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RANK - 597
FORMER ASST. COMMANDANT IN BSF
CITY COLLEGE KOLKATA

OUR UPSC TOPPERS 2024



IRS SARLA JAKHER
AIR 593
CITY COLLEGE KOLKATA



IRS TANMAY
AIR 346
IIT KHARAGPUR





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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS-

1. Parali Protection Force
2. Cool Leaders Award
3. Polylactic Acid (PLA)-Based Biodegradable Bioplastics
4. Make in India: 12 Years of Manufacturing Transformation
5. AFSPA Extended in Parts of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland

1.Parali Protection Force

Source: The Hindu

Why in News?

The Haryana government has announced a dedicated **Parali Protection Force**, supported by drone surveillance and late-night patrols, to curb paddy stubble burning ahead of the harvesting season.

What is Parali Protection Force?

- It is a dedicated **district- and block-level enforcement and monitoring mechanism** proposed by the Haryana government to prevent paddy stubble burning through coordinated surveillance, prompt action and farmer support.
- **Aim:** To eliminate stubble-burning incidents, improve air quality and encourage farmers to adopt sustainable crop-residue management practices.

Key Features

- **Multi-agency mechanism:** Includes police personnel, Agriculture Department officials, administrative officers, and nodal and cluster officers to monitor farm fires and coordinate enforcement.
- **Drone surveillance:** Uses drones in coordination with **DRIISHYA**, following directions of the **Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM)**.
- **Late-night patrols:** Intensified evening and night patrols will help detect fires that may escape satellite monitoring.
- **Strict enforcement:** Every verified stubble-burning incident will attract an **FIR, challan, red entry in land records and applicable environmental compensation**.
- **Financial support:** Farmers will receive **₹1,200 per acre** along with subsidies for crop-residue management machinery.
- **Machinery access:** Movement of **balers and rakers** between districts will be facilitated.

- **Nodal officers:** Around **8,134 nodal officers** will use a mobile application to report farm fires and monitor residue management.
- **Straw utilisation:** Straw-storage facilities and industry linkages will support the collection and productive utilisation of paddy straw.

Significance

- Enables **early detection and prevention of farm fires**, helping control seasonal air pollution in Haryana and the wider NCR.
- Combines **enforcement with financial assistance and machinery access**, rather than relying only on punitive measures.
- Promotes alternatives to open-field burning through **crop-residue management and industrial utilisation of paddy straw**.

2.Cool Leaders Award

Source: The Hindu

Why in News?

The **Cool Leaders Award** has been introduced to recognise exemplary leadership, policy breakthroughs, technological innovation and scalable actions in **sustainable cooling and climate resilience**.

What is the Cool Leaders Award?

- It is a global recognition mechanism for individuals, governments and institutions contributing to sustainable cooling and heat resilience.
- **Organisation:** Launched under the aegis of the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** and administered through the UNEP-led **Cool Coalition** in collaboration with **Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL)**.
- **Aim:** To accelerate implementation of commitments under the **Global Cooling Pledge**, first established at COP28.
- It promotes passive cooling, nature-based solutions and ultra-efficient cooling systems, particularly to protect vulnerable communities.



Key Features

- **Turning Commitments into Action:** Converts commitments under the Global Cooling Pledge into measurable policies, practical interventions and sustainable cooling technologies.
- **Nature-Based and Passive Cooling:** Promotes urban forests, green roofs and passive architectural ventilation to reduce dependence on mechanical cooling and potentially lower peak urban temperatures by up to **5°C**.
- **Addressing Rising Cooling Demand:** Encourages low-carbon cooling alternatives as the global stock of conventional cooling appliances is projected to nearly **triple to 5.6 billion units by 2050**.
- **Cross-Sectoral Recognition:** Recognises national governments, municipal authorities and private-sector leaders for innovative cooling policies, heat-resilient urban planning and energy-efficient technologies.
- **Global Heat Resilience:** Complements initiatives such as the **Global Heat Resilience Roadmap** and the GEF-backed **Nature for Cooling Challenge** to promote coordinated action on sustainable cooling and extreme heat.

2026 Inaugural Winners

- **Singapore:** Recognised for integrating passive cooling, urban greenery and heat-resilient urban planning into its sustainable urban development approach.
- **United Arab Emirates (UAE):** Recognised for developing large-scale district-cooling infrastructure and promoting sustainable cooling through international climate diplomacy and development initiatives.
- **Dong Mingzhu (Gree Electric Appliances):** Recognised for advancing ultra-efficient, low-carbon cooling technologies, particularly the research and commercial deployment of the **Zero Carbon Source air-conditioning system**.

3.Polylactic Acid (PLA)-Based Biodegradable Bioplastics

Source: The Hindu

Why in News?

The Union Minister formally launched the commercial development of **Polylactic Acid (PLA)-based biodegradable bioplastics** under the Government of India's **BioE3 (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment & Employment) Policy** framework.

What is PLA?

