



ANDHRA PRADESH CURRENT AFFAIRS

Monthly Compendium — April 2026

Target Examinations:

APPSC Group-I | APPSC Group-II | APPSC Group-III | APPSC FSO

Compiled Topics: 27 High-Yield Current Affairs

Categories: Polity & Governance · Economy · Infrastructure ·
Education & Technology · Agriculture · Environment · Heritage

Format: Current Affairs + Detailed Static Integration + Analytical Dimensions

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01 **Amaravati Capital Act (Retrospective Status)**

PAPER II / III — Polity & Governance

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

Parliament passed the **Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026**, formally establishing Amaravati as the sole and permanent capital of AP. The Act retrospectively recognizes this status starting from **June 2, 2024**, ending a decade of policy uncertainty regarding the three-capital proposal.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **AP Reorganisation Act, 2014:** Section 5 of the original Act designated Hyderabad as the common capital for both Telangana and AP for a period not exceeding 10 years (till 2024). The 2026 Amendment formally severs this arrangement and solidifies Amaravati.
- **Article 3 of the Constitution:** Empowers Parliament to form new states, alter boundaries, and pass necessary reorganisation laws. The amendment exercises this plenary power to settle the capital dispute definitively.
- **Land Pooling Scheme:** Amaravati was developed through the voluntary pooling of 33,000+ acres by farmers. They were promised 70% of developed plots back and a 10% commercial plot share. The amendment secures the legal sanctity of these 99-year lease agreements.
- **Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA):** The statutory body established under the AP CRDA Act, 2014, responsible for the planning and development of the capital region. The amendment reinforces CRDA's exclusive jurisdiction over the Amaravati master plan.

02 **State Election Commissioner Appointment**

PAPER II — Polity & Governance

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

Former senior bureaucrat **Anil Chandra Punetha** was officially appointed as the new State Election Commissioner (SEC) of Andhra Pradesh, tasked with overseeing local body elections across the state.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Constitutional Mandate (Art. 243K & 243ZA):** Article 243K vests the superintendence, direction, and control of elections to Panchayats in the SEC. Article 243ZA extends this

mandate to Municipalities.

- **Appointment & Tenure:** The SEC is appointed by the Governor of the state. Unlike the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India, the SEC's conditions of service and tenure are determined by state law, though the Supreme Court has mandated parity in security of tenure.
- **Removal:** The SEC can only be removed in the same manner and on the same grounds as a Judge of a High Court (Article 243K(2)), ensuring independence from executive interference.
- **Delimitation:** The SEC is also responsible for the delimitation of ward constituencies for local bodies based on the latest Census data, ensuring fair representation at the grassroots level.

03

Public Employment Zones (6 Zones)

PAPER II / III — Polity & Economy

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The State Cabinet approved the creation of **six zones and two multi-zones** under the revised AP Public Employment Order–2025, aiming to streamline local cadre recruitment and ensure equitable regional representation in state services.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Article 16(1) & 16(2):** Guarantees equality of opportunity in public employment and prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, or residence. However, Article 16(3) allows Parliament to prescribe residence requirements.
- **AP Public Employment Order, 1975:** Originally established 6 zones (Zone 1 to 6) to provide local cadre employment in districts, preventing dominance by one region over another in state services.
- **Multi-Zone Concept:** The "multi-zone" classification allows candidates from specific adjacent zones to compete for a broader set of posts, balancing strict localism with administrative efficiency and merit.
- **Article 371D Provisions:** Such local cadre rules fall under the special provisions for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, requiring careful alignment with the equitable distribution of state resources and opportunities.

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The AP state cell adjusted public sector employment definitions to align with updated central income thresholds for the **OBC creamy layer**, ensuring uniformity in reservation policies across state and central domains.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Indra Sawhney Judgment (1992):** The Supreme Court upheld 27% OBC reservation but introduced the "creamy layer" concept, excluding socially and educationally advanced members of backward classes from reservation benefits.
- **Income Threshold:** The central government periodically revises the income ceiling for the creamy layer. Currently, it is set at ₹8 lakh per annum (based on the 2017 notification, revised from earlier limits).
- **Article 15(4) & 16(4):** These articles empower the state to make special provisions for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes. The creamy layer exclusion ensures that benefits reach the most marginalized within the OBC category.
- **National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC):** Now a constitutional body under Article 338B, it examines requests for inclusion/exclusion of communities in the central and state lists of backward classes.

