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Index

India's AMCA Stealth Fighter Jet: A New Dawn in Indigenous Airpower

Why It Is in the News

- India's ambition to join the elite club of nations fielding fifth-generation fighter aircraft received a significant boost when Defence Minister Rajnath Singh approved the execution model of the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) programme.
- This long-anticipated move officially sets in motion the country's most sophisticated indigenous military aviation initiative to date.
- Backed by a budget exceeding ₹15,000 crore and a vision to deliver operational capability by 2035, the AMCA marks India's definitive leap into stealth-era air combat.

Background: From Light Fighters to Stealth Machines

- India's journey toward a fifth-generation fighter aircraft began with its experience in the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas programme.
- While the LCA helped establish indigenous competence in jet design and avionics integration, the AMCA project is an evolutionary jump rather than a linear progression.
- Approved in principle by the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) in early 2024, the AMCA builds upon decades of experience gathered by institutions like the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- In contrast to the LCA Mk I/II, which were fourth-generation aircraft with limited stealth and performance envelopes, AMCA aims to match or rival cutting-edge platforms like the F-35 (USA), Sukhoi Su-57 (Russia), and Chengdu J-20 (China).

Key Features and Capabilities

The AMCA is envisioned as a twin-engine, stealth-capable, multi-role fighter optimised for air superiority, deep-strike, and electronic warfare. Here are the standout features:
Stealth Design and Reduced Radar Signature

- Internal weapons bay to avoid external radar reflections
- Special radar-absorbent material (RAM) coating
- Angular, faceted surfaces for radar deflection.

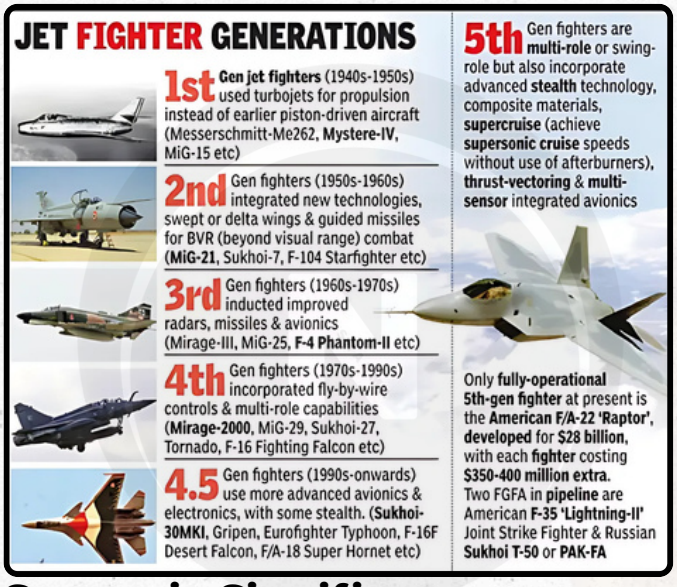
Advanced Digital Architecture

- **Sensor Fusion:** Integrated display of radar, infrared, and electronic intelligence
- **AI-Driven Electronic Pilot:** Decision-aid systems for reduced pilot workload
- **Integrated Vehicle Health Monitoring (IVHM):** Predictive diagnostics and real-time maintenance updates

High Survivability and Combat Efficiency

- **Supercruise Capability:** Sustained supersonic flight without afterburners
- **Net-Centric Warfare Suite:** Seamless coordination with UAVs, AWACS, and ground stations
- **Internal Weapon Load:** Up to 1,500 kg of long-range air-to-air missiles and smart munitions
- **Internal Fuel Capacity:** 6.5 tonnes for enhanced combat radius

With these specifications, AMCA will offer deep-penetration strike ability, rapid engagement, and survivability in contested airspace.



Strategic Significance

The AMCA is not just another military project-it's a strategic enabler for India's broader objectives:

- **Atmanirbhar Bharat in Defence:** Reduces reliance on foreign fighters like Rafale, Su-30 MKI upgrades, or F-21 deals
- **Aerospace Ecosystem Development:** Encourages public-private partnerships and boosts the domestic manufacturing base
- **Force Multiplication:** Operates alongside Tejas Mk II, Su-30MKI, and Rafale to create a potent multi-layered air combat grid
- **Geopolitical Signalling:** Positions India as a technologically advanced power with indigenous stealth capability

Comparison with Global Fifth-Gen Fighters

Parameter	Amca	F-35(USA)	SU-75	J-20
Engine	twin	Single	Twin	Twin
Stealth Level	High	Very high	Moderate	High
Supercruise	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Avionics	Sensor Fusion, AI	Advanced	Mixed	Advanced
Combat	Multi role	Multi role	Air superiority + EW	Air

While the AMCA may initially fall short of the F-35's scale or the J-20's deployment numbers, its design philosophy aligns well with India's unique strategic and economic needs. Its compact, stealth-optimised design makes it suitable for operations over diverse terrains-from the Himalayas to the Indian Ocean.

