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📅 May 7th, 2025

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Jharkhand Completes OBC Data Collection for Urban Local Body Quotas under Supreme Court's "Triple Test"

- Recently, Jharkhand has completed its data collection on **Other Backwards Classes (OBCs).** This initiative aims to establish quotas for OBCs in urban local bodies.

About Triple Test

The triple test consists of three steps.

- First, a dedicated commission must empirically **investigate backwardness** in local bodies.
- Second, the commission specifies the required reservation proportion. This ensures that **reservations do not exceed legal limits.**
- Third, the total reservation for **Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs),** and OBCs **combined must not surpass 50% of total seats.**

The "triple test" is a legal framework laid down by the Supreme Court in **Vikas Kishanrao Gawali vs State of Maharashtra (2021)** to ensure that OBC reservations in local bodies are fair, evidence-based, and within constitutional limits.

THE TRIPLE TEST

▸▸ Dedicated OBC commission should be engaged in a full time exercise to map OBC community presence

▸▸ State's OBC Commission and Election Commission required to conduct rigorous, thorough and contemporary study of the nature and extent of backwardness on OBC communities in each village panchayat

▸▸ The sum total of all reservations shouldn't go over 50%

STATE GOVT, OBC COMMISSION, DID NOTHING TOWARDS TRIPLE TEST FOR 3 YRS

▸▸ In a scathing indictment, the State Government and the OBC Commission did practically nothing towards compliance with the triple test requirements for the last 12 years

▸▸ The HC observed that this inquiry only commenced after June 29, but was completed by July 5—in less than a week

▸▸ The report doesn't make clear the nature of the inquiry; it merely quotes data from the outdated 2011 Census and CDPR Report of 2013

Jharkhand's Commission and Data Collection

- The Jharkhand OBC Commission was constituted in June 2023. Commission members studied Madhya Pradesh's implementation of the triple test as a model.
- **Data collection timeline:** Data collection completed (between December 2023 - March 2024) and submitted (recently, several districts missed their submission deadlines) to the Commission.

Verification and analysis:

- For socio-economic and educational analysis, data will be handed to empanelled institutions like **IIM, Xavier School of Management (XLRI) and Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS).**

- A final report will be submitted to the state government post-verification. Based on this, Jharkhand will determine **OBC quotas in the 48 ULBs across the state.**

OBC Classification in Jharkhand

- In Jharkhand, OBCs are divided into two categories.
  - **BC-I (Backwards Class I):** More socially and educationally backwards; includes 127 castes.
  - **BC-II (Backwards Class II):** Relatively better-off; includes around 45 castes.
- The Kudmi community, a subgroup of the **Mahato/Mahto caste, is the largest OBC** group, representing about **15% of the electorate.**

Survey Focus and Methodology

- The survey aimed to identify OBC voters and estimate their share in urban local bodies. It differed from the nationwide caste census, focusing solely on urban areas.
- The survey gathered data on political representation of OBCs across various government tiers.
- It included mayors, panchayat committee members, and the caste affiliations of Jharkhand's MPs and MLAs.

Conclusion

- The successful implementation of the Triple Test in Jharkhand could set a precedent for other states to follow in ensuring constitutionally valid and data-driven OBC reservations in local governance.

- This process not only strengthens grassroots democracy but also enhances the inclusivity and representational equity of India's urban political landscape.

Question. Regarding the "Triple Test" criteria laid down by the Supreme Court of India for OBC reservations in Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The test requires a commission to empirically determine the political backwardness of OBCs.
2. The commission must recommend reservation percentages based on socio-economic indicators alone.
3. The cumulative reservation for SCs, STs, and OBCs must not breach the 50% constitutional ceiling.

4. Jharkhand is the first Indian state to complete the triple test procedure after the Vikas Kishanrao Gawali judgment.

Select the correct answer using the code below:
A. 1 and 3 only
 B. 2 and 4 only
 C. 1, 2 and 3 only
 D. 1, 3 and 4 only

Answer A. 1 and 3 only

Explanation:
- Statement 1 is correct: The first step of the Triple Test requires empirical investigation of political backwardness.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: The recommendation must consider political, social, and educational backwardness, not just socio-economic indicators.
- Statement 3 is correct: The 50% ceiling is mandated.
- Statement 4 is incorrect: Madhya Pradesh completed the process before Jharkhand and served as a model for Jharkhand.

