

Fiscal Health Index 2025:

- Fiscal Health Index (FHI) initiative by NITI Aayog aims to evolve an understanding of fiscal health of states in India.
- FHI analysis covers eighteen major states that drive Indian economy in terms of their contribution to India's GDP, demography, total public expenditure, revenues, and overall fiscal stability.
- Odisha leads Index, followed by Chhattisgarh, Goa, Jharkhand and Gujarat.
- It has been developed using data from CAG, covering Financial Year 2022-23.
- Fiscal Health Index 2025 is based on a comprehensive set of indicators that are grouped into five broad categories:
 1. **Revenue Generation and Mobilization:** Assessment of states' own revenue receipts, tax buoyancy, and non-tax revenue generation.
 2. **Expenditure Management and Prioritization:** Evaluation of efficiency in expenditure allocation, prioritization of capital expenditure, and adherence to fiscal discipline.
 3. **Debt Management:** Analysis of states' debt-to-GSDP ratios, interest payment burdens, and overall sustainability of debt portfolios.
 4. **Fiscal Deficit Management:** Measurement of states' fiscal deficit as a percentage of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and adherence to statutory limits.
 5. **Overall Fiscal Sustainability:** Composite analysis of revenue, expenditure, deficit, and debt indicators to gauge long-term fiscal health.

North Sentinel Island:

- U.S. man arrested for entering restricted North Sentinel Island.
- Sentinelese are a negrito tribe who live on North Sentinel Island of the Andamans.
- The inhabitants are connected to Jarawa tribe on the basis of physical, as well as linguistic similarities.
- Their numbers are believed to be less than 150 and as low as 40.
- Entire North Sentinel Island along with 5 km coastal sea from high water mark is notified as tribal reserve.

BIMSTEC:

- Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation is holding its sixth summit in a physical format in Bangkok (Thailand), for first time since end of the pandemic.
- Last such in-person summit was held in Kathmandu in 2018.
- Fifth BIMSTEC summit was held virtually in 2022, under leadership of Sri Lanka.
- This year's theme is a "prosperous, resilient, and open BIMSTEC".

About BIMSETC:

- It came into being in 1997 through Bangkok Declaration.
- At the beginning, it was formed with four Member States with the acronym 'BIST-EC' (Bangladesh, India, Sri-Lanka and Thailand Economic Cooperation).
- It became renamed 'BIMST-EC' in 1997, following the inclusion of Myanmar.
- With admission of Nepal and Bhutan in 2004, name of grouping was changed to 'Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation'.

- Out of the 7 members, five are from South Asia (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka) and two are from Southeast Asia (Myanmar, Thailand).
- BIMSTEC Secretariat is in Dhaka.
- BIMSETC charter was signed and adopted during the 5th summit of grouping in Sri Lanka, in 2022 and came into force on May 20, 2024.
- Charter is a foundational document that outlines goals, principles, and structure of BIMSTEC.
- Charter confers legal personality on the grouping and paves the way for external partnerships and admission of observers and new members.

Greenhouse gases vs. aerosols:

- Global warming is caused by build-up of greenhouse gases in atmosphere and has been known to intensify temperature and rainfall extremes.
- Aerosols can counteract the impact of greenhouse gases to some extent. This is because, while greenhouse gases trap heat and warm the earth's surface, aerosols such as sulphates and nitrates scatter solar radiation, preventing it from reaching the ground and rendering a cooling effect. Aerosols also affect the water cycle.
- Greenhouse gases are also more long-lived — carbon dioxide can persist in the atmosphere without breaking down for centuries — whereas aerosols live for a few days to weeks at a time. The consequences of changes in the atmosphere's aerosol load can thus be felt almost immediately.

New Pamban Bridge:

- India's First Vertical Lift Railway Sea Bridge, built with stainless steel reinforcements and Polysiloxane Paint.
- Bridge is designed to withstand harsh marine conditions.
- It has an automated electro-mechanical lift system, which will help the bridge rise to 17 meters, allowing smooth ship passage.
- Its expected lifespan is up to 58 years.
- With its genesis in the Indo-Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) trade during the British Era, the old bridge stood firm even during the horrific 1964 tsunami when a train full of passengers was washed away.
- On the night of December 23, 1964, a fierce tidal wave or tsunami hit Pamban Island very badly. The six coaches of the 653 Pamban-Dhanushkodi Passenger train crossed the bridge at around 11 pm and were en route to Dhanushkodi from Rameswaram.

Perm:

- Russian President launched Perm, a nuclear-powered submarine with hypersonic Zircon missiles.
- Perm is fourth-generation multipurpose nuclear-powered submarine, and sixth in a series of Yasen-class submarines.
- Zircon missile can reach eight times speed of sound, has a range of 625 miles and can carry a 660-pound warhead.

Hypersonic Missiles:

- They travel at a speed Mach 5, or at least five times the speed of sound in upper atmosphere.
- Main feature of a hypersonic missile is its maneuverability, meaning its trajectory can be altered according to intended target.
- These are generally slower than intercontinental ballistic missiles.

- Hypersonic weapons can potentially evade missile shields and ground-based radars.
- The two types of hypersonic weapons systems are Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs) and Hypersonic Cruise Missiles (HCMs).
- HGVs are launched from a rocket before gliding to the intended target, while HCMs are powered by air-breathing high-speed engines or 'scramjets' after acquiring their target.