Challenges Ahead

Engine Development

- India currently lacks a powerful, stealth-compatible jet engine. The indigenous Kaveri engine was shelved due to performance shortfalls.
- As of now, A joint venture with a foreign OEM (potentially Safran, Rolls-Royce, or GE) is being explored. The required engine must deliver high thrust, low infrared signature, and high reliability.

Timeline Pressure

- With the prototype delivery aimed for 2035, the AMCA faces a tight 10-year development windowPrevious delays in Tejas serve as a cautionary tale; timely component development and vendor integration are critical.

Industrial Collaboration

- Ensuring synergy between ADA, DRDO, HAL, and private sector players like L&T, Tata Advanced Systems, and Bharat Forge is crucial. Supply-chain bottlenecks and technology transfer hurdles could pose a delay.

Way Forward

- Strategic Partnerships for Engine and Avionics
- Fast-tracking negotiations with global OEMs for engine and radar technologies
- Ensuring technology transfer clauses that support future indigenous upgrades
- Strengthening Private Industry Role
- Opening up AMCA production under a public-private partnership (PPP) model
- Establishing Tier-1 and Tier-2 vendor ecosystems for components like composite airframes, AESA radars, and avionics modules
- Dedicated Budget and Oversight
- Ensuring the timely allocation of the ₹15,000+ crore development budget
- Appointing a single-point programme management office for progress tracking and issue resolution

Human Capital and Skill Development

- Training engineers, designers, and pilots for the fifth-generation platform handling
- Involving IAF test pilots from the early stages for continuous feedback

Conclusion: A Flight Path Toward Sovereign Airpower

The AMCA is more than a fighter jet- it represents India's coming-of-age moment in military aviation. It is a product of strategic necessity, technological ambition, and national pride. If executed efficiently, it could make India only the fourth nation after the US, Russia, and China to field a fifth-generation stealth aircraft developed largely in-house. By 2035, as the Indian Air Force retires legacy platforms like MiG-21s and upgrades its Rafale-Su-30 mix, the AMCA will be poised to become the crown jewel of Indian airpower, symbolising a bold, self-reliant future in the face of evolving regional threats and technological frontiers.

The Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) programme represents a generational leap in India's military aviation capabilities, reflecting both strategic autonomy and technological ambition." Critically examine the key features, strategic significance, and institutional challenges of the AMCA project. How does it align with the objectives of Atmanirbhar Bharat and future-proofing India's airpower?
(250 words)

Question: About India's Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) project, consider the following statements:

1. The AMCA is designed to operate solely in air-superiority missions and lacks deep-strike or electronic warfare capabilities.
2. Unlike the Tejas Mk I/II, the AMCA is a twin-engine aircraft with supercruise capability and an internal weapons bay.
3. The current indigenous engine development programme for the AMCA is spearheaded by HAL using a modified version of the Kaveri engine.

4. The AMCA programme is aimed to be executed under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model involving both Tier-1 and Tier-2 suppliers.

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

Correct Answer: A. 2 and 4 only

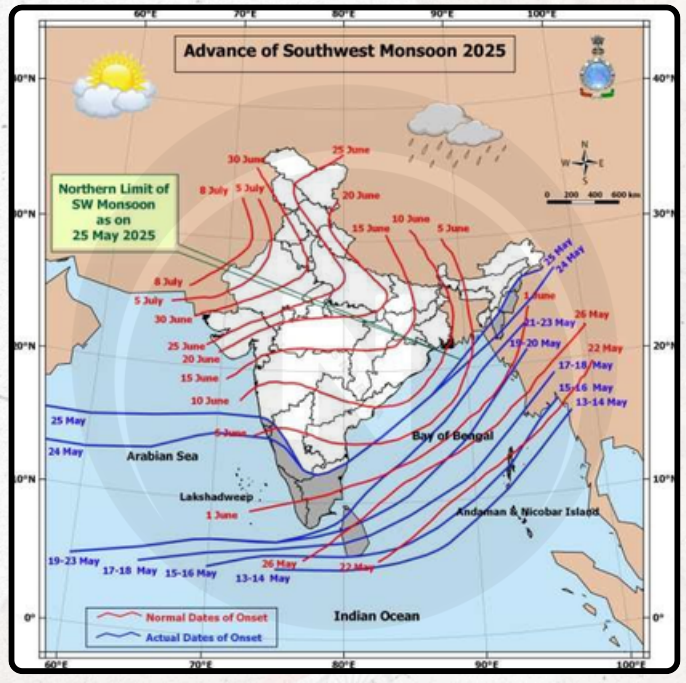
Explanation:

- **Statement 1 Incorrect:** AMCA is a multi-role fighter designed for air superiority, deep-strike, and electronic warfare, not solely air superiority.
- **Statement 2 Correct:** AMCA is twin-engine, has supercruise, and features an internal weapons bay for stealth.
- **Statement 3 Incorrect:** The Kaveri engine has been shelved. Current plans involve a foreign joint venture (e.g., with Safran, Rolls-Royce, or GE) for a new stealth-compatible engine, not HAL's modified Kaveri.
- **Statement 4 Correct:** The AMCA programme is envisioned under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) with a vendor ecosystem, including Tier-1 and Tier-2 suppliers like Tata, L&T, and Bharat Forge

What caused an 'early' monsoon onset in India this year?

Why It Is in the News

- In a significant meteorological development, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) declared the onset of the 2024 southwest monsoon over Kerala on May 24, eight days ahead of its typical arrival on June 1.
- This marks one of the earliest monsoon arrivals in over a decade last such early onset was recorded on May 23, 2009.
- This premature onset is not just a climatological curiosity; it has vast implications for India's agriculture, water security, power generation, and economic stability, given that the monsoon accounts for over 70% of India's annual rainfall.



Background: The Lifecycle and Importance of the Monsoon

The southwest monsoon is the lifeline of India's agrarian economy. It typically spans from June to September, impacting nearly every sector from agriculture and irrigation to hydroelectricity, rural livelihoods, and inflation management. The IMD's declaration of monsoon onset is a closely watched event, given its importance in crop sowing cycles, reservoir levels, and rural employment programs like MGNREGA.

The southwest monsoon's mechanism involves:

- Oceanic heating, especially over the Indian Ocean
- Shift of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) northward
- Formation of low-pressure systems and monsoon troughs
- Cross-equatorial winds such as the Somali Jet
- Support from high-pressure systems like the Mascarene High

Given India's dependence on a timely and well-distributed monsoon, any anomaly—early or delayed- can have widespread ramifications.

Monsoon Onset: Criteria and IMD Protocols

- The declaration of monsoon onset over Kerala is governed by a rigorous set of meteorological criteria designed by the IMD to ensure objectivity and accuracy. These criteria include:

Rainfall

- At least 60% of the 14 designated meteorological stations in southern India (including Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Mangalore, etc.) must report ≥2.5 mm of rainfall for two consecutive days.

Wind Field

- Westerly winds must dominate up to the 600 hPa pressure level.
- Wind speed at 925 hPa must be between 15–20 knots (27–37 km/h).
- Outgoing Longwave Radiation (OLR)
- OLR must be <200 W/m², signifying enhanced cloud cover and atmospheric instability—a necessary condition for sustained monsoon activity.
- Once these conditions are fulfilled and persist for at least two days, the IMD officially declares the monsoon onset.

This Year's Onset: A Simultaneous Entry

The 2024 monsoon onset not only occurred early but also covered a broader spatial zone than usual. It simultaneously entered:

- Kerala
- Lakshadweep
- Mahe (Puducherry enclave)
- Southern Karnataka
- Parts of Mizoram
- Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal coastal zones

Such a multi-front entry is rare and suggests strong convective and wind conditions pushing the monsoon both westward and eastward across southern India.

Factors Behind the Early Onset

Several oceanic and atmospheric factors came together in 2024 to accelerate the southwest monsoon. These include:

Low-Pressure System over the Arabian Sea

A pre-monsoon low-pressure area formed in the eastern Arabian Sea, near the Kerala coast. It increased moisture convergence and convective activity, creating favourable conditions for early rainfall.

Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO)

- The MJO, a travelling pulse of cloud and rainfall, was in a favourable phase over the Indian Ocean during late May.
- This phase amplifies rainfall, convection, and low-pressure systems, thus facilitating the monsoon's advancement.

Heat-Low over Pakistan-NW India

- The rapid heating of the Thar Desert and adjoining regions in April-May created a heat-low system, which acts as a vacuum, drawing moist air from the ocean and accelerating monsoon onset.

Enhanced Convective Activity

- Strong vertical movement of moisture and heat (convection) was observed across peninsular India and the Bay of Bengal, creating cloud formation and early precipitation, which met the IMD's onset conditions.

Key Features of This Year's Monsoon Onset

- Early Entry: Arrived on May 24 instead of June 1
- Wide Coverage: Onset observed over multiple states and seas
- Strong Initial Surge: Marked by significant rain events in southern India
- Moisture Convergence: Indicative of active monsoon dynamics
- Warm SSTs: Sea Surface Temperatures in the Arabian Sea were above normal, aiding convection

Challenges Posed by Early Monsoon

While an early onset is often celebrated as a positive development, it presents several operational and strategic challenges:

Uneven Rainfall Distribution

- Early monsoon does not guarantee uniform rainfall. A strong onset can be followed by prolonged dry spells, impacting sowing and crop yield.