Question. The Supreme Court's "Triple Test" framework is a landmark in regulating OBC reservations in urban local bodies. Critically examine the legal, political, and social implications of Jharkhand's attempt to implement this framework. How can this model influence the future of data-driven affirmative action in India?

Human Development Index: UNDP

- India Rises in Human Development Index 2023, But Inequality Remains a **Key Challenge.**
- According to the Human Development Report 2025 released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), **India has climbed three places in the Human Development Index (HDI), ranking 130 out of 193 countries** in 2023.
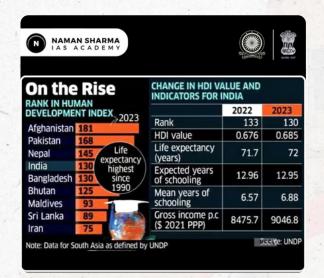
Highlights

- **HDI Rank (2023): 130 (from 133 in 2022)**

HDI Value: 0.685 in 2023 (up from 0.676 in 2022)
India remains in the 'medium human development' category but is nearing the high development threshold of 0.700.
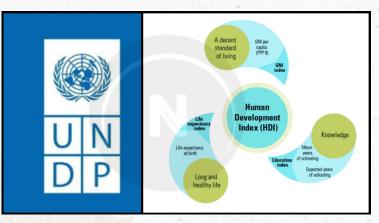
Economic and Social Progress

Gross National Income (GNI) per capita: Increased to $9,046.76 in 2023 (from $2,167.22 in 1990).

Multidimensional Poverty: 135 million people exited poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-21.
Life Expectancy: Improved to 72 years in 2023 (from 58.6 years in 1990), showing resilience post-COVID-19.
Expected Years of Schooling: Rose to 13 years (from 8.2 years in 1990). Despite increased enrollment and years of schooling, learning outcomes and education quality need urgent attention.

Health and Education Interventions

- Progress in social indicators is attributed to key government schemes:
- Health: National Rural Health Mission, Ayushman Bharat, Janani Suraksha Yojana, Poshan Abhiyaan
- Education: Right to Education Act, Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, National Education Policy 2022

Challenges

- Inequality reduces India's HDI by 30.7%, one of the highest losses in the Asia-Pacific region. Despite improvements in access, income, and gender-based disparities remain serious concerns.

On the Rise
RANK IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX 2023

Afghanistan	181
Pakistan	168
Nepal	145
India	130
Bangladesh	130
Bhutan	125
Maldives	93
Sri Lanka	89
Iran	75

Life expectancy highest since 1990

CHANGE IN HDI VALUE AND INDICATORS FOR INDIA

	2022	2023
Rank	133	130
HDI value	0.676	0.685
Life expectancy (years)	71.7	72
Expected years of schooling	12.96	12.95
Mean years of schooling	6.57	6.88
Gross income p.c ($ 2021 PPP)	8475.7	9046.8

Note: Data for South Asia as defined by UNDP
Source: UNDP

Gender Disparities

Low Female Labour Force Participation and under-representation in politics. However, the recent constitutional amendment reserving one-third seats for women in legislatures offers a path to progress.

Q1. About the Human Development Index (HDI) 2023, consider the following statements:

1. HDI is published annually by the United Nations Economic and Social Council.
2. India's HDI value in 2023 was below the threshold of medium human development.
3. Life expectancy in India has increased by more than 10 years since 1990.
4. HDI includes indicators such as life expectancy, gross national income per capita, and mean years of schooling.
5.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 3 and 4 only
C. 2 and 4 only
D. 1, 2 and 3 only

Answer: B

- Statement 1 is incorrect: HDI is released by the UNDP, not the UN Economic and Social Council.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: India is in the 'medium' category (HDI = 0.685), not below it.
- Statement 3 is correct: Life expectancy rose from 58.6 in 1990 to 72 in 2023 (an increase of 13.4 years).

Operation sindoor

- Recently, the Indian Military initiated **OPERATION SINDOOR,** striking terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

ADG PI - INDIAN ARMY ✔ @a... ·9m ⌀ ⋮
#PahalgamTerrorAttack

Justice is Served.

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Jai Hind!

