other infrastructure.

**Statement 2 is correct** – After development, owners receive reconstituted plots that are serviced and generally more valuable than before.

**Statement 3 is incorrect** – A portion of the pooled land is specifically used for infrastructure and public purposes; therefore, land contribution is an essential feature of the model.

Q.) Which of the following best explains the strength of India's dairy sector?

- (a) Large corporate dairy farms dominate milk production.
- (b) Milk production is primarily driven by millions of smallholder farmers.
- (c) Most milk is produced through imports of high-yield cattle.
- (d) Dairy production is concentrated in a few metropolitan regions.

**Answer: (b) Milk production is primarily driven by millions of smallholder farmers.**

**11 SAAL** myGov

Rashtriya Gokul Mission  
 Revolutionising India's  
**LIVESTOCK SECTOR**

- 38,736 MAITRIs\* trained to deliver artificial insemination at farmers' doorsteps
- Sex-sorted semen enables up to 90% female calf births, improving breeds and boosting incomes
- Bovine IVF tech introduced for the first time in India to conserve indigenous breeds
- 63.5% rise in milk production over the past decade under the mission

\*Multi-purpose Artificial Insemination Technicians in Rural India