Agricultural Mismatch

- Farmers may begin sowing early, but a break in the monsoon due to delayed progression can lead to crop failure. Early monsoons require real-time advisories and agronomic support.

Flood Risks

- Sudden and intense rainfall events linked to early monsoon surges may flood low-lying urban areas, especially in Kerala, Karnataka, and coastal Andhra Pradesh.
- Reservoir Management: Premature water inflow can overflow reservoirs if not managed wisely. Reservoirs need dynamic water release protocols to ensure adequate storage for dry months.
- Monsoon Breaks and Lulls: An early onset increases the chance of a mid-June lull, a phenomenon where the monsoon pauses after an initial surge. This can affect critical kharif sowing windows.
- Forecasting Errors: Early onsets test the accuracy and reliability of monsoon forecasting models, often leading to divergent projections on total rainfall and distribution.

Broader Implications for India

- India's monsoon variability has been increasing in recent years. Events like delayed withdrawals, early onsets, extended breaks, and extreme rainfall events point to a changing climate regime:
- **Agricultural Dependency:** Over 60% of India's net sown area is rain-fed, making the timing and distribution of rainfall crucial.
- **Food Security:** Erratic rainfall affects paddy, pulses, cotton, and oilseed productionstaples of India's food system.
- **Energy Security:** Hydropower accounts for over 13% of India's power; its performance depends on monsoon-fed reservoirs.
- **Urban Resilience:** Cities like Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Chennai are vulnerable to flash floods, overwhelming urban drainage systems.
- **Health:** Waterlogging and vector breeding due to premature rains increase the risk of malaria, dengue, and cholera outbreaks.

Climate Change and Monsoon Behaviour

According to IPCC reports and Indian climate assessments, climate change is altering the spatial and temporal characteristics of the Indian monsoon. Key trends include:

- Increase in extreme rainfall events
- Shorter duration but more intense spells
- Shifts in onset and withdrawal timings
- Changing wind patterns and sea temperatures

The Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal are warming faster than other tropical oceans, leading to more frequent cyclogenesis and irregular monsoon onset trajectories.

Way Forward: Strengthening India's Monsoon Preparedness

- To mitigate the adverse effects and capitalise on the early onset, a multi-sectoral approach is required:

Agro-Advisory Services

- Real-time crop planning advisories via Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs)
- Promote climate-resilient crop varieties and short-duration cultivars

Improved Forecasting Models

- Integration of high-resolution satellite data, AI, and machine learning
- Regional monsoon modelling to provide district-level forecasts

Reservoir Management Systems

- Use of Decision Support Systems (DSS) for real-time reservoir operation
- Inter-agency coordination between IMD, CWC, and State Irrigation Departments

Urban Flood Preparedness

- Strengthen early warning systems, stormwater management, and sewage infrastructure.
- Adopt blue-green infrastructure to manage excess runoff

Institutional Reforms

- Empower State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) to handle climate-induced monsoon variation.s
- Train local-level institutions like Panchayats and Municipal Bodies in weather literacy.

Conclusion

The early arrival of the 2024 southwest monsoon over Kerala marks both an opportunity and a warning. On the one hand, it may bring early agricultural benefits, replenish reservoirs, and reduce heatwave impacts. On the other hand, it demands enhanced preparedness, smart agricultural practices, and robust climate infrastructure.

As India contends with the realities of climate-induced monsoon variability, events like this early onset should be seen as wake-up calls, urging us to reimagine weather governance, agricultural policy, and climate resilience in a rapidly changing environment.

Discuss the meteorological and oceanic conditions that led to the early onset of the 2024 southwest monsoon in India. In what ways can such anomalies impact agriculture, economy, and climate preparedness in the country? **(250 words)**

Q. Which of the following best explains why the early onset of the southwest monsoon in 2024, despite appearing advantageous, may not necessarily result in agricultural or economic gains unless followed by complementary atmospheric conditions?

A. Early monsoon onset reduces the formation of the Mascarene High, weakening subsequent rainfall patterns.

B. An early onset often leads to a "monsoon trap," where rainfall peaks early but is followed by prolonged dry spells, disrupting crop cycles and water management.

C. The simultaneous onset over multiple regions causes excessive rainfall throughout the season, leading to a uniform flood threat across India.

D. Early monsoon onset disturbs the Madden-Julian Oscillation cycle, preventing cloud formation in the Bay of Bengal and affecting eastern India's rainfall.

Answer: B. An early onset often leads to a "monsoon trap," where rainfall peaks early but is followed by prolonged dry spells, disrupting crop cycles and water management.