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The state legislative framework provided compliance inputs to the **Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC)** exploring synchronized polls ("One Nation, One Election") for Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Constitutional Hurdles:** Implementing simultaneous elections requires amendments to Articles 83, 85, 172, and 174 (related to the duration of Houses and dissolution), and potentially Article 356 (President's Rule).
- **Ram Nath Kovind Committee (2024):** A high-level committee headed by the former President recommended a phased rollout of simultaneous elections, suggesting that elections

held close to the target date could be clubbed together.

- **Federalism Concerns:** Critics argue it undermines federalism by overshadowing state issues with national narratives. It also raises concerns about the massive logistical requirement of EVMs and central security forces.
- **Constructive No-Confidence Motion:** To prevent frequent mid-term elections, proposals include a "constructive vote of no-confidence" (as in Germany), where a government can only be ousted if the House agrees on an alternative successor.

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The state minority cell fast-tracked **direct bank transfers (DBT)** for post-matric professional course student groups, ensuring timely financial support for higher education among minority communities.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Constitutional Safeguards:** Articles 29 (Protection of interests of minorities) and 30 (Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions) form the bedrock of minority rights in India.
- **Ministry of Minority Affairs Schemes:** The central government runs Pre-matric and Post-matric Scholarship schemes. The Post-matric scheme specifically targets students from minority communities whose parental income is below ₹2.5 lakh per annum.
- **National Commission for Minorities (NCM):** A statutory body constituted under the NCM Act, 1992. The central government notifies six religious communities as minorities: Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis, and Jains.
- **DBT Mechanism:** Direct Benefit Transfer via the National Scholarship Portal (NSP) eliminates middlemen, reduces leakage, and ensures that funds are credited directly to the student's Aadhaar-seeded bank account.

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The Registration and Stamps Department phased out physical stamp papers for property sales over ₹10 lakhs, mandating **e-stamping** to curb fraud and ensure transparency in real estate transactions.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Indian Stamp Act, 1899:** Governs the levy of stamp duty on legal documents. Stamp duty is a state subject (Entry 63, State List), making it a significant revenue source for state governments.
- **Article 268:** Duties levied by the Union but collected and appropriated by the States. While stamp duties on bills of exchange, etc., are under Union purview, property stamp duty is entirely a state domain.
- **SHCIL & E-Stamping:** The Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL) is the central record-keeping agency for e-stamping. E-stamps are non-judicial stamp papers generated electronically, preventing the use of counterfeit physical papers.
- **Registration Act, 1908:** Mandates the registration of immovable property transactions. Integrating e-stamping with the registration process creates a seamless, tamper-proof digital trail for property records.

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The state cleared infrastructure expansion budgets for the **State Judicial Academy in Kurnool** to enhance continuous legal education and judicial training for district court officers.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Article 233 & 234:** Deal with the appointment of district judges and recruitment of persons to the judicial service. The State Judicial Academy plays a pivotal role in the initial training and continuous education of these officers.
- **National Judicial Academy (NJA):** Located in Bhopal, it is the apex body for judicial training. State academies complement NJA by focusing on regional laws, local languages, and specific state-level procedural bottlenecks.

- **Reducing Pendency:** With over 4 crore cases pending in lower courts, training judges in advanced case management, alternative dispute resolution (ADR), and digital literacy is critical to upholding the "Right to Speedy Trial" under Article 21.
- **Continuous Legal Education (CLE):** Mandatory training programs for sitting judges to update them on recent Supreme Court/High Court judgments, new legislations, and socio-economic developments.

SECTION II — INFRASTRUCTURE, ECONOMY & URBAN DEVELOPMENT

09 Polavaram Spillway Clearance

PAPER IV — Infrastructure & Geography

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

Central water experts from the **Central Water Commission (CWC)** cleared structural safety parameters for the newly constructed Polavaram spillway blocks, a critical milestone for the project's completion.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **National Project Status:** Polavaram was granted National Project status under Section 89 of the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014. This means the central government bears the entire financial cost of the project.
- **Interlinking of Rivers:** It is a key component of the National River Linking Project (NRLP), designed to transfer surplus Godavari waters to the water-deficit Krishna river via the Pattiseema lift irrigation scheme.
- **Dam Safety Act, 2021:** Establishes a robust institutional mechanism for surveillance, inspection, operation, and maintenance of specified dams to prevent dam failure disasters. The CWC clearance aligns with these safety protocols.
- **Environmental & Rehabilitation:** The project involves submergence of hundreds of villages. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the R&R (Rehabilitation and Resettlement) plans are continuously monitored by central committees.