Exercise- Tiger Triumph:

- 4th edition of the bilateral joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) amphibious exercise between India and the U.S. - Tiger TRIUMPH 2025.
- The harbour phase of the exercise is being conducted at Visakhapatnam from 01-07 Apr 25.
- During the sea phase, which will take place from 08-12 Apr 25, the bilateral forces will work together to train for maritime, amphibious and HADR operations through a Joint Combined Command and Control Center.

TARANG:

- It is a 64-bit High Performance Computing (HPC) system, capable of supporting multi-tasking, multi-programming, multi-user and time-sharing environment.
- The compute capacity is about 1 Peta FLOPS, with 2 Peta Byte storage and 3 Peta Byte archival storage.
- The HPC would help scientists to run advance operational models for providing Tsunami Early Warnings for India and other 25 countries on Indian Ocean rim.

BHARATPOL Portal:

- It is developed by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).
- It will streamline processing of all requests for international assistance through INTERPOL, including issuance of Red Notices and other colour-coded INTERPOL notices.
- It will facilitate Indian Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) enabling real-time information sharing for faster access to international police assistance.

Green Credit Programme:

- It was launched by Indian PM on the sidelines of COP 28 in Dubai, UAE.
- It is an initiative within government's Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) movement.
- It introduces a market-based approach to incentivise 8 identified environmental activities.
- It encourages voluntary environmental actions by individuals, organizations, and companies.
- Implementing agency: Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE)
- It allows for exchange of credits to meet compensatory afforestation (CA) requirements.
- The actual afforestation will be carried out by State Forest departments.

National Urban Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation Limited (NUCFDC):

- Operate as a Non-Banking Finance Company (NBFC) and serve as umbrella organisation for urban cooperative banking sector.
- It will be allowed to operate as a Self-Regulatory Organisation (SRO) for the sector.
- It aims to raise capital, with plans to reach a capital base of Rs.300 crores.
- Besides offering liquidity and capital support, the umbrella organisation would set up a technology platform that can be shared by all UCBs, enabling them to widen their range of services at a relatively lower cost.

Climate Resilient Coastal Fishermen Villages Programme:

- This initiative under Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) primarily aims to develop existing 100 coastal fishermen villages situated close to coastline in all coastal States and Union Territories(UTs).

PRACTICE MCQs

Q1. Exercise Tiger Triumph is a bilateral joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) between –

- India and France
- India and the U.K.
- India and the U.S.
- India and Russia

Answer: C

Q2. Consider the following statements about BIMSTEC:

- It came into being in 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration.
- Its headquarter is located in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- BIMSTEC Charter was adopted in 2022 and came in force in 2024.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 3 only
- 1 and 3 only

Answer: D

Q3. Consider the following statements about the Fiscal Health Index 2025:

- It is an initiative of NITI Aayog.
- It covers eighteen major states that drive Indian economy.
- Tamil Nadu leads the Index, followed by Chhattisgarh, Goa.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only

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

Answer: B

Q4. Which of the following statements is incorrect about the Green Credit Program?

- a) It was launched by India's Prime Minister on the sidelines of COP 28 in Dubai, UAE.
- b) It is an initiative within the government's Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) movement.
- c) It encourages voluntary environmental actions by individuals, organizations, and companies.
- d) It is implemented by Forest Survey of India.

Answer: D

Q5. Consider the following statements:

Statement – I: Reduction in number of aerosols can counteract the impact of greenhouse gases.

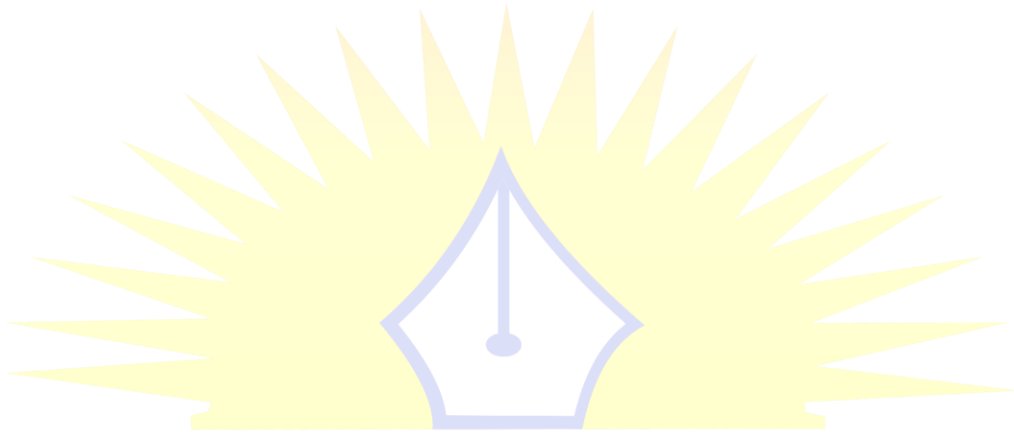
Statement – II: Aerosols scatter solar radiation and prevent it from reaching the ground.

Statement – III: Lifespan of aerosols in atmosphere is more than greenhouse gases.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- a) Both Statement-II and Statement-III are correct and both of them explain Statement-I
- b) Both Statement-II and Statement-III are correct, but only one of them explains Statement-I
- c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement-I
- d) Neither Statement-II nor Statement-III is correct

Answer: C



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