Panchayat Advancement Index

Why is it in the news?

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj recently organised a two-day national write-shop in New Delhi to officially roll out the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) Version 2.0 for the financial year 2023-24. This new version aims to better assess and support the holistic development of Panchayats across India, advancing the localisation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Background

What is the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI)?

- The PAI is a comprehensive multi-domain and multi-sectoral index designed to assess the overall development, performance, and progress of Panchayats (village-level local self-government institutions).
- **Purpose:** To track and measure how Panchayats contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) locally by evaluating socio-economic indicators that reflect the well-being and development of their communities.
- **Previous Version:** PAI 1.0, launched earlier, served as the baseline index covering 2.16 lakh Gram Panchayats across 29 states and union territories.

Features of PAI Version 2.0

- **Improved Framework:** PAI 2.0 is a significant upgrade from Version 1.0, with sharper and more practical indicators that enhance usability, reliability, and efficiency.
- **Indicators and Data Points:** The index uses 435 unique local indicators (331 mandatory and 104 optional) comprising 566 unique data points across 9 themes aligned with the National Indicator Framework (NIF) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
- **Themes:** These themes relate to the localisation of SDGs and cover diverse socio-economic dimensions impacting Panchayats.
- Classification of Panchayats:

Based on their scores, Gram Panchayats are categorised as:

- **Achiever:** 90+
- **Front Runner:** 75 to below 90
- **Performer:** 60 to below 75
- **Aspirant:** 40 to below 60
- **Beginners:** below 40
- **Evidence-based Planning:** By identifying development gaps and strengths through these scores, Panchayats can adopt evidence-based planning to prioritise interventions.

Challenges

- **Data Collection & Quality:** Collecting reliable and timely data from grassroots Panchayats can be difficult due to varying capacities and infrastructure.

- **Capacity Building:** Panchayat-level officials may need training to understand and use the index effectively for planning and implementation.

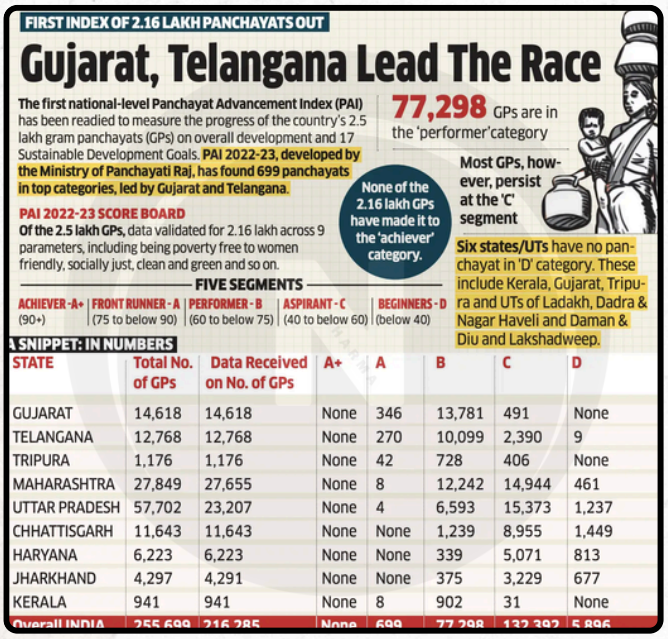
- **Harmonising Indicators:** Ensuring that the selected indicators comprehensively cover local needs while remaining aligned with national frameworks requires continuous refinement.
- **Technology and Accessibility:** Ensuring that the index platform is accessible and user-friendly across diverse geographies with differing levels of digital penetration.

Way Forward

- **Capacity Strengthening:** The Ministry will likely focus on training Panchayat representatives to interpret PAI scores and integrate findings into local development plans.
- **Continuous Refinement:** Regular updates to the index to include emerging local priorities and improve indicator relevance.
- **Integration with SDG Monitoring:** Using PAI as a critical tool for real-time monitoring and feedback to track India's progress towards the SDG 2030 agenda at the grassroots level.
- **Incentivising Panchayats:** Encouraging higher performance through recognition, funding, and technical support for top-performing Panchayats.
- **Collaborative Approach:** Involving state governments, local bodies, and civil society for data validation and localised problem-solving.

Which of the following statements about the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) Version 2.0 is CORRECT?
A) PAI Version 2.0 uses fewer indicators than Version 1.0 to simplify data collection.
B) The index categorises Gram Panchayats into five performance groups based on their scores.
C) PAI Version 2.0 focuses solely on the financial performance of Panchayats.
D) The index is not aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Answer: B) The index categorises Gram Panchayats into five performance groups based on their scores.



