

SMILE SCHEME

(Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise)

The **SMILE** scheme is a prestigious Central Government initiative launched by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**.

1. QUICK FACTS

- **Launch Date:** February 12, 2022.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- **Target Groups:** 1. Transgender persons.
2. Persons engaged in the act of begging.
- **Budget Allocation (2021-22 to 2025-26):** ₹390 Crores.

2. SUB-SCHEMES

The SMILE scheme consists of two primary components:

A. REHABILITATION FOR TRANSGENDER PERSONS

Key facilities provided under this section include:

- **Scholarships:** Financial assistance for transgender students studying from 9th grade to Post-Graduation.
- **Ayushman Bharat TG Plus:** Health insurance of ₹5 lakhs per year for every transgender person. This includes '**Sex Reassignment Surgery**' (SRS).
- **Garima Greh:** Shelter homes established for homeless transgender individuals. Currently, 21 Garima Grehs are operational.
- **PM-DAKSH:** Skill development training and a monthly stipend of ₹1,000.
- **National Portal:** A centralized portal for obtaining identity cards and certificates.

B. REHABILITATION FOR PERSONS ENGAGED IN BEGGING

- **Survey & Identification:** Identifying persons engaged in begging across cities (currently implemented in 181 cities).
- **Mobilization:** Bringing individuals into the mainstream through counseling.
- **Bhiksha-Vrutti Mukh Bharat:** The ultimate goal is to make India a "begging-free" nation.
- **Skill Training:** Providing self-employment opportunities by training individuals in trades like tailoring, carpentry, and e-rickshaw driving.

3. CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL CONTEXT (UPSC PERSPECTIVE)

- **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019:** This law prohibits discrimination against transgender individuals. The SMILE scheme acts as a tool to implement the provisions of this Act.

- **Article 21:** The scheme is designed to uphold the **Right to Life with Dignity**.
- **National Council for Transgender Persons:** A **Statutory Body** that monitors the welfare of these communities.

KEY TERMS FOR COMPETITIVE EXAMS

- **PM-DAKSH:** Related to skill development.
- **Garima Greh:** Shelter homes for transgender persons.
- **SMILE-Beggary Portal:** For monitoring and registration.
- **Composite Medical Health:** A health package under Ayushman Bharat that includes sex reassignment surgeries.

CIVIL SERVICES DAY 2026: KEY HIGHLIGHTS

BASIC INFORMATION

- **Date:** April 21, 2026 (18th Edition).
- **Chief Guest:** Honorable Vice President of India, Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan.
- **Organizing Department:** Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG).
- **Venue:** Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

1. HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE

- **Historical Event:** On April 21, 1947, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first Home Minister of independent India, addressed probationary officers at Metcalf House.
- **Steel Frame of India:** Patel described civil servants as the "**Steel Frame of India**." Civil Services Day is celebrated every year to commemorate that day.

2. 2026 THEME

"Viksit Bharat: Citizen-Centric Governance and Development at the Last Mile"

- **Objective:** To provide transparent and accountable governance in line with the '**Viksit Bharat 2047**' vision.

3. THEMATIC SESSIONS - GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

Four special sessions were held during this celebration focusing on major themes:

Session Theme	Related Central Scheme / Ministry
Sustainable Livelihood	PM Vishwakarma (Ministry of MSME)

Session Theme	Related Central Scheme / Ministry
Prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Reducing Financial Risk for Farmers	KCC (Kisan Credit Card) & other agricultural schemes
Net-Zero Path	PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana

4. PERSONALITIES IN NEWS

- **Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan:** Vice President of India.
- **Dr. Jitendra Singh:** Union Minister of State (MoS) for Personnel, Public Grievances.
- **Dr. T.V. Somanathan:** Cabinet Secretary (He will speak on 'Ethics and Efficiency in Civil Services').

QUICK REVISION POINTS FOR EXAMS

- Civil Services Day was first inaugurated in 2006.
- The "**Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration**" are presented annually on this day.
- **Articles 311 & 312:** These articles in the Indian Constitution deal with the protections for civil servants and the creation of All India Services, respectively.

PM VIKAS SCHEME - MOU WITH IIT PATNA

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Ministry:** Ministry of Minority Affairs.
- **Partner Institution:** Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Patna.
- **Scheme Name:** PM VIKAS (Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan).
- **Target Group:** 600 minority youth from the state of Bihar.

1. KEY OBJECTIVES

- **Skill Development:** Providing modern, technology-based skills to minority youth.
- **Employment Generation:** Improving placement opportunities by providing training tailored to industry requirements.

- **Sustainable Livelihood:** Promoting the socio-economic development of minority communities through contemporary training methods.

2. HIGH-DEMAND TRAINING ROLES

IIT Patna will provide training in the following cutting-edge fields:

1. **AI Technocrat:** Technical expertise in the field of Artificial Intelligence.
2. **Business Analytics Executive:** Data analytics and analysis of business strategies.

3. WHAT IS THE PM VIKAS SCHEME? (UPSC/SSC CONTEXT)

PM VIKAS is an integrated scheme designed by merging five erstwhile schemes (**Seekho Aur Kamao, USTTAD, Hamari Virasat, Nai Roshni, and Nai Manzil**). It comprises four primary components:

- Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- Entrepreneurship Support.
- Preservation of heritage arts and culture of minority communities.
- Education and Leadership Development.

4. OTHER RECENT MOUS

In addition to IIT Patna, agreements were signed with several other institutions under this scheme last week:

- **IIT Dharwad** (Karnataka)
- **NIT Manipur**
- **CSIR-CMERI, Durgapur** (West Bengal)
- **Arunachal Pradesh Forest Corporation Limited**

QUICK NOTES FOR EXAMS

- **Full Form of PM VIKAS:** Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan.
- **Core Focus:** Technologically empowering minorities as part of the '**Viksit Bharat**' goal.
- **Main Objective:** Connecting traditional skills with modern technology (AI, Data Science).

DSC A 23 (YARD 328) - FOURTH DIVING SUPPORT CRAFT

KEY INFORMATION

- **Launch Date:** April 19, 2026.
- **Venue:** Titagarh, Kolkata (West Bengal).
- **Manufacturer:** M/s Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL).
- **Launched By:** Smt. Deepa Sivakumar, in the presence of Vice Admiral B. Sivakumar (Chief of Material).

1. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

- **Project Scope:** This is the 4th vessel in a project consisting of a total of 5 ships.
- **Design:** It features a **Catamaran-hull** design, which provides excellent stability at sea and a larger deck area.
- **Dimensions:** 30 meters in length with a displacement of approximately 380 tonnes.
- **Technical Support:** Model testing and hydrodynamic analysis for these ships were conducted at the **NSTL (Naval Science and Technological Laboratory)** in Visakhapatnam.

2. OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES

These vessels will strengthen the Indian Navy in the following areas:

- **Diving Support:** Supporting diving operations in coastal waters and harbors.
- **Underwater Inspection:** Inspecting underwater structures.
- **Salvage Assistance:** Assisting in the recovery of sunken or damaged objects.
- **Coastal Patrol:** Operational deployment along the coast.

3. 'ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT' AND MAKE IN INDIA

- **Indigenous Technology:** 70% of the main and auxiliary equipment in these ships has been sourced from indigenous manufacturers.
- This stands as a testament to the Indian Government's goals of '**Atmanirbhar Bharat**' (Self-reliant India) and '**Make in India**' in the defense sector.

QUICK NOTES FOR EXAMS

- **What is DSC?** Diving Support Craft (Specialized vessels used for underwater operations).
- **Where is NSTL located?** Visakhapatnam (It operates under the DRDO).
- **TRSL:** This Kolkata-based private firm is constructing ships for the Indian Navy.

INS SUDARSHINI - LOKAYAN 26 VOYAGE

KEY INFORMATION

- **Vessel Type:** Sail Training Ship (STS).
- **City Visited:** Casablanca (Morocco).
- **Completion Date:** April 18, 2026.
- **Mission Name:** Lokayan 26.
- **Next Destination:** Las Palmas, Spain.

1. PURPOSE OF VISIT

- **Training Exchange:** Facilitating professional interaction and exchange of training aspects between Indian Naval trainees and Royal Moroccan Naval School cadets.
- **Maritime Partnership:** Strengthening maritime relations between India and Morocco.

- **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam:** Spreading the message of global peace and friendship through the seas.

2. ABOUT INS SUDARSHINI

- **Design & Construction:** Built indigenously by **Goa Shipyard Limited** in Kochi, Kerala.
- **Role:** Used for providing basic seamanship and sailing training to Indian Naval officers.
- **Class:** It is the second training ship of the **Tarangini Class**.

3. RELATIONS WITH MOROCCO - GEOGRAPHICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Morocco is located in the **Northwest** of the African continent.
- It shares borders with both the **Atlantic Ocean** and the **Mediterranean Sea**.
- **Strait of Gibraltar:** This strait, located between Morocco and Spain, is vital for international trade.

QUICK REVISION POINTS FOR EXAMS

- **INS Tarangini & INS Sudarshini:** These are the two well-known sail training ships of the Indian Navy.
- **Lokayan:** A long-distance voyage organized by the Indian Navy to foster good relations with nations worldwide.
- **Casablanca:** The largest city and a major port in Morocco.

JAGADGURU BASAVESHWARA (BASAVANNA)

BASIC DETAILS

- **Period:** 12th Century (1131-1167 AD).
- **Region:** Karnataka.
- **Vision:** Social equality, a caste-free society, and women's empowerment.

1. HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

- **Lingayat Movement:** Basaveshwara initiated the 'Lingayat' or 'Veerashaiva' movement against caste discrimination within Hinduism.
- **Vachana Literature:** He propagated his teachings through '**Vachanas**' (rhythmic poems) in the Kannada language, making them easily understandable to the common man.
- **Anubhava Mantapa:** He established the '**Anubhava Mantapa**' (Hall of Spiritual Experience), which is considered the world's first parliament. Here, people from all walks of life discussed social and spiritual issues.

2. KEY PHILOSOPHIES

- **Kayakave Kailasa:** This translates to "**Work is Worship**." He taught that every individual should engage in physical labor and that work itself is the path to salvation.
- **Dasoha:** The practice of utilizing a portion of one's earnings for social service and helping the poor.
- **Anti-Casteism:** He argued that a person's greatness is determined by their character and conduct, not by their birth.

3. POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUND

- Basaveshwara served as the **Prime Minister** in the court of King **Bijjala II** of the Kalachuri dynasty (Kalyani Chalukya era).
- He used his administrative power to implement social reforms and provide equal rights to the marginalized sections of society.

4. CURRENT SIGNIFICANