



National Health Account (NHA) Estimates 2020-21 and 2021-22

For Prelims: [National Health Account \(NHA\)](#), [Covid-19 pandemic](#), [Out-of-Pocket Expenditure \(OOPE\)](#), [National Health Accounts Guidelines for India, 2016](#), [National Health Mission](#), [Ayushman Bharat](#), [Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana \(AB-PMJAY\)](#), [National Medical Commission](#), [PM National Dialysis Programme](#), [Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram \(JSSK\)](#), [Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram \(RBSK\)](#)

For Mains: Various initiatives taken by the government in Healthcare.

[Source: PIB](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the **Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** has released the [National Health Account \(NHA\)](#) estimates for the **fiscal years 2020-21 and 2021-22**.

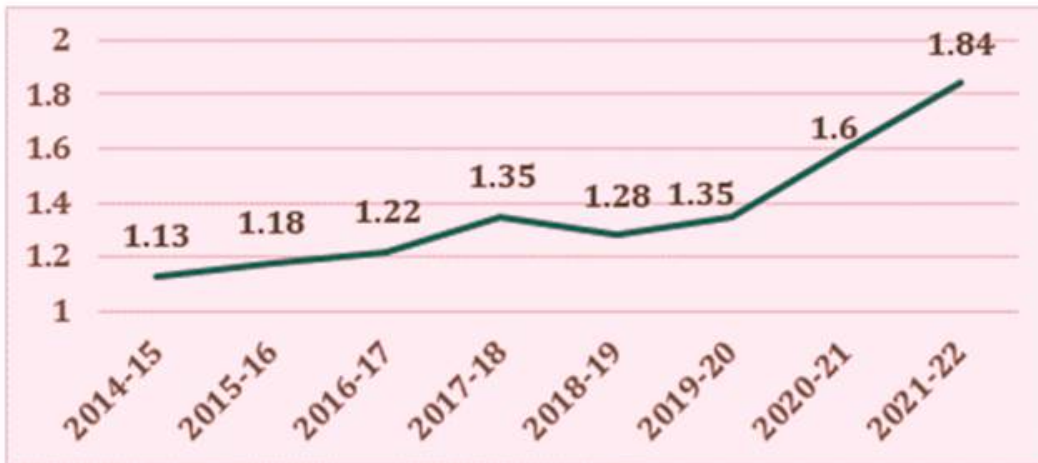
- These reports are the **eighth and ninth editions of the NHA series**, offering a comprehensive overview of the country's healthcare expenditure.

What are the Key Findings of NHA Estimates for 2020-21 and 2021-22?

- **Rising Government Health Expenditure (GHE):** The share of **GHE** in [GDP](#) rose from **1.13% in 2014-15 to 1.84% in 2021-22**.
 - The share of GHE in **General Government Expenditure (GGE)** increased from **3.94% in 2014-15 to 6.12% in 2021-22**.
 - This growth reflects the government's commitment to enhancing public healthcare services, particularly in response to the [Covid-19 pandemic](#).

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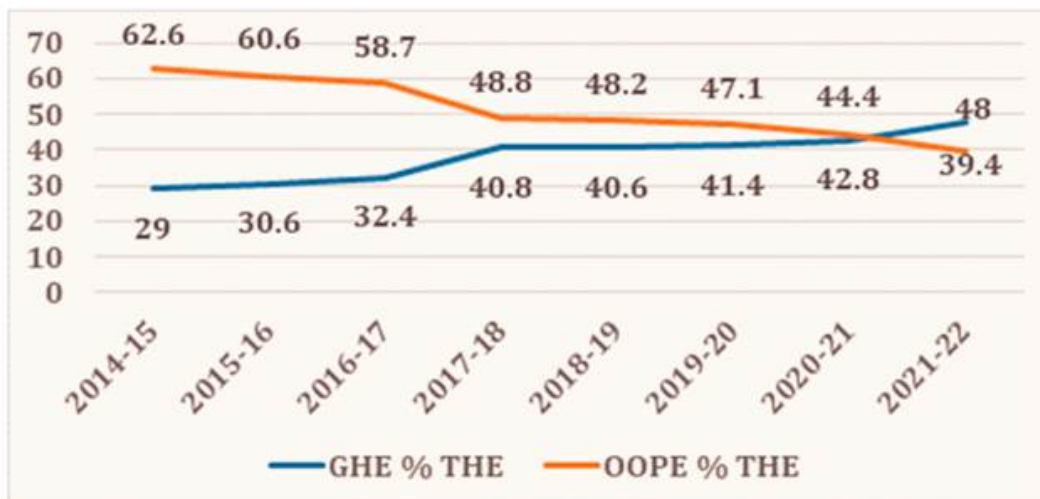
Government Health Expenditure (GHE) as % of GDP



Decline in Out-of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE):

- From 2014-15 to 2021-22, the share of **OOPE** in **Total Health Expenditure (THE)** decreased from **62.6% to 39.4%**.
- This reduction is attributed to government efforts to increase public health spending and improve access to healthcare, thereby reducing financial strain on individuals.
- The government's share in **Total Health Expenditure (THE)** rose from **29% in 2014-15 to 48% in 2021-22**.
 - This shift indicates **greater reliance on public health services** and a decreased financial burden on citizens.
- The increase in **GHE** reflects the focus on strengthening healthcare infrastructure and enhancing financial protection for individuals.

Government Health Expenditure (GHE) and Out-Of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE) as % of Total Health Expenditure (THE)



Increased Share of Government Health Expenditure in Total Health Expenditure (THE):

- The government's share in **THE** increased from **29% in 2014-15 to 48% in 2021-22**.
 - There has been a reduction in the financial burden on citizens.
 - The rise in Government Health Expenditure (**GHE**) indicates improved access to medical

services and enhanced financial protection for individuals.

- **Total Health Expenditure:**
 - India's THE was estimated at Rs. 7,39,327 crores, **representing 3.73% of the GDP, with** per capita spending of Rs. 5,436 in 2020-21.
 - India's Total Health Expenditure rose to Rs. 9,04,461 crores, **constituting 3.83% of GDP, with a per capita expenditure of Rs. 6,602 in 2021-22.**
- **Growth in Social Security Expenditure (SSE) on Health:** There has been a positive trend in [Social Security Expenditure \(SSE\)](#) in the country's health financing.
 - The **share of SSE in Total Health Expenditure rose from 5.7% in 2014-15 to 8.7% in 2021-22.**
 - This includes government-funded health insurance, medical reimbursements for government employees, and social health insurance programs.
 - Increased SSE directly reduces out-of-pocket payments for healthcare.
 - A strong social security mechanism helps prevent financial hardship and poverty when accessing essential health services.
- **Distribution of Current Health Expenditure:**
 - In 2020-21, the **Union Government's share of Current Health Expenditure (CHE)** was Rs. 81,772 crores (**12.33% of CHE**) and **state governments** contributed Rs. 1,38,944 crores (**20.94% of CHE**).
 - By 2021-22, the Union Government's CHE share increased to Rs. 1,25,854 crores (15.94%) and State contributions rose to Rs. 1,71,952 crores (21.77%).

What are National Health Accounts?

- NHA estimates are based on the **globally recognized System of Health Accounts (SHA) framework, established in 2011 by the World Health Organization.**
- This framework allows for inter-country comparisons by providing a **standardised method to track and report healthcare expenditures.**
- The NHA details financial flows within **India's health system**, showing how funds are collected, spent across the healthcare sector, and utilised for healthcare services.
- India's NHA estimates follow the [National Health Accounts Guidelines for India, 2016](#), with updates to reflect changes in the healthcare landscape.
- The NHA **methodology and estimates are regularly updated** to align with the dynamic nature of the Indian health system and evolving policies/programs.
 - Continuous improvements are made regarding data availability, estimation methodologies, and stakeholder feedback.

What are the Government's Initiatives Related to Healthcare?

- [National Health Mission](#)
- [Ayushman Bharat](#)
- [Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana \(AB-PMJAY\)](#)
- [National Medical Commission](#)
- [PM National Dialysis Programme](#)
- [Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram \(JSSK\)](#)
- [Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram \(RBSK\)](#)

Conclusion

- The **National Health Account estimates for 2020-21 and 2021-22** provide crucial **insights into India's healthcare spending trends** and the government's growing investment in public health.
- Key indicators such as rising government health expenditure, decreased out-of-pocket costs, and increased social security spending suggest a more resilient and inclusive healthcare system.
- These estimates highlight the government's commitment to **reducing financial barriers, improving healthcare infrastructure, and progressing towards Universal Health**

Coverage, supported by ongoing reforms and strong financial backing.

Drishti Mains Question:

Discuss the objectives and key components of the National Health Mission (NHM) in India. Evaluate its effectiveness in improving healthcare access and outcomes in rural and underserved areas.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. Which of the following are the objectives of 'National Nutrition Mission'? (2017)

1. To create awareness relating to malnutrition among pregnant women and lactating mothers.
2. To reduce the incidence of anaemia among young children, adolescent girls and women.
3. To promote the consumption of millets, coarse cereals and unpolished rice.
4. To promote the consumption of poultry eggs.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Ans: (a)

Mains:

Q. Despite Consistent experience of high growth, India still goes with the lowest indicators of human development. Examine the issues that make balanced and inclusive development elusive. **(2019)**

Effectiveness of Fast Track Special Courts

For Prelims: [Fast-track courts in India](#), [sexual offenses](#), [Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act \(POCSO Act\)](#), [Criminal Law \(Amendment\) Act in 2018](#), [Centrally Sponsored Scheme](#), [judiciary](#).

For Mains: [Challenges of Fast-track courts in India](#).

Source: TH

Why in News?

India's [Fast-Track Courts](#), designed to expedite serious criminal cases, are facing scrutiny over their

effectiveness. Despite an initial surge, the number of operational courts has declined.

Note:

▪ Trends in the Number of Fast-Track Courts:

- Between **2018 and 2020**, India saw a significant **rise in the number of fast-track courts**, from 699 to 907, largely in response to public outcry over delays in high-profile cases.
- However, this progress has **slowed since 2020**, with the number of functional courts dropping to 832 in 2023, reflecting the challenges states face in maintaining these courts due to financial and administrative constraints.

▪ Disparities in Fast-Track Court Availability:

- While states such as **Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu have maintained a high number of operational fast-track courts**, others have far fewer or, in some cases, none.
- These disparities are a reflection of local resource limitations, varying levels of prioritization, and differing administrative capabilities.



Chart 1: The chart shows the total criminal cases pending in High Courts (right axis) and District Courts (left axis)

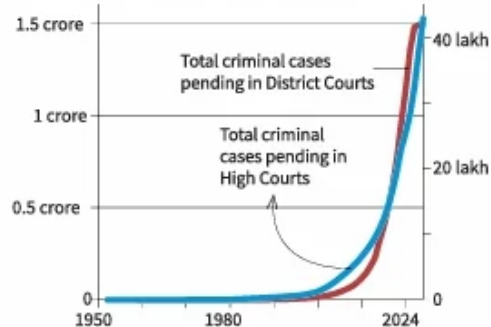
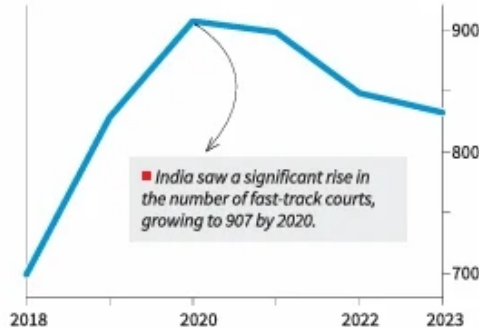


Chart 2: The chart shows the number of fast-track courts established between 2018 to 2023



What are FTSCs?

▪ About:

- FTSCs are judicial bodies established in India to **expedite the trial process for cases** pertaining to **sexual offenses**, particularly those involving rape and violations under the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO Act)**.

▪ Establishment:

- The Central Government enacted the **Criminal Law (Amendment) Act in 2018**, introducing stringent penalties, including the death penalty for perpetrators of rape. Following this, FTSCs were instituted to facilitate the swift adjudication of such cases.

- The initiative to establish FTSCs was **formalized in August 2019** as a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**, in accordance with directives from the Supreme Court of India.
- **Reasons for Establishing FTSCs:**
 - The FTSCs was established in response to the alarming rise in sexual offenses and the prolonged duration of trials in conventional courts, which led to significant delays in delivering justice to victims.
- **Extension of the FTSCs:**
 - The FTSCs Scheme, originally launched for one year in 2019, has been extended by the Union Cabinet for an additional three years, from 2023 to 2026.

What is the POCSO Act?

- **About:** The law aims to address offences of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children. The Act defines a child as any person below the age of 18 years.
 - It was enacted in consequence to India's ratification of the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** in **1992**.
- **Features:**
 - **Gender-Neutral Nature:** The Act recognises that **both girls and boys can be victims of sexual abuse** and that such abuse is a crime regardless of the gender of the victim.
 - **Confidentiality of Victim's Identity:** Section 23 of the POCSO Act, 2012 mandates that the **identity of child victims must be kept confidential**.
 - Media reports cannot disclose any details that could reveal the victim's identity, including their name, address, and family information.
 - **Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Cases: Sections 19 to 22** compel individuals who have knowledge or reasonable **suspicion of such offenses to report them to concerned authorities**.

What are the Challenges Faced by FTSCs?

- **Infrastructure Deficiencies:** Fast-track courts often operate in inadequately equipped facilities, **lacking necessary resources such as modern technology and sufficient space** to handle case loads efficiently.
- **Judicial Overload:** Despite their purpose, fast-track courts frequently experience **overwhelming case volumes, leading to delays** that contradict their foundational objective of expedited justice.
- **Inconsistent Implementation:** The establishment and functioning of fast-track courts can vary significantly across states, resulting in **uneven access to justice and inconsistent application of legal standards**.
- **Quality of Judicial Personnel:** The recruitment and training of judges and support staff may not always align with the specialized needs of fast-track courts, impacting the quality of judicial decision-making.
- **Limited Public Awareness:** There exists a **general lack of awareness among the populace regarding the functions and processes** of fast-track courts, which can hinder their effectiveness and accessibility.

Way Forward

- **Infrastructure Development:** Invest in the modernization and expansion of court infrastructure to ensure that fast-track courts are equipped to handle caseloads.
- **Comprehensive Training Programs:** Implement targeted training programs for judges and support staff to enhance their skills, focusing on the complexities of cases typically handled by fast-track courts, such as those involving sensitive issues.
- **Streamlined Judicial Processes:** Establish clear procedural guidelines and best practices to ensure efficiency while maintaining the integrity of the judicial process, facilitating quicker resolutions without compromising fairness.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Launch initiatives to educate the public about the functions,

processes, and benefits of fast-track courts, fostering greater community engagement and trust in the judicial system.

- **Legislative Reforms:** Advocate for amendments to existing laws to support the unique operational needs of fast-track courts, ensuring that procedural frameworks align with their objectives.

Drishti Mains Question:

Critically evaluate the role and effectiveness of Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) in India.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Mains:

Q. The judicial system in India and the UK seem to be converging as well as diverging in recent times. Highlight The key points of convergence and divergence between the two nations in terms of their judicial practices. **(2020)**

Q. From the resolution of contentious issues regarding distribution of legislative powers by the courts, 'Principle of Federal Supremacy' and 'Harmonious Construction' have emerged. Explain. **(2019)**

DRDO's Deep Tech Efforts for Defence

For Prelims: [Defence Research and Development Organisation \(DRDO\)](#), [Light Combat Aircraft, Tejas](#), [Pinaka](#), [Akash](#), [radars and electronic warfare systems](#), [nanotechnology](#), [biotechnology](#), [Agni](#), [Prithvi Missile Series](#), [Tejas Light Combat Aircraft \(LCA\)](#), [Akash Missile System](#), [BrahMos Missile](#), [Arjun Main Battle Tank \(MBT\)](#).

For Mains: Achievements of DRDO, Challenges faced by DRDO and steps that can be taken.

Source: [BL](#)

Why in News?

The [Defence Research and Development Organisation \(DRDO\)](#) is set to launch a new initiative aimed at **advancing emerging military technologies**. It will fund five deep-tech projects, with each project receiving up to Rs 50 crore, to promote the [indigenisation of defence products](#) and **strengthen national security**.

- This initiative is supported by a Rs 1-lakh crore fund announced in the [Interim Budget 2024-2025](#) to drive transformative research in the defence sector.

What are the Key Points About the Projects?

- **Objective:**
 - DRDO aims to **reduce reliance on imports of systems**, subsystems, and components required by the tri-services through indigenisation.
 - By focusing on futuristic and disruptive technologies, DRDO will seek innovative solutions

for concepts that are not currently available in India or globally.

▪ **Futuristic and Disruptive Tech:**

- DRDO has identified **three broad categories** for inviting proposals: indigenisation, futuristic and disruptive technology, and cutting-edge technology.
- It primarily **focuses on advancing research in futuristic and disruptive technologies**, such as [quantum computing](#), [blockchain](#), and [artificial intelligence](#).
 - **Futuristic and disruptive technologies** are innovations that significantly **transform or revolutionise existing industries, markets, or societal norms** by introducing new methods, products, or services.
 - Globally, similar programmes are led by state defence research organisations, such as the [US DARPA \(United States Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency\)](#) which DRDO is using as a model for its deep tech initiative.
- Investments in these deep tech projects will be executed through [DRDO's Technology Development Fund \(TDF\)](#).
 - The TDF has been collaborating with private industries, especially [MSMEs](#) and **start-ups**, to develop military hardware and software needed by the armed forces.

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)

- DARPA is a **research and development agency under the United States Department of Defense**, focused on developing emerging technologies for military applications.
- Its objective is **to design and implement research and development projects** aimed at pushing the boundaries of technology and science, often addressing needs beyond immediate military requirements.

What is the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)?

▪ **About:**

- DRDO is the **R&D (Research and Development) wing** of the **Ministry of Defence** with a vision to empower India with cutting-edge defence technologies.
- Its [pursuit of self-reliance](#) and successful indigenous development and production of strategic systems and platforms such as [Agni and Prithvi series of missiles](#), [Light Combat Aircraft](#), [Tejas](#), [multi-barrel rocket launcher](#), [Pinaka](#), [air defence system](#), [Akash](#), [a wide range of radars and electronic warfare systems](#), etc. have given quantum jump to India's military might, generating effective deterrence and providing crucial leverage.

▪ **Formation:**

- It was formed in 1958 from the amalgamation of the **Technical Development Establishment (TDEs)** of the Indian Army and the **Directorate of Technical Development & Production (DTDP)** with the **Defence Science Organisation (DSO)**.
- DRDO is a network of more than 50 laboratories which are deeply engaged in developing defence technologies covering various disciplines, like aeronautics, armaments, electronics, combat vehicles, engineering systems etc.

▪ **Technology Clusters of DRDO:**

- **Aeronautics:** Focuses on designing and developing aviation technologies, including aircraft, [Unmanned Aerial Vehicle \(UAVs\)](#), and advanced materials.
- **Armament and Combat Engineering:** Develops weapon systems, artillery, and ammunition for the armed forces.
- **Missiles and Strategic Systems:** Specializes in missile technology, including ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and tactical missile systems.
- **Electronics and Communication Systems:** Works on radar systems, communication devices, and electronic warfare systems for military applications.
- **Life Sciences:** Develops technologies for human survival in extreme environments, such as protective gear, life-support systems, and combat casualty care.
- **Materials and Life Sciences:** Focuses on advanced materials, [nanotechnology](#), and [biotechnology](#) for defence applications.

What are the Achievements of DRDO?

System	Description
Agni and Prithvi Missile Series	Successful development of ballistic missile systems , significantly enhancing India's strategic capabilities.
Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)	An indigenous multi-role fighter aircraft, designed and developed by DRDO in collaboration with other agencies.
Akash Missile System	A medium-range surface-to-air missile system that provides air defence support to the Indian Army and Air Force.
BrahMos Missile	World's fastest supersonic cruise missile , developed in collaboration with Russia.
Arjun Main Battle Tank (MBT)	Arjun Main Battle Tank (MBT) is an indigenous battle tank designed for the Indian Army, featuring advanced firepower, mobility, and protection systems.
INSAS Rifle Series	INSAS Rifle Series is an indigenous design and development of small arms, including rifles, for the Indian armed forces.
Light Combat Helicopter (LCH)	Developed to meet the operational requirements of the Indian Army and Air Force .
NETRA UAV	NETRA UAV is an indigenous unmanned aerial vehicle designed for surveillance and reconnaissance operations.
Submarine Sonar Systems	Development of sonar and underwater communication systems for the Indian Navy's submarines.

What are the Challenges Faced by DRDO?

- **Delays in Project Execution:** Many DRDO projects, such as the **development of advanced weapon systems and aircraft, have faced significant delays**, affecting timely deployment and causing cost overruns.
- **Technology Gaps and Dependence on Imports:** Despite a substantial production and R&D base, the Indian defence industry **lacks the technological capability to independently design and manufacture major systems**, critical parts, components, and raw materials, leading to continued reliance on imports.
 - This limited technological depth is a key factor behind the Indian government's preference for licensing the manufacture of many major defence systems.
- **Budgetary Constraints:** The budget allocation for **the DRDO increased to Rs 23,855 crore in FY 2024-25**, up from **Rs 23,263.89 crore in FY 2023-24**.
 - Despite this increase, the **budget growth remains modest**, not aligning with the government's strong emphasis on modernisation and the indigenisation of defence technology.
- **Collaboration with Industry and Academia:** While DRDO is trying to increase collaboration with private industries and academic institutions, aligning them efficiently with defence R&D requirements remains a challenge.

Way Forward

- **Strengthening Industry Collaboration:** DRDO should enhance partnerships with private industries, MSMEs, and **start-ups** to **accelerate innovation and the development of cutting-edge defence technologies**, promoting efficient technology transfer.
- **Focus on Time-bound Execution:** Implementing **stricter project timelines and adopting agile project management techniques** can help mitigate delays and ensure timely delivery of critical defence systems.
- **Increased Investment in R&D:** Allocating additional resources and consistent funding for research and development will empower DRDO to bridge technological gaps and reduce reliance on foreign imports.

- **Fostering Global Collaborations:** Expanding collaborations with international defence research agencies and fostering joint ventures can help DRDO acquire advanced technologies and expertise in emerging areas.

Drishti Mains Question:

Analyze the significance of DRDO's technology clusters and highlight notable achievements in recent years. How do these achievements contribute to India's strategic autonomy?

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. In the context of Indian defence, consider the following statements: (2009)

1. The Shourya missile flies with a speed of more than 8 Mach.
2. The range of Shourya missile is more than 1600 km.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (d)

Q. Which one of the following is the best description of 'INS Astradharini', that was in the news recently? (2016)

- (a) Amphibious warfare ship
- (b) Nuclear-powered submarine
- (c) Torpedo launch and recovery vessel
- (d) Nuclear-powered aircraft carrier

Ans: (c)

Mains:

Q. How is S-400 air defence system technically superior to any other system presently available in the world? (2021)

Israel-Hezbollah Conflict and War Theory

For Prelims: [Israel](#), [Palestine](#), [Middle-East](#), [Arab World](#), Yom-Kippur War, [Zionism](#), [Al-Aqsa](#), [Gaza Strip](#), [Jerusalem](#), [Palestinian Liberation Organisation \(PLO\)](#)

Mains: Impact of [Israel-Palestine Conflict](#), Ethical Basis for War and Peace and Related issues

[Source: IE](#)

Why in News?

Recent conflicts, such as the prolonged **Israel-Hezbollah war**, the [Russia-Ukraine war](#), and unrest in many other parts of the world have revived the debate over whether large-scale violence can ever be justified.

- The **three major schools of thought provide** distinct ethical viewpoints on this matter providing distinct perspectives on the morality of war, making this issue increasingly relevant today.

What are the Reasons of Conflict Between Israel and Hezbollah?

- **Origins of the Conflict (1982):**
 - The establishment of the **State of Israel in 1948** triggered mass displacement of over 750,000 Palestinian Arabs (**during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war**).
 - Many of these refugees sought shelter in **southern Lebanon**, heightening tensions in the region. This situation was further complicated by conflicts among various Lebanese factions, including Christian militias and Palestinian groups.
 - During the 1960s and 1970s, the presence of the **Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)** in southern Lebanon escalated Israeli security concerns.
 - In response to PLO attacks on northern Israeli towns, Israel launched military operations in Lebanon (1978 and 1982), leading to prolonged occupation and the **eventual rise of Hezbollah**.
 - Hezbollah was established in 1982, with Iranian support, **in response to the Israeli invasion** and the **ongoing civil war**, aiming to **resist Israeli occupation and protect Lebanese sovereignty**.
- **Escalation of Violence (1980s - 1990s):** During the 1980s, Hezbollah conducted **guerrilla warfare against Israeli forces** and their allies in Lebanon, notably bombing US and French barracks in 1983, causing significant casualties.
 - By 1985, as Hezbollah's military strength increased, Israel withdrew to a self-declared "**security zone**" in **southern Lebanon**, which it held until 2000.
- **Political Integration and Continued Hostilities (1990s):** Following the Lebanese civil war, **Hezbollah integrated into politics**, securing parliamentary seats and establishing a social support network, which **enhanced its legitimacy among Shia communities**.
 - In 1993, Israel launched "Operation Accountability" in response to Hezbollah attacks, resulting in significant civilian casualties and infrastructure damage in Lebanon known as **Seven-Day War (1993)**.
- **The July War (2006):** In July 2006, Hezbollah captured two Israeli soldiers, prompting a large-scale Israeli military response. The conflict lasted 34 days and resulted in around 1,200 Lebanese and 158 Israeli fatalities. The war underscored Hezbollah's military capabilities and solidified its position as a key player in Lebanese and regional politics.
- **Recent Developments (2010s - Present):**
 - **Syrian Civil War Involvement:** Since 2012, Hezbollah has intervened in the Syrian civil war **to support the Assad regime**, gaining valuable combat experience despite facing criticism.
 - **Gaza Conflict (2023):** In October 2023, Hezbollah launched a **rocket campaign in solidarity with Gaza** amid escalating Israeli military actions, intensifying cross-border hostilities.
 - **Recent Escalations:** The assassination of key Hezbollah leaders and the [blast of walkie-](#)

[talkie and pagers](#) in September 2024 have increased tensions, with Hezbollah vowing retaliation, raising the possibility of further conflict.

What is the Ethical Basis for War and Peace?

- **Just War Theory (JWT): A Measured Approach:**
 - **About:**
 - **Just War Theory (JWT)** is a **significant framework in international law**, primarily articulated by philosophers such as **Augustine and Aquinas**.
 - It holds that **war can be morally justified in certain situations**, though it is not commendable merely for its strategic or bold nature.
 - It views war as an acceptable form of mass political violence under specific conditions.
 - **Parts of JWT:**
 - **Jus ad Bellum (Just Cause):** This principle focuses on the **justification for initiating war**. Just causes include **self-defense, preventing future aggression, and stopping ongoing atrocities**.
 - **Example:** Allied forces' intervention in [World War II](#) is often cited as a just war, responding to aggression and atrocities committed by Axis powers.
 - **Jus in Bello (Right Conduct):** This principle **dictates how war is waged**. It emphasises **minimising civilian casualties, avoiding unnecessary suffering, and respecting the rights of non-combatants**.
 - Violations of these principles can lead to **war crimes**, as outlined in **international humanitarian law**.
 - **Jus Post Bellum (Just Peace):** This principle focuses on a **just and lasting peace** following the war. It emphasises **fair treatment of the defeated, reconstruction efforts, and addressing the root causes** of conflict.
- **Realism: Power Politics Prevail**
 - **Thought:**
 - Realism asserts that **moral considerations have no place in international relations**.
 - According to realists, states operate in an **anarchic international system** where **power and national security are paramount**.
 - **They believe that national security, national interest, and the pursuit of power** are the **driving forces** in international politics, and **war becomes a tool** to achieve these goals.
 - It was articulated by philosophers like **Thucydides** and **Machiavelli**.
 - They **criticise Just War Theory** for being impractical and idealistic, arguing that focusing on morality weakens a state's ability to defend itself and pursue its interests.
 - **Criticism of Realism: Critics of realism** point out that a **complete disregard for ethics** can lead to brutal and unnecessary wars.
 - **Examples:** Historical events like the lead-up to [World Wars I](#) and [World Wars II](#) show that **states prioritise strategic calculations over ethics**.
 - The **Cuban Missile Crisis** highlights this realist view, with national security outweighing moral concerns.
- **Pacifism: Abhorring All Violence**
 - **Thought:**
 - Pacifists **reject all forms of violence, including war**, and **promote nonviolent resistance and diplomacy** to resolve conflicts, **aligning with the ideals of leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.**
 - Pacifists **critique Just War Theory** by arguing that **any justification for war leads to more violence** and suffering.
 - They believe that **creative and persistent nonviolent methods** can achieve more lasting peace than armed conflict.
 - **Criticism of Pacifism:**
 - Critics argue that **pacifism can be unrealistic** when **confronting aggression and evil**, suggesting that military force may sometimes be necessary to prevent or stop atrocities.

What is Hezbollah?

- Hezbollah, which translates to "Party of God," is a **Shia militia and political party based in Lebanon**.
- **Origin of Hezbollah:**
 - Hezbollah was **founded in 1982** as a **resistance movement against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon** during the **Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990)**.
 - It received **support from Lebanon's Shia community, Iran and its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and Palestinian groups**, influenced by **Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution**.
- It is recognized as one of the **most heavily armed non-state actors** globally, according to the **Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)**.
- Several countries, including the United States and Israel, have designated Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation.



What are the Principles of India's Foreign Policy?

- **Panchsheel (Five Principles):** It was first formalised in the **1954 Agreement on Trade** between **India and the Tibet** region of China, forming the foundation of India's international relations. These principles are:
 - Mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty
 - Mutual non-aggression
 - Non-interference in internal affairs
 - Equality and mutual benefit
 - Peaceful co-existence

- **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (The World is One Family):** India sees the world as a global family, promoting harmony, collective growth, and trust among nations, aligned with **Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas**.
 - The **Gujral Doctrine** is a set of **5 principles** to **guide India's foreign relations with its immediate neighbours**, recognizing the supreme importance of friendly, cordial relations. These **5 principles** are:
 - India extends support to neighbours like Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka **without expecting reciprocity**, acting in good faith and trust.
 - No South Asian country should allow its territory to be **used against the interests of another** in the region.
 - Countries should **refrain from interfering in the internal affairs** of one another.
 - All South Asian nations must **respect each other's territorial integrity** and sovereignty.
 - Disputes should be **resolved peacefully through bilateral negotiations**.
- **Proactive and Impartial Assistance:** India promotes **democracy and development** through proactive assistance, but always with the **consent of the concerned government**.
 - This emphasises **capacity building and institutional strengthening** in partner nations, as seen in **India's efforts in Afghanistan**.
- **Support for the United Nations:** India is a founding member of the **United Nations (UN)** and supports the purposes and principles of the UN.
- **Strategic Autonomy:** It emphasises **independent decision-making** and **India favours partnerships** but **avoids formal military alliances**, maintaining flexibility in its international engagements.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q 1. Which one of the following countries of South-West Asia does not open out to the Mediterranean Sea? (2015)

- (a) Syria
- (b) Jordan
- (c) Lebanon
- (d) Israel

Ans: (b)

Q2. The term “two-state solution” is sometimes mentioned in the news in the context of the affairs of (2018)

- (a) China
- (b) Israel
- (c) Iraq
- (d) Yemen

Ans: (b)

Mains

Q . “India’s relations with Israel have, of late, acquired a depth and diversity, which cannot be rolled back.” Discuss. (2018)

Declining Academic Freedom in India

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

The "**Free to Think 2024**" annual report by the **Scholars at Risk (SAR) Academic Freedom Monitoring Project** reveals a concerning decline in [academic freedom in India](#) over the past decade.

- Academic freedom refers to the right to pursue knowledge and conduct research without interference, supporting the **open exchange of ideas and protecting academic integrity**.

Note:

SAR is a network of 665 universities across the globe, it investigates and reports attacks on higher education with the aim of raising awareness, generating advocacy, and increasing protection for scholars, students, and academic communities.

What are the Key Highlights of the Report?

- **Significant Decline in Academic Freedom:** The report stated that India's academic freedom index score dropped from **0.6 to 0.2 points** between 2013 and 2023.
 - The report stated that, according to the [Academic Freedom Index \(AFI\)](#), India now ranks as "**completely restricted**," marking its lowest score since the mid-1940s.
- **Main Threats to Academic Freedom in India:**
 - **Political Control:** The report cites the heightened efforts to exert political control and impose a majoritarian religion agenda in universities.
 - **Restrictions on Protests:** New policies at universities like Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and South Asian University (SAU) have **prohibited student protests**, undermining student expression and **activism**.
 - Restrictions are also placed on **academic freedom, limiting independent thought and expression**.
 - **Central vs. State Government Conflicts:** Ongoing battles between the **Union government and various State governments over control of higher education** are evident, particularly in states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and Punjab.
 - Such conflicts result in restrictive policies that can limit independent institutional autonomy and restrict academic freedom.
 - **Intimidation of Scholars:** Instances of intimidation have led to resignations or retractions of critical academic work, undermining academic integrity and fostering self-censorship among researchers in higher education.
- **Global Context:** The report documents **391 attacks** on higher education communities in **51 countries**, highlighting a broader global issue of threats to academic freedom.

Academic Freedom Index

- The AFI assesses **de facto levels of academic freedom across the world based on five indicators**. The AFI currently covers **179 countries (including India)** and territories, and provides the most comprehensive dataset on the subject of academic freedom.
 - **Five Indicators:** freedom to research and teach; freedom of academic exchange and

dissemination; institutional autonomy; campus integrity; and freedom of academic and cultural expression.

- The AFI project **started in 2017** with an expert consultation in Cologne, funded by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, and the **first version** was **released in 2020**.
- AFI uses a scale from **0 (low) to 1 (high)** to measure the degree of academic freedom in a country.



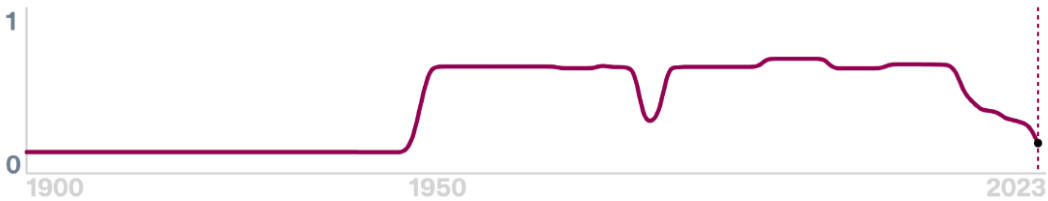
India

ACADEMIC FREEDOM INDEX (2023) 0.18 ⬇️

Freedom to Research and Teach:	1.25	⬇️
Academic Exchange and Dissemination:	1.45	⬇️
Institutional Autonomy:	1.24	⬇️
Campus Integrity:	1.37	⬇️
Academic and Cultural Expression:	1.23	⬇️

India

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Academic and Cultural Expression (2023) 1.23



UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Which of the following provisions of the Constitution does India have a bearing on Education? (2012)

1. Directive Principles of State Policy
2. Rural and Urban Local Bodies
3. Fifth Schedule
4. Sixth Schedule
5. Seventh Schedule

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 3, 4 and 5 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 5 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Ans- (d)

Jamaican Prime Minister's Visit to India

Source: PIB

Why in News?

Recently, the **Prime Minister of Jamaica** visited India to solidify bilateral ties in a range of key areas including trade and investment. It will be the **first-ever bilateral visit of the Prime Minister of Jamaica to India.**

What are the Key Outcomes of the Visit?

- **Meeting the President of India:**
 - Both leaders agreed on the **need to further strengthen partnerships** across various levels, including parliamentary, academic, and cultural exchanges, as well as **collaboration in international forums.**
 - The President appreciated Jamaica's participation in all **three editions of [the Voice of the Global South Summits](#)** and emphasised the shared commitment of both nations to reform multilateral institutions, including the **[UN Security Council](#)**, through groupings like the **[L-69](#).**
- **Several Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) were Signed:**
 - The **governments of India and Jamaica** collaborate to share successful **[digital public](#)**

- **infrastructure**, the Cultural Exchange Programme, and **cooperation in sports**.
- Between **NPCI International Payments Limited** and **Egov Jamaica Limited**.

The Voice of the Global South Summit (VOGSS)

- It is a new and unique **India-led initiative** that envisages bringing together countries of the Global South and sharing their perspectives and priorities on a **common platform** across a whole range of issues.
- It is a reflection of India's philosophy of **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**, or "One Earth, One Family, One Future", and the Prime Minister's vision of **Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas**.

How are the Relations between India and Jamaica?

- **India** was **among the first nations to recognize Jamaica after its independence**, establishing diplomatic relations in 1962, and setting up a resident mission in Kingston in 1976 following PM Indira Gandhi's visit.
- Jamaica established its Resident Mission in India in 2020.
- India and Jamaica have historically maintained **cordial and friendly relations**, built on shared ties of history, **parliamentary democracy, Commonwealth membership**, and a mutual love for cricket.
- Jamaica is home to a 70,000-strong **Indian diaspora**, one of the **girmitiya countries**, serving as a vital connection between the two nations. The year 2022 marks 177 years of the Indian community's presence in Jamaica.
 - The **Girmitiya countries** are countries where Indian indentured labourers settled, such as **Fiji, Guyana, Mauritius, South Africa, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Reunion Island**.
- Both countries are members of international organizations like **the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)** and **G-77**.
 - As **developing nations**, India and Jamaica share similar goals, such as **economic growth, equity, poverty eradication, and improving citizens' quality of life**.

Jamaica

- It is **an island country of the West Indies** and **third largest island in the Caribbean Sea**, after Cuba and Hispaniola.
- It is situated **west of Haiti, south of Cuba, northeast of the nearest point on the mainland, Cape Gracias a Dios, on the Caribbean coast of Central America**.
- The **national capital is Kingston**.
- Its population being of **African ancestry**, descended from slaves brought by European colonists.
- **Jamaica gained independence from the UK in 1962** and remains a Commonwealth member.



10 years of Swachh Bharat Mission

[Source: IE](#)

Recently, the [Swachh Bharat Mission \(SBM\)](#) marked its **10th anniversary on 2nd October 2024**.

▪ About:

- It was launched on **2nd October 2014** by the **Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**.
- It was also divided into [SBM-Gramin](#) for rural areas and [SBM-Urban](#) for urban centers.

▪ Aim:

- It aimed to make India [Open Defecation Free \(ODF\)](#) by constructing individual and community toilets, and to implement waste management systems in school and anganwadi toilets.
 - An area can be notified or **declared as ODF** if at any point of the day, not even a single person is found defecating in the open.

▪ Achievements:

- Under the mission, **10 crore toilets** were built, and almost **6 lakh villages** have been designated as [ODF](#) on 2nd October, 2019.
 - Upon completing **five years in 2021**, the government launched [SBM 2.0](#) focusing on creating garbage-free cities, managing faecal sludge, addressing plastic waste, and improving greywater management.
- Urban India has become **ODF**, with all 4,715 [Urban Local Bodies \(ULBs\)](#) completely ODF.

India Joins 44th Codex Nutrition Session

[Source: PIB](#)

India participated in the **44th session of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU)** in Germany, contributing significantly to global food safety and nutrition standards.

- CCNFSDU is a unit of the [Codex Alimentarius Commission\(CAC\)](#), responsible for developing global standards for **special dietary foods such as infant formulas, dietary supplements**, and medical foods.
 - The CAC, established in 1963 by the [Food and Agriculture Organization\(FAO\)](#) and [World Health Organization\(WHO\)](#), sets international food standards to protect consumer health and ensure fair trade practices, with input from its **189 Codex Members(including India)**.
- **India at 44th Session of CCNFSDU:** India stressed the need to update outdated **FAO/WHO probiotic guidelines from 2001 and 2002**, highlighting that the current guidelines are two decades old.
 - The country called for **harmonized regulations** to enhance global trade.
 - India suggested that the combined **Nutrient Reference Value-Requirement (NRV-R)** for children aged 6 to 36 months should be calculated by taking the mean of two age groups(6-12 months and 12-36 months), and it was accepted by the CCNFSDU.
 - NRVs-R are recommendations for nutritional intake based on current scientific data, established for target groups or populations.

Read more: [Codex Alimentarius Commission](#)

International Energy Efficiency Hub

[Source: HT](#)

Recently, the **Union Cabinet** has signed the **Letter of Intent** thus enabling India to join the **International Energy Efficiency Hub (IEEH)**.