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

Land handover disputes in Visakhapatnam were completely resolved, clearing the deck for the construction of the **South Coast Railway (SCoR)** zone headquarters, a long-pending demand of the region.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Railway Zones in India:** Indian Railways is divided into 18 zones. SCoR was announced in the 2019 Rail Budget, to be carved out of the existing East Coast Railway (ECoR) and South Central Railway (SCR) zones.
- **Waltair Division:** The new zone will initially comprise the existing Waltair, Vijayawada, and Guntur divisions, with plans to add new divisions in the future to improve administrative efficiency.
- **Economic Impact:** A dedicated railway zone will significantly boost logistics efficiency for the Vizag-Chennai Industrial Corridor (VCIC), reduce freight costs, and improve port connectivity for the steel and petrochemical industries.
- **Ministry of Railways:** Operates under the Union List (Entry 22, List I). The allocation of land and infrastructure development requires coordination between the Railway Board, state government, and local authorities.

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

MoUs for the setup of a **greenfield petrochemical facility** near Kakinada were cleared by the state pollution board, paving the way for massive industrial investment and job creation in the coastal region.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Petrochemical Industry:** Often called a "sunrise sector," petrochemicals derive chemicals from petroleum and natural gas. They are foundational for downstream industries like plastics, textiles (synthetic fibers), pharmaceuticals, and paints.
- **Greenfield vs. Brownfield:** A greenfield project is built from scratch on undeveloped land, without the constraints of existing infrastructure or legacy environmental liabilities, allowing

for optimal modern design.

- **Environmental Clearances:** Under the EIA Notification 2006, petrochemical complexes fall under Category A (requiring appraisal by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change - MoEFCC).
- **Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB):** Regulates the downstream sector (refining, storage, distribution) to ensure fair trade and competition, while upstream exploration is regulated by the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH).

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

Visakhapatnam, Kakinada, and Tirupati presented execution updates for works under the extended **Smart Cities Mission** funds, focusing on urban mobility, sustainability, and IT connectivity.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Mission Launch & Scope:** Launched in 2015 by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) to develop 100 cities. The mission was extended to June 2024 and further to 2025/26 to complete pending projects.
- **Core Infrastructure Elements:** The mission focuses on adequate water supply, assured electricity, robust IT connectivity, efficient urban mobility, public transport, affordable housing, and sustainable environment.
- **Funding Pattern:** The central government provides ₹48,000 crore (₹500 crore per city), matched equally by the state/urban local bodies (ULBs). Additional funds are leveraged through municipal bonds and PPP models.
- **Area-Based Development (ABD) vs. Pan-City:** ABD involves transforming a specific area (minimum 50 acres) into a smart zone, while pan-city solutions apply smart technologies (like IoT traffic management) to the entire city.

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The AP non-conventional energy development cell targeted **50,000 acres of uncultivable, barren land** for commercial solar lease, avoiding agricultural land diversion and boosting renewable capacity.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Renewable Energy Targets:** India aims to achieve 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030 (COP26 Glasgow Pledge). Solar energy is the cornerstone of this transition to net-zero emissions.
- **Ultra Mega Solar Power Parks:** The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) implements the Solar Park Scheme, providing land and transmission infrastructure to developers to achieve economies of scale.
- **Food vs. Fuel Debate:** Utilizing barren, wasteland, or desert areas (like the Bhadla Solar Park in Rajasthan) prevents the diversion of fertile agricultural land, ensuring food security while boosting energy production.
- **State Nodal Agencies:** Each state has a Non-Conventional Energy Development Corporation (NEDCAP in AP) that facilitates land acquisition, clearances, and single-window approvals for renewable projects.

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The promised **free power supply scheme** for registered handloom and powerloom weavers officially came into force on April 1, 2026, significantly reducing production costs for the textile sector.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Handloom & Powerloom Sector:** The handloom sector is the second-largest rural employer after agriculture. AP is a major hub, famous for GI-tagged clusters like Pochampally Ikat, Dharmavaram Pattu, and Mangalagiri sarees.
- **Welfare Schemes:** The National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP) provides block-level development, working capital funds, and building infrastructure. The Powerloom

Sector Development Programme focuses on modernization.