- PLA is a **bio-based, compostable thermoplastic aliphatic polyester**.
- It is produced by fermenting plant-derived sugars such as **sugarcane, corn starch and cassava** into lactic acid, which is then polymerised to produce PLA.
- It can serve as an alternative to conventional **petroleum-derived non-biodegradable plastics**.

Aim of the Initiative

- Develop indigenous production capabilities for biodegradable plastics using **agricultural feedstocks**.
- Promote high-value and next-generation **sustainable biomanufacturing**.
- Reduce dependence on fossil-fuel-based single-use plastics.
- Support India's transition towards a **bio-based economy**.

Key Features

- **Renewable Feedstocks:** Sugarcane juice, molasses and agricultural biomass can be converted into lactic acid for PLA production, creating a waste-to-wealth model beyond conventional ethanol production.
- **Compostability:** Under suitable industrial composting conditions, PLA can decompose into **water, carbon dioxide and biomass**, reducing persistent plastic waste.
- **100 TPA Pilot Facility:** A proposed **100-tonne-per-annum facility at Kumbhi, Uttar Pradesh**, will help validate production technology, assess economic viability and develop specialised PLA grades before commercial expansion.
- **Versatile Applications:** Depending on the polymer grade, PLA can be used in **packaging, agricultural films, textiles and medical sutures**.

- **Lower Carbon Footprint:** Plant-based production can reduce lifecycle greenhouse-gas emissions, with estimated reductions of up to **60–70%** compared with certain conventional petroleum-derived plastics.

Significance

- Supports India's **Plastic Waste Management Rules** and long-term **net-zero ambitions** by promoting alternatives to conventional plastics.
- Creates additional markets for **sugarcane and agricultural residues**.
- Can diversify **sugar-mill revenues** and promote value addition in the agricultural sector.
- Contributes to India's ambition of developing a **$300-billion bioeconomy**.
- Strengthens domestic capabilities in **sustainable biomanufacturing and biodegradable materials**.

4.Make in India: 12 Years of Manufacturing Transformation

Source: IE

Why in News?

Make in India, launched on **25 September 2014**, has completed 12 years. The initiative has contributed to significant expansion of India's manufacturing capabilities, although challenges remain in investment, exports and the overall contribution of manufacturing to the economy.

Objectives and Evolution

- Make in India was launched to position India as a global hub for **manufacturing, design and innovation**.
- Its initial focus was on:
    - Facilitating investment.
    - Promoting innovation.
    - Developing infrastructure.
    - Improving business processes.
- **Make in India 2.0** expanded the initiative to **27 sectors** — 15 manufacturing and 12 services sectors.
- The manufacturing ecosystem is also supported by:

- Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes.
- National Single Window System (NSWS).
- PM GatiShakti.
- India Industrial Land Bank.

Manufacturing Growth and Sectoral Gains

- Manufacturing GVA at constant prices recorded a **10.88% CAGR between 2022–23 and 2025–26** under the revised national accounts series.
- The manufacturing component of the **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** grew by **7% during April–July 2026** compared with the corresponding period of 2025.

Sector	Key Gains
Electronics	Production increased from about ₹1.9 lakh crore in 2014–15 to ₹13.11 lakh crore in 2025–26.
Mobile Phones	Production rose from ₹18,000 crore to ₹6.27 lakh crore; India became the world's second-largest mobile-phone manufacturer by volume.
Automobiles	Vehicle production reached 31.03 million units in 2024–25, around 33% higher than in 2014–15.
Pharmaceuticals	Annual turnover reached ₹4,71,898 crore in 2024–25.
Medical Devices	Domestic manufacturing increased from ₹28,000 crore in 2019–20 to ₹41,500 crore.
Steel	Crude steel production increased from 81.7 million tonnes in 2014–15 to 170 million tonnes in 2025–26.
Defence	Indigenous defence production increased from ₹46,429 crore to ₹1.78 lakh crore.

Strategic and Component Manufacturing

- Manufacturing capabilities are increasingly expanding beyond finished products towards **components and strategic technologies**.
- **Solar-module capacity:** Increased from 2.3 GW in 2014 to **192 GW by June 2026**.
- **Solar-cell capacity:** Increased from 1.2 GW to around **30 GW**.
- India has developed indigenous **microprocessors for space applications**.
- A pilot facility for **Nd-Fe-B rare-earth permanent magnets** has also been established.

Investment and PLI Schemes

- The **14 PLI schemes** attracted:
  - ₹2.40 lakh crore in investment.
  - More than ₹22.66 lakh crore in production and sales.

  - Over ₹15.20 lakh crore in exports.
  - More than 14 lakh jobs.
- These figures are as of **June 2026**.
- However, PLI investment remains concentrated: **solar modules, pharmaceuticals, automobiles and components, speciality steel and large-scale electronics account for nearly 83% of PLI investment**.

Key Challenges

- Manufacturing's overall share of economic output, employment and global exports has not increased proportionately.
- Its share in GVA increased only marginally from **14.6% in 2022–23 to 15.6% in 2025–26**.
- Non-petroleum goods exports increased from **$253.5 billion in 2014–15 to $388.3 billion in 2025–26**, but India's share of global merchandise exports remained around **1.7%**.
- Private-sector **Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF)** as a share of GDP has declined in recent years.
- Manufacturing FDI grew more slowly than overall FDI in **7 of the 12 years** examined.
- Capacity utilisation has improved but remains below the **80% level** generally associated with fresh capacity creation.
- PLI benefits remain concentrated in a limited number of sectors.

Recent Policy Push

The next phase is increasingly focused on **domestic value addition and strategic manufacturing capabilities**:

- **Semicon 2.0:** ₹1,27,500 crore allocation for semiconductor design, manufacturing, packaging, materials, equipment, research and talent.
- **BHAVYA:** ₹33,660 crore for **100 investment-ready industrial parks**.
- **Rare-Earth Permanent Magnets:** ₹7,280 crore allocated for integrated manufacturing of sintered rare-earth permanent magnets.

Way Forward

- Shift from simply increasing production towards building **competitive domestic value chains**.
- Encourage greater private-sector investment.

- Develop stronger component and supplier ecosystems.
- Improve capacity utilisation.
- Promote indigenous technology development.
- Deepen integration with **global value chains (GVCs)**.
- Diversify manufacturing beyond a few PLI-supported sectors.

Conclusion

Twelve years of Make in India have expanded India's manufacturing capabilities across **electronics, automobiles, pharmaceuticals, steel, defence and strategic technologies**. However, the next phase needs to focus on translating these capabilities into **broader, technology-intensive and globally competitive manufacturing growth**, with stronger domestic value chains and private investment.

5.AFSPA Extended in Parts of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland

Source: The Hindu

Why in News?

The Union Home Ministry has extended the **Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA)** for another six months in parts of **Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland**, citing continuing security concerns.

AFSPA and Disturbed Areas

- The **AFSPA, 1958** provides special powers to armed forces in areas declared as **"disturbed areas"**.
- Under **Section 3**, the Governor, Administrator of a Union Territory or the Central Government can declare an area disturbed when the use of armed forces is considered necessary in aid of civil power.
- **Section 4** provides powers such as:
    - Opening fire, including causing death, after due warning in specified circumstances.
    - Arresting without warrant on reasonable suspicion.
    - Entering and searching premises without warrant.
    - Stopping and searching vehicles suspected of carrying arms or offenders.

- **Section 6** provides protection from prosecution or legal proceedings for actions under the Act without prior sanction of the Central Government.

Present Status in the Northeast

- **Manipur:** AFSPA continues across the State except the jurisdiction of **13 police stations in five valley districts**. Its continuation is linked to the ethnic violence that began in May 2023.
- **Nagaland:** Extended in **nine districts** and in specified police-station areas of five other districts.
- **Arunachal Pradesh:** Extended in **Tirap, Changlang and Longding districts**, along with three police stations in Namsai district.
- AFSPA was reimposed in six police-station areas of Manipur in November 2024 following renewed violence.
- The application of AFSPA remains dynamic and is subject to periodic security reviews.

Judicial and Committee Interventions

- **Naga People's Movement for Human Rights v. Union of India (1997):** The Supreme Court upheld the constitutional validity of AFSPA while stressing periodic review and the use of minimum force.
- **EEVFAM v. Union of India (2016):** The Supreme Court held that excessive or retaliatory force is impermissible even in disturbed areas and that alleged extrajudicial killings can be subject to judicial scrutiny.
- **Justice Jeevan Reddy Committee (2005):** Recommended repeal of AFSPA and incorporation of necessary provisions into the **UAPA**; it described AFSPA as a "symbol of oppression".

Security–Rights Balance

- AFSPA is justified by the security challenges and armed insurgency in disturbed areas, but its extraordinary powers raise concerns regarding **fundamental rights, accountability and civilian oversight**.
- A balanced approach requires periodic review of disturbed-area notifications, adherence to minimum and proportionate force, investigation of alleged excesses and stronger accountability mechanisms.
- The objective should be to combine **national security with protection of constitutional rights and restoration of normal civilian administration**.

UPSC Prelims Practice

Q.With reference to the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958, consider the following statements:

1. Section 3 deals with the declaration of an area as a "disturbed area".
2. Section 4 provides certain special powers to armed forces in disturbed areas.
3. Section 6 requires prior sanction of the Central Government before prosecution or legal proceedings against personnel for actions under the Act.
4. Only the Central Government can declare an area as a disturbed area under the Act.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (b) 1, 2 and 3 only

Explanation: Under Section 3, the Governor of a State, Administrator of a UT or Central Government can declare an area disturbed. Hence, statement 4 is incorrect.

UPSC Mains Practice

Q."AFSPA represents the continuing challenge of balancing internal security with constitutional rights." Discuss the need for periodic review, accountability and proportionality in its application. (150 words)