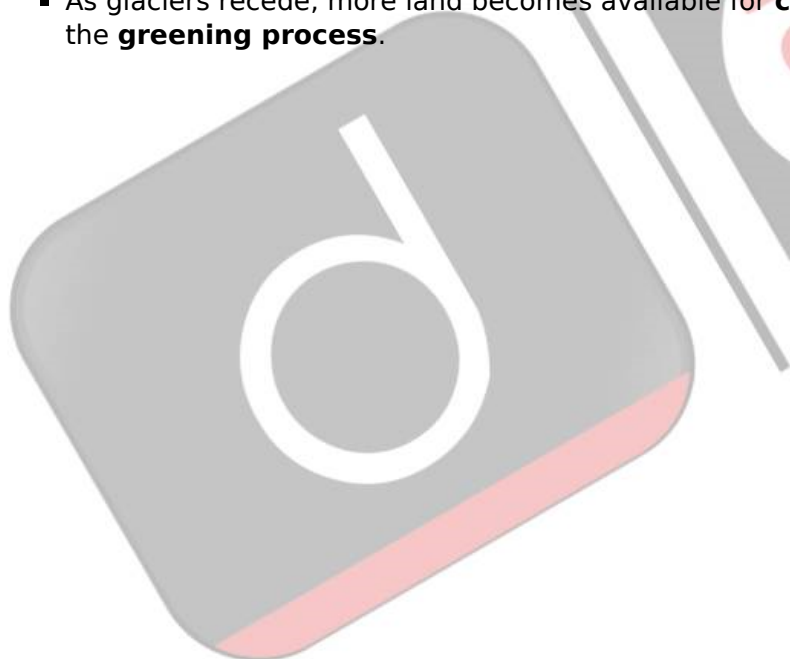
- IEEH is a global platform dedicated to fostering collaboration and promoting **energy efficiency** worldwide.
- It brings together **governments, international organisations, and private sector** entities to share knowledge, best practices, and **innovative solutions**.
- By joining IEEH, India will gain access to a vast network of **experts and resources**, enabling it to enhance its **domestic energy efficiency initiatives**.
- **The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)** has been designated as the implementing agency for the IEEH on behalf of India.
- As of July 2024, **16 countries** including **China**, France, Germany, Japan, Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, United States and United Kingdom have joined the Hub.
- **IEEH** was established in **2020** as the successor to the [International Partnership for Energy Efficiency Cooperation \(IPEEC\)](#), in which India was a member.

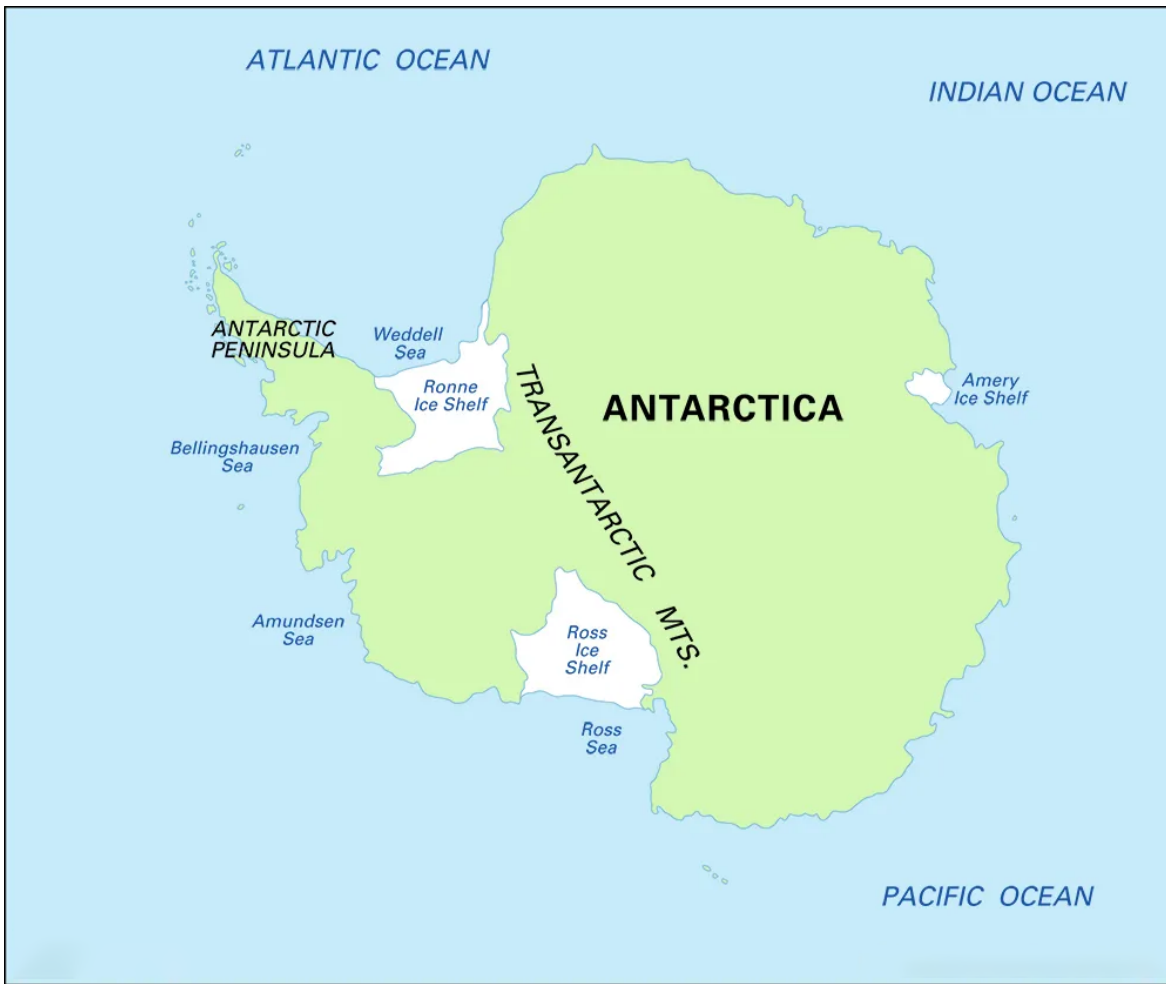
Greening of Antarctic Peninsula

[Source: DTE](#)

The [Antarctic peninsula](#) has experienced a **10-fold increase in [vegetation](#)** from less than **1 square km in 1986** to almost **12 square km by 2021**.

- The **rate of change** in vegetation cover in **2016-2021** was **0.424 km² per year** compared to the entire **35-year-long study** period of **0.317 km² per year**.
- Development of [moss ecosystems](#) can lead to **organic soil formation** and higher plant colonisation.
 - It also raises concerns about the potential introduction of **non-native and [invasive species](#)**.
 - **Mosses** are [pioneer species](#) that start ecological succession.
 - **Ecological succession** is the **steady and gradual change** in a species of a given area with respect to the changing environment.
- This **greening** is likely due to **accelerated warming** in the region, which has been heating up **five times faster** than the global average.
- The Antarctic Peninsula Ice Sheet is sensitive to [climate change](#) due to its **small size and northerly location**. Since 1950, it has warmed by **nearly 3°C**.
- As glaciers recede, more land becomes available for **colonisation by plants**, further accelerating the **greening process**.





Read More: [India's Tryst with Antarctica](#)

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