- **Energy Intensive Nature:** Powerlooms are highly energy-intensive. High electricity tariffs severely impact their profitability. Free or subsidized power is a critical welfare intervention to prevent the closure of small-scale units.
- **MUDRA & MSME:** Most weaver units are classified as Micro or Small enterprises. They rely on MUDRA loans (Shishu, Kishor, Tarun) for expansion, and stable utility costs are essential for their financial viability.

SECTION III — TECHNOLOGY, EDUCATION & DEEP TECH

15 **IIFT Kakinada Phase-2**

PAPER II — Education & Economy

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The permanent academic facility of the **Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) Kakinada** was cleared for full phase-2 infrastructural execution, boosting management education in the region.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **IIFT Background:** Established in 1964, IIFT is an Institute of National Importance under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. It is a premier B-school specializing in international business and EXIM policies.
- **Kakinada Campus:** Announced to boost higher education and management studies in the coastal Andhra region, leveraging the area's strong export-import background (seafood, agriculture, and port logistics).
- **Deemed University Status:** IIFT operates as a deemed-to-be university, granting it autonomy in curriculum design, fee structure, and admissions (conducting its own entrance exam, now integrated with CAT).
- **Export Competitiveness:** By training professionals in global trade, supply chain management, and international finance, IIFT directly contributes to India's goal of increasing its share in global merchandise exports.

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

A central allocation of ₹320 crore was sanctioned for the **Central Tribal University of Andhra Pradesh** in Vizianagaram to expand academic and residential infrastructure for tribal students.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Central Universities Act, 2009:** The university was established via an Act of Parliament (along with others in MP, Jharkhand, etc.) to serve as an institution of national importance focusing on tribal studies and education.
- **Article 46:** Directs the State to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections, particularly the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and to protect them from social injustice.
- **Curriculum Focus:** Central Tribal Universities are mandated to integrate tribal culture, language, and traditional knowledge systems into the curriculum, alongside modern sciences and professional courses.
- **Ministry of Education Funding:** As a central university, it receives direct funding from the Union Government, ensuring high-quality infrastructure, faculty recruitment, and research grants without relying on state fiscal capacity.

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The **Indian Institute of Petroleum and Energy (IIPE) Visakhapatnam** entered into a research pact with **OIL India** for shale extraction modeling and advanced hydrocarbon exploration technologies.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **IIPE Status:** Established in 2016 in Visakhapatnam, IIPE was declared an Institute of National Importance (INI) in 2017. It focuses on energy sector research, policy, and technology.
- **OIL India Limited:** A Navratna CPSE under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG), engaged in exploration, production, and transportation of crude oil and natural gas across India.

- **Shale Hydrocarbons:** Shale gas/oil is trapped in fine-grained sedimentary rock. Extraction requires advanced technologies like hydraulic fracturing (fracking) and horizontal drilling, which have high environmental and financial risks.
- **KG Basin Significance:** The Krishna-Godavari (KG) basin is one of India's most prolific hydrocarbon zones. Research into unconventional resources like shale is critical to reducing India's 85% crude oil import dependency.

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AP FiberNet Phase-3 (Tribal Hamlets)

PAPER V / II — Technology & Rural Dev

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

FiberNet infrastructure expanded high-speed broadband lines to over 4,000 remote tribal hamlets, bridging the digital divide and enabling access to e-governance and online education in the Eastern Ghats.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **BharatNet Project:** The world's largest rural broadband connectivity project, implemented in three phases to connect all Gram Panchayats (GPs) with optical fiber. Phase 3 focuses on last-mile connectivity and private player participation.
- **Digital India Programme:** A flagship initiative to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. Broadband highways are one of its nine core pillars of growth.
- **Tribal Welfare & PESA:** Under the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, tribal communities have the right to manage local resources. Internet access empowers them to access market prices, welfare schemes, and digital literacy.
- **Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF):** A non-lapsable fund created to provide support for telecom services in commercially unviable rural and remote areas. It heavily subsidizes FiberNet expansion in tribal zones.