FIRST INDEX OF 2.16 LAKH PANCHAYATS OUT

Gujarat, Telangana Lead The Race

The first national-level Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) has been readied to measure the progress of the country's 2.5 lakh gram panchayats (GPs) on overall development and 17 Sustainable Development Goals. **PAI 2022-23, developed by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, has found 699 panchayats in top categories, led by Gujarat and Telangana.**

77,298 GPs are in the 'performer' category

Most GPs, however, persist at the 'C' segment

None of the 2.16 lakh GPs have made it to the 'achiever' category.

PAI 2022-23 SCORE BOARD

Of the 2.5 lakh GPs, data validated for 2.16 lakh across 9 parameters, including being poverty free to women friendly, socially just, clean and green and so on.

FIVE SEGMENTS

ACHIEVER - A+ (90+)	FRONT RUNNER - A (75 to below 90)	PERFORMER - B (60 to below 75)	ASPIRANT - C (40 to below 60)	BEGINNERS - D (below 40)

Six states/UTs have no panchayat in 'D' category. These include Kerala, Gujarat, Tripura and UTs of Ladakh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu and Lakshadweep.

SNIPPET: IN NUMBERS

STATE	Total No. of GPs	Data Received on No. of GPs	A+	A	B	C	D
GUJARAT	14,618	14,618	None	346	13,781	491	None
TELANGANA	12,768	12,768	None	270	10,099	2,390	9
TRIPURA	1,176	1,176	None	42	728	406	None
MAHARASHTRA	27,849	27,655	None	8	12,242	14,944	461
UTTAR PRADESH	57,702	23,207	None	4	6,593	15,373	1,237
CHHATTISGARH	11,643	11,643	None	None	1,239	8,955	1,449
HARYANA	6,223	6,223	None	None	339	5,071	813
JHARKHAND	4,297	4,291	None	None	375	3,229	677
KERALA	941	941	None	8	902	31	None
Overall INDIA	255 699	216 285	None	699	77 298	132 392	5 896

Mt. Khangchendzonga: Sikkim Seeks Ban on Mountaineering to Preserve Sacred Peak

Why is it in the news?

The Chief Minister of Sikkim has recently urged the Government of India to declare Mt. Khangchendzonga, the world's third-highest peak and a sacred mountain for the local people, off-limits to mountaineers. This move aims to respect its cultural and religious significance and preserve its pristine environment.

Background

- Mt. Khangchendzonga, also spelt Kanchenjunga, is the highest peak in India and the third-highest in the world after Everest and K2.
- It is located in the eastern Himalayas, straddling the border between Sikkim (India) and eastern Nepal.
- The peak rises to 8,586 meters (28,169 feet) and forms part of the Great Himalaya Range.
- The name means "Five Treasuries of the Great Snow," referring to its five distinct summits.
- The mountain is surrounded by four glaciers and lies adjacent to Khangchendzonga National Park, a biodiversity hotspot.
- The first successful ascent was made in 1955 by a British expedition led by Charles Evans.

Feature

- Mt. Khangchendzonga is not only a natural landmark but also holds immense cultural and religious significance for the people of Sikkim.
- The mountain's five summits and surrounding glaciers are key geographical features.
- It is part of a protected area that sustains diverse flora and fauna, including rare species.
- Climatic conditions include heavy summer snowfall and lighter winter snow, which shape the region's ecology.

Challenge

- Mountaineering expeditions have raised concerns over the environmental impact and disturbance to sacred traditions.
- Balancing tourism, adventure sports, and cultural sensitivity remains difficult.
- Preservation of the fragile mountain ecosystem is threatened by increased human activity.
- Ensuring the livelihood of local communities while respecting their spiritual beliefs poses governance challenges.

Way Forward

- The Centre could officially ban mountaineering activities on Mt. Khangchendzonga to safeguard its sanctity and environment.
- Strengthening conservation efforts within the Khangchendzonga National Park region.
- Promoting eco-tourism and cultural tourism that respects local traditions and protects natural resources.
- Involving local communities in decision-making and management to align development with cultural preservation.
- Encouraging research and monitoring to better understand and mitigate human impact on the mountain ecosystem.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Mt. Khangchendzonga:

1. It is located entirely within Indian territory and lies adjacent to the Kaziranga National Park.
2. The mountain is considered sacred and holds religious significance for the people of Sikkim.
3. The first successful ascent was made by an Indo-British expedition in 1955 led by Tenzing Norgay.
4. It is part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site recognised for both its natural and cultural value.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

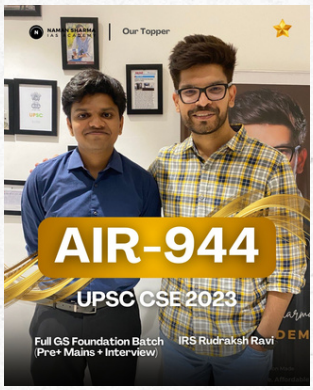
A. 2 and 4 only
B. 1, 2, and 3 only
C. 2, 3, and 4 only
D. 1 and 4 only

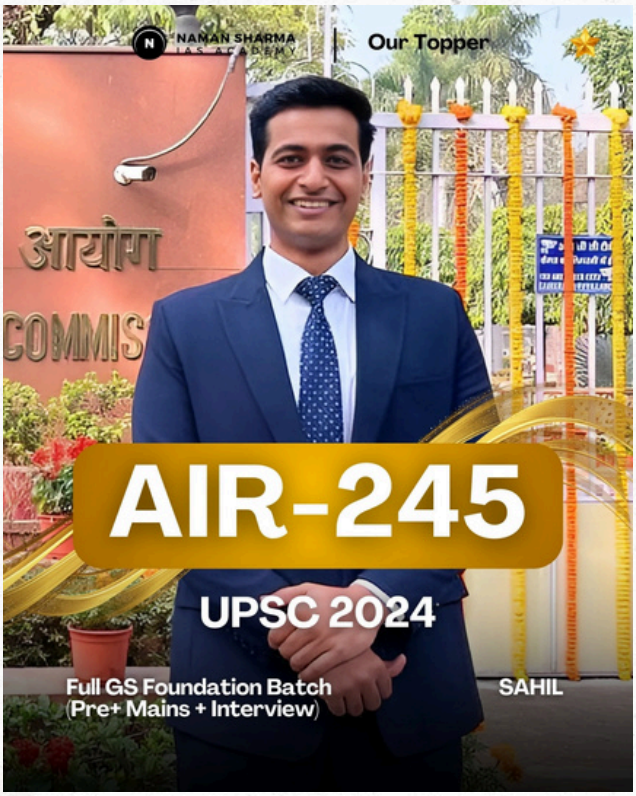
Correct Answer: A. 2 and 4 only

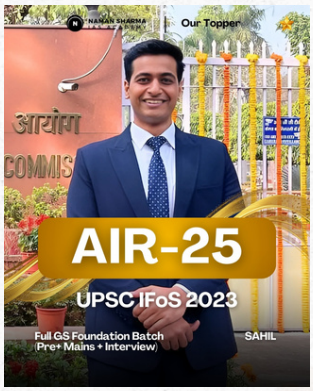
Explanation:

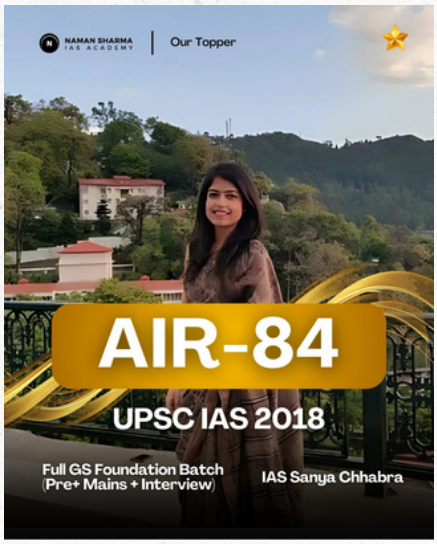
- **Statement 1 Incorrect:** Mt. Khangchendzonga straddles the border between India (Sikkim) and Nepal, and Kaziranga is in Assam, not near the peak.
- **Statement 2 Correct:** The mountain is sacred to the people of Sikkim and is deeply embedded in local culture and beliefs.
- **Statement 3 Incorrect:** The first ascent was by a British expedition in 1955, led by Charles Evans, not by Tenzing Norgay.
- **Statement 4 Correct:** The Khangchendzonga National Park, which surrounds the mountain, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site for both natural and cultural significance.

Our Recent Toppers









Vipan Kumar
AIR-4, HPAS 2022

Anshul Shandil
AIR-7, HPPCS 2019

Arshiya Sharma
AIR-3, HPPCS 2019

Kirti Sharma
AIR-35, PCS 2021

IPS Vineet Ahlawat
AIR-231, CSE 2020

SDM Himani Sharma
AIR-2, HPAS 2024

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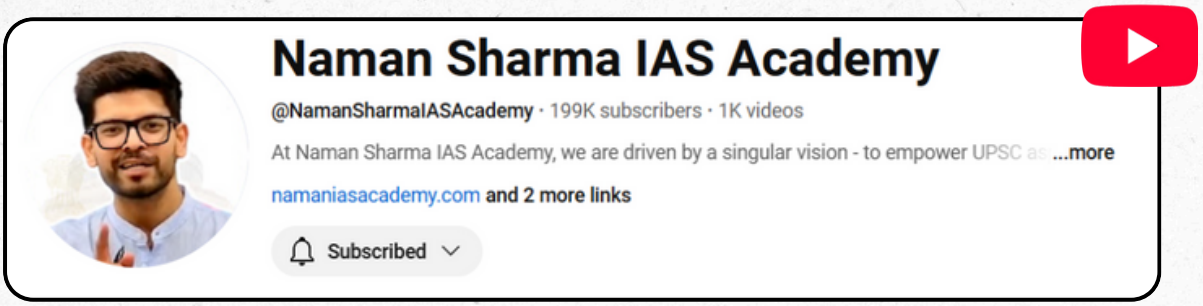