OPERATION

SINDOOR

💬 885   🔁 3.8K   ❤ 7K   �ᴸᴸ 172K   🔖 ⤵

About Operation Sindoor

- India launched Operation Sindoor in the early hours of May 7, 2025, targeting terrorist camps in **Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir (Pok)**.9 terrorist infrastructure sites linked to banned outfits like **Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, and Hizbul Mujahideen** were precisely struck.
- The Indian government clarified that **no Pakistani military installations** were targeted—**only non-state terror elements.**

Highlights of OPERATION SINDOOR

- Target: Nine terror-associated sites were attacked, including the offices of **Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) in Bahawalpur and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in Muridke.**

SITES TARGETED IN OPERATION SINDOOR

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P A K I S T A N

I N D I A

1. Markaz Subhan Allah, Bahawalpur (JeM)
2. Markaz Taiba, Muridke (LeT)
3. Sarjal, Tehra Kalan (JeM)
4. Mehmoona Joya, Sialkot (HM)
5. Masjid Ahle Hadith, Barnala (LeT)
6. Masjid Abbas, Kotli (JeM)
7. Maskar Raheel Shahid, Kotli (HM)
8. Shawai Nalla Camp, Muzaffarabad (LeT)
9. Syedna Bilal Camp, Muzaffarabad (JeM)

- Forces Used: A joint effort by the Indian Army, Indian Navy, and Indian Air Force.
- **Method: Advanced precision strike weapon systems were employed, with attacks launched from Indian territory.**

Nature: The operation was termed "focused, measured, and non-escalatory," with no Pakistani military installations attacked.

Conclusion

- Operation Sindoor marks a significant shift in India's approach to counter-terrorism.

- By targeting terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pok, India has sent a strong message about its resolve to act against terror groups operating on its borders. However, the operation has also led to heightened tensions, with Pakistan responding militarily and claiming civilian casualties.

Global Reactions and Geopolitical Implications

- **International Concern:** The international community has expressed concern over the rising tensions between **India and Pakistan, urging both sides to de-escalate and engage** in dialogue.
- **US and UN Responses:** The United States and the United Nations have urged restraint and called for peace to be maintained in the region.

Q. About Operation Sindoor, launched by India in May 2025, consider the following statements:

1. The operation involved airstrikes launched from both Indian and foreign territories to maximise precision and surprise.
2. Among the targets were the headquarters of banned terror groups located deep within Pakistani territory.
3. The operation marked the first-ever coordinated use of land, naval, and air forces by India for a cross-border anti-terror strike.
4. It was officially categorised by the Indian government as a "non-escalatory" response strictly against non-state actors.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 4 only
C. 1, 3, and 4 only
D. 2, 3, and 4 only

Correct Answer: B. 2 and 4 only

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is incorrect – All strikes were launched from Indian territory only.
- Statement 2 is correct – Targets included deep Pakistani sites like JeM's base in Bahawalpur and LeT's in Muridke.
- Statement 3 is incorrect – While joint force operations have happened before (e.g., Surgical Strikes, Balakot), this was not the first such coordinated use across Army, Navy, and Air Force.
- Statement 4 is correct – The operation was described as "focused, measured, and non-escalatory" and aimed solely at non-state actors.

Civil Defence Mock Drill

- The Ministry of Home Affairs has issued a notification instructing states to conduct mock drills to **Evaluate Civil Defence Preparedness on 7th May 2025.**
- The central government has given the advisory to many states, including Delhi, to conduct thorough mock drills to assess and improve the **civil defence** readiness in the wake of the **Pahalgam Terror Attack** that took place on **22nd April 2025 in Jammu and Kashmir.**
- These **Mock Drills** will help in evaluating the **strengths, weaknesses** and gaps in the current civil defence preparedness.

- A **Civil Defence Mock Drill** is a large-scale, state-supervised emergency response simulation designed to train civilians and officials in responding to **wartime scenarios or disasters like aerial attacks and missile strikes.**
- It involves real-time simulations including blackouts, air raid sirens, camouflage operations, evacuation drills, and public awareness sessions.

- These activities are carried out **under the Civil Defence Rules, 1968,** ensuring systematic civil preparedness across India.
- Mock Drill in India means it is rooted in creating **public readiness and testing the capabilities of emergency response systems**.
- The goal is to mitigate panic, streamline coordination, and protect civilian life in times of war-like emergencies.

Expect During the Mock Drill in India

The mock drill in India on 7 May 2025 will take place across designated Civil Defence Mock Drill districts, covering both urban and rural areas.

According to the MHA's circular, the event is expected to involve:

- Blackout simulations: Lights in specific areas will be switched off to replicate wartime conditions.
- Air raid sirens: Alert systems will be tested through the activation of sirens.
- Evacuation drills: Citizens will be moved from vulnerable zones to safe shelters.