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RTGS Satellite Weather Integration

PAPER V / III — Tech & Disaster Mgmt

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The **Real-Time Governance Society (RTGS)** hub in Vijayawada integrated satellite weather tracking to assist coastal fishermen, providing real-time alerts on cyclones, high waves, and fish

shoals.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **AP RTGS Society:** A unique nodal agency created by the AP government to monitor governance, scheme implementation, and disaster management in real-time using data analytics and satellite imagery.
- **Ocean States Forecast (OSF):** Issued by the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), it provides warnings on wave height, sea state, and cyclone tracks, crucial for marine safety.
- **Potential Fishing Zone (PFZ):** Satellite-derived data identifies chlorophyll-rich zones where fish aggregate. Disseminating this via SMS to fishermen increases catch efficiency and reduces fuel costs.
- **Disaster Management Act, 2005:** Mandates the establishment of disaster management authorities at the national, state, and district levels. Early warning systems are a core component of India's proactive disaster risk reduction strategy.

SECTION IV — ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE, HEALTH & WELFARE

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The Ministry of Agriculture data confirmed that Andhra Pradesh leads the country in **oil palm crop expansion area**, driven by aggressive state incentives and favorable agro-climatic zones in the western districts.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **National Mission on Edible Oils - Oil Palm (NMEO-OP):** Launched in 2021 with a massive outlay to boost domestic oil palm cultivation. It aims to achieve self-reliance in edible oils by expanding the area under cultivation significantly by 2025-26.
- **Import Dependency:** India imports nearly 60% of its edible oil requirements (primarily palm oil from Indonesia and Malaysia). Boosting domestic production is critical for food security and reducing the current account deficit.
- **Price Stability Fund:** Under NMEO-OP, the government guarantees a minimum price to farmers. If international crude palm oil (CPO) prices fall below a threshold, the difference is

shared between the center and state.

- **Environmental Concerns:** Oil palm is a water-intensive crop. Its expansion must be carefully regulated to prevent groundwater depletion and the loss of biodiversity, ensuring it is grown only in suitable zones with assured irrigation.

21 **Mega Aquaculture Park (Aqua Processing)**

PAPER IV — Economy & Environment

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

West Godavari district operationalized a massive **aqua processing zone** with integrated cold storage capacities to halt post-harvest losses and boost shrimp and fish exports.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Blue Economy:** Refers to the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth. Aquaculture is a vital component, providing livelihoods and food security. AP is the largest producer of farmed shrimp in India.
- **PM Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY):** A flagship scheme with an investment of ₹20,050 crore to bring about the Blue Revolution through sustainable and responsible development of the fisheries sector.
- **Cold Chain Infrastructure:** Post-harvest losses in fisheries are high due to a lack of cold storage and processing facilities. Integrated parks provide freezing, vacuum packing, and value-addition units, ensuring higher export realization.
- **Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA):** The apex body under the Ministry of Commerce responsible for the development of the marine products export industry, ensuring compliance with international quality standards.

22 **Heatwave Action Plan (SMS Alerts)**

PAPER III / V — Environment & Health

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The AP Disaster Management Authority deployed district-wise **early warning SMS alerts** for summer heatwaves, advising citizens on hydration and outdoor activity restrictions during peak temperature days.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **NDMA Heatwave Guidelines:** The National Disaster Management Authority issued comprehensive guidelines in 2019, focusing on early warning systems, inter-agency cooperation, and public awareness campaigns to reduce heat-related mortality.
- **Heat Action Plans (HAPs):** Localized, multi-pronged strategies developed by districts to tackle extreme heat. They include setting up cooling shelters, adjusting school/work hours, and ensuring water availability.
- **Indian Meteorological Department (IMD):** Issues color-coded heatwave warnings (Yellow, Orange, Red) based on temperature thresholds. A heatwave is generally declared when maximum temperatures exceed 45°C in plains.
- **Urban Heat Island Effect:** Concrete surfaces in cities absorb and retain heat, making urban areas significantly hotter than rural surroundings. HAPs mandate the use of cool roofs and increased green cover to mitigate this.

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

A state-of-the-art **chemical residue testing laboratory** for agricultural produce was inaugurated in Bapatla, ensuring food safety and enabling local farmers to meet international export standards.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **FSSAI Regulations:** The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India sets scientific standards for food articles and regulates their manufacture, storage, distribution, and sale to ensure safe and wholesome food for human consumption.
- **Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs):** The maximum permissible concentration of pesticide residues in agricultural commodities. Exceeding MRLs leads to the rejection of export consignments by the EU and USA.
- **APEDA & Export Quality:** The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority works to ensure that Indian agricultural exports meet the stringent phytosanitary and chemical residue norms of importing countries.

- **Food Safety Index:** Released annually by FSSAI, it ranks states on five parameters: human resources, compliance, food testing, certification, and consumer awareness. AP consistently ranks among the top states.

24 **Banganapalle Mango Export (GI)**

PAPER IV — Agriculture & Economy

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The horticulture department facilitated the season's first major direct cargo flight of **GI-tagged Banganapalle mangoes** to Europe, ensuring premium price realization for local orchardists.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Geographical Indication (GI) Tag:** An intellectual property right that identifies a good as originating in a specific territory, where a given quality or reputation is essentially attributable to its geographical origin. Banganapalle mangoes are native to Kurnool district.
- **Air Cargo & Logistics:** Direct cargo flights reduce transit time, preserving the shelf life and freshness of perishable horticulture products. This is crucial for accessing high-value markets in the Middle East, Europe, and North America.
- **Phytosanitary Certification:** Exporting fresh fruits requires strict compliance with the quarantine regulations of the importing country. The National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) issues these certificates after inspecting the produce.
- **Horticulture Cluster Development:** A scheme under the Ministry of Agriculture to promote cluster-based development of high-value horticulture crops, focusing on end-to-end solutions from farm to foreign markets.

25 **Pulicat Lake Eco-Protection Zones**

PAPER III — Environment & Ecology

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

Special **eco-protection zones** were demarked around Pulicat lake to guard migratory flamingo habitats, restricting human encroachment and regulating aquaculture activities in the buffer areas.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Pulicat Lake:** The second-largest brackish water lake in India (after Chilika in Odisha), located mostly in Andhra Pradesh (Tirupati district) with a small portion in Tamil Nadu. It is a

critical habitat for migratory birds.

- **Central Asian Flyway:** A major migratory bird route spanning from the Arctic to the Indian Ocean. Pulicat lies on this flyway, hosting thousands of flamingos, pelicans, and sandpipers during the winter months.
- **Wetland Conservation:** While Pulicat is not yet a Ramsar site, it is protected under the Wildlife Protection Act and state biodiversity frameworks. Protecting its ecology is vital for maintaining the local microclimate and fish breeding grounds.
- **Threats to Wetlands:** Unregulated shrimp farming, industrial effluents, and siltation from the Arani and Kalangi rivers threaten the lake's health. Eco-zones aim to balance economic activities with ecological preservation.

SECTION V — CULTURE, TOURISM & HERITAGE

26 **Kondaveedu Fort Tourism (Walkways)**

PAPER I — Art, Culture & Tourism

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The state archaeological department allocated special grants to develop historical walkways and safety railings at **Kondaveedu Fort** in Guntur district, promoting heritage tourism and preserving the site.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Kondaveedu Fort History:** Built by the Reddy kings (Prolaya Vema Reddi) in the 14th century, it served as the capital of the Reddy kingdom. It later passed to the Vijayanagara Empire, Gajapatis of Odisha, and the Qutb Shahis.
- **Architectural Significance:** The fort is perched on a hill and features massive granite walls, intricate gateways, and remnants of temples dedicated to Hindu and Jain deities, reflecting the syncretic culture of the medieval period.
- **Ancient Monuments Act, 1958:** The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) protects monuments of national importance under this Act. State archaeology departments protect monuments of state importance, ensuring their conservation and regulated access.
- **Heritage Tourism:** Developing safe walkways, signage, and lighting encourages tourism, generating local employment and revenue while fostering a sense of pride in regional history among the youth.

CURRENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

Archaeological survey teams initiated fort walls fortification works at **Udayagiri Fort** in Nellore district, utilizing traditional materials and modern conservation techniques to prevent structural decay.

STATIC BACKGROUND — EXPLAINED

- **Udayagiri Fort History:** Originally built by the Vijayanagara rulers, it was later captured by the Golconda Sultanate and eventually the British. It is famous for the Udayagiri cannon (made of Panchaloha - five metals) and the tomb of Sheikh Abdul Khader.
- **Conservation Ethics:** ASI follows the Venice Charter principles, which mandate that restoration must stop where conjecture begins. New materials must be distinguishable from the original, and the structural integrity must be maintained without altering the historical character.
- **Panchaloha Cannon:** The fort houses one of the largest and oldest cannons in India, a marvel of medieval metallurgy. Its conservation requires specialized chemical treatments to prevent rusting and metal fatigue.
- **Tourism Circuit Development:** The restoration is part of a broader state initiative to integrate Nellore's historical sites into the regional tourism circuit, boosting the local economy and preserving the military architecture of the Deccan.

— *End of Compendium* —

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