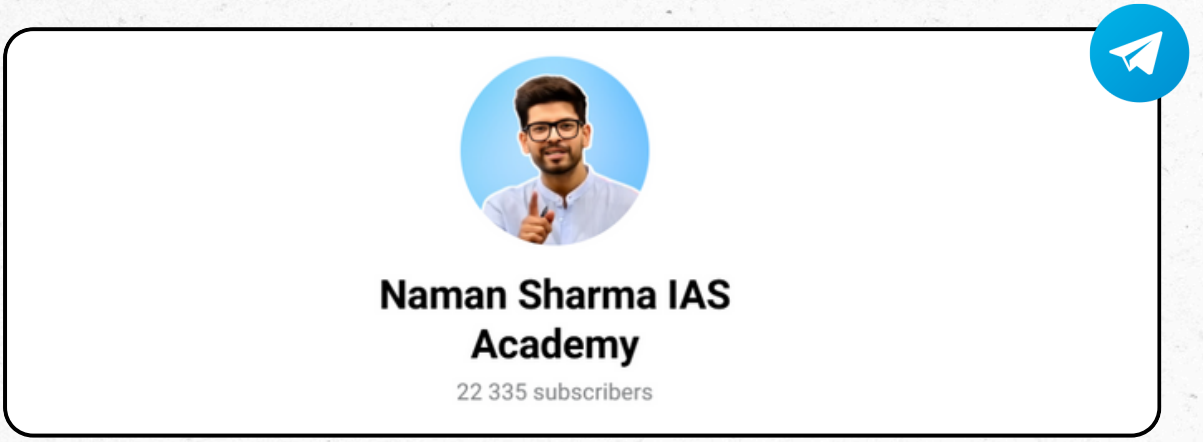

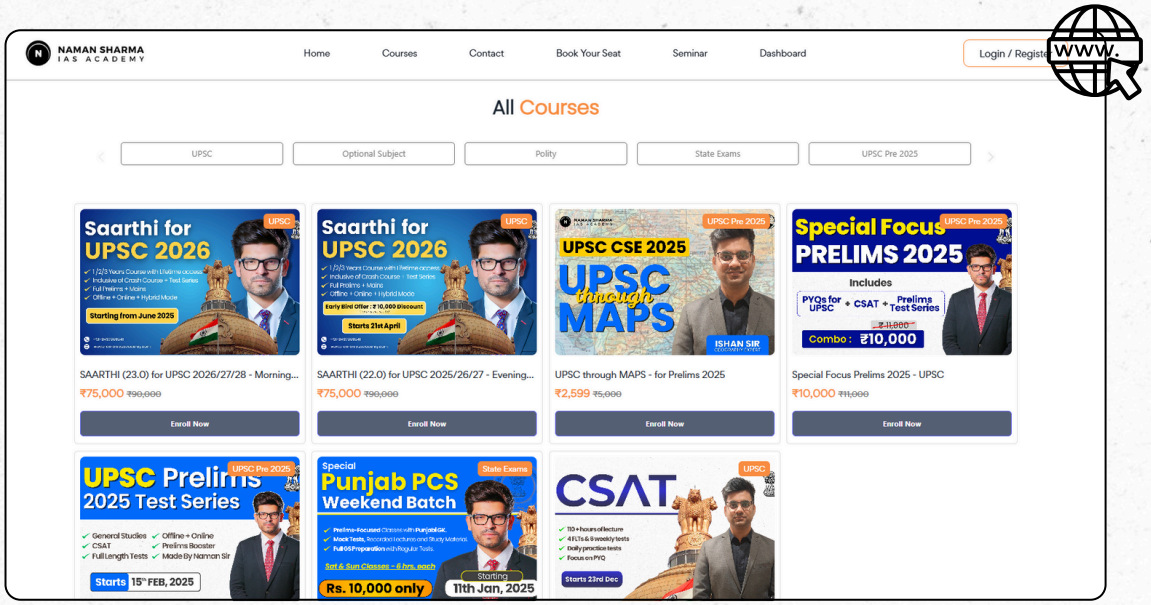

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