INDIA PREPARES NATIONWIDE CIVIL DEFENCE MOCK DRILL ON MAY 7

- Camouflage exercises: Critical infrastructure such as power grids and communication hubs will undergo concealment training.
- Public awareness campaigns: Training sessions will be conducted in schools, colleges, and community centres.

War Mock Drill Participating Agencies

- The agencies participating in the War Mock Drill to be conducted on 7th May are:
- State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs)
- District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs)
- Firefighting and rescue services
- Police forces
- Departments of health and hospitals
- Transportation departments
- Local administrations and municipalities
- National Disaster Response Force

Objective

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the air raid warning system
- Implement and test hotline and radio communication with the Indian Air Force
- Assess the functioning of control rooms and shadow control rooms
- Train civilians and students in basic civil defence measures
- Deploy immediate crash blackout procedures
- Ensure early camouflage for critical infrastructure and installations
- Confirm the alertness and response of civil defence services, including firefighting and rescue teams

- Test the effectiveness of blackout measures.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Civil Defence Mock Drill held on 7 May 2025:

1. The drill simulated conditions consistent with peacetime natural disasters, excluding wartime scenarios such as aerial or missile attacks.
2. Camouflage and blackout measures tested during the drill align with obligations under India's adherence to the Geneva Conventions on civilian protection.
3. The participation of health departments and local administrations in the drill is governed by provisions under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
4. The drill's objectives include the operational coordination between civil agencies and the Indian Armed Forces during full-spectrum conflict situations.
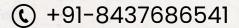
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2, 3, and 4 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 3 and 4 only

Answer: B. 2, 3, and 4 only

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is incorrect because the drill explicitly simulates wartime scenarios, including missile strikes.
- Statement 2 is correct; civil defence measures are expected to comply with international humanitarian law obligations.

- Statement 3 is correct; the Disaster Management Act, 2005, provides the legal framework for such coordinated civil responses.
- Statement 4 is correct; the drill aims to align civil-military coordination during high-conflict conditions.

Question: Civil Defence Mock Drills are no longer mere exercises in emergency response—they reflect a nation's preparedness for hybrid threats." In the context of the 2025 Civil Defence Mock Drill and Operation Sindoor, critically examine how evolving geopolitical tensions and internal threat perceptions are reshaping India's national security and civil preparedness strategies. Also, discuss the limitations and ethical challenges of conducting such large-scale simulations.
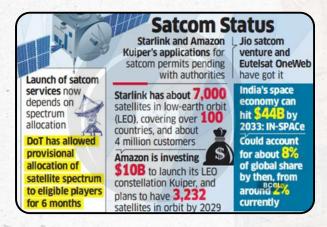
The government amends satellite Internet service rules

- Recently, India's Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has issued stricter security guidelines for satellite communication (satcom) services. It added new conditions related to data localisation, website blocking, metadata collection, and the integration of the indigenous Navic (Navigation with Indian Constellation) positioning system.

Compliance Requirements for Satcom Companies in India

- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has issued a set of security and operational guidelines for satellite communication firms such as Starlink (Elon Musk), Amazon's Kuiper, Eutelsat, OneWeb, and Jio.

Satcom Status

Starlink and Amazon Kuiper's applications for satcom permits pending with authorities | Jio satcom venture and Eutelsat OneWeb have got it

Launch of satcom services now depends on spectrum allocation

DoT has allowed provisional allocation of satellite spectrum to eligible players for 6 months

Starlink has about **7,000** satellites in low-earth orbit (LEO), covering over **100** countries, and about 4 million customers

Amazon is investing **$10B** to launch its LEO constellation Kuiper, and plans to have **3,232** satellites in orbit by 2029

India's space economy can hit **$44B** by 2033: IN-SPACe

Could account for about 8% of global share by then, from around **2%** currently

Requirements

- Local Manufacturing Companies must submit a year-wise phased manufacturing plan, **aiming to indigenise at least 20% of the ground segment within five years** of starting commercial operations.

- Data Localisation
- All satellite communication-related data must be stored within India.
- Domestic Navigation System Integration: Mandatory integration of NavIC, India's regional navigation system, in user terminals on a best-effort basis, with **full transition required by 2029.**
- Website Blocking Mechanism: Firms must enable systems to block government-identified websites.
- **Cooperation with Law Enforcement** Companies is required to collect and share metadata with security agencies when requested.

National Security and Law Enforcement Cooperation

- Service Restrictions During Emergencies Companies must be capable of restricting services to individuals, subscriber groups, or regions during periods of hostilities or national emergencies.

Special Monitoring Zones (SMZs): Designated zones include areas within 50 km of international borders and coastal regions up to the **Exclusive Economic Zone (200 nautical** miles). These zones will be monitored by law enforcement and security agencies.

Real-Time User Terminal Tracking: Operators must provide real-time location data (latitude-longitude) of all user terminals, both fixed and mobile, upon request.
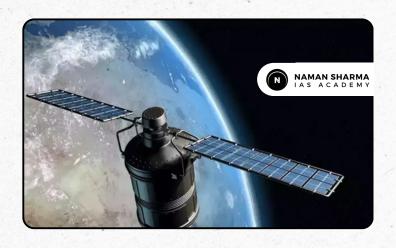
They must also report foreign or unregistered terminals connecting from within Indian territory.

Current Regulatory

- Starlink is currently undergoing security clearance to begin operations in India.
- It has already formed retail partnerships with Airtel and Jio.
- The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is finalising the satellite spectrum allocation framework, which will impact how these companies operate.

Question. Concerning the recent amendments by India's Department of Telecommunications (DoT) regarding satellite Internet services, consider the following statements:

1. Satellite communication firms must ensure integration of the NavIC navigation system in user terminals, with immediate mandatory compliance.
2. The guidelines mandate real-time location tracking of only mobile user terminals in areas within 50 km of international borders.
3. Companies must submit a phased plan to indigenise a minimum of 20% of the satellite payload within five years.
4. Satellite firms are required to implement mechanisms for blocking websites as identified by the Indian government.

1. localisation norms.
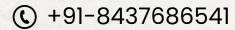2.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1, 3, and 4 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 4 and 5 only
D. 1, 2, and 5 only

Answer: C. 4 and 5 only

Explanation:

- Statement 1: Incorrect — Integration of NavIC is on a best-effort basis for now, with mandatory compliance by 2029.
- Statement 2: Incorrect — Real-time tracking applies to both fixed and mobile terminals, and not restricted to border zones.
- Statement 3: Incorrect — The 20% indigenisation target is for the ground segment, not the satellite payload.Statement 4: Correct — Website blocking mechanism for government-identified sites is mandatory.
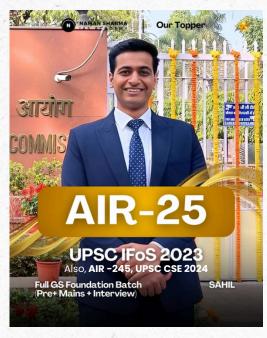- Statement 5: Correct — Full data localisation within India is mandated.

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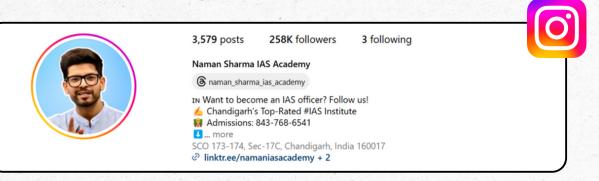**Kirti Sharma**
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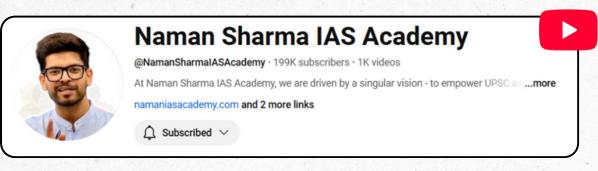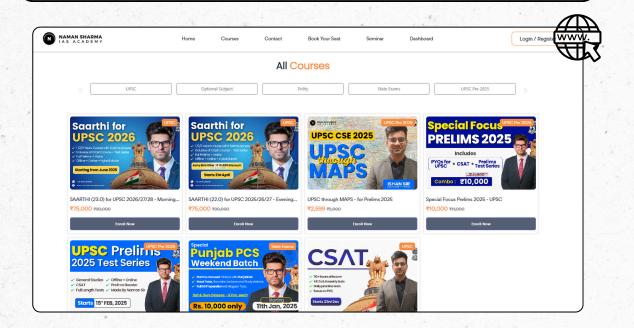AIR-231, CSE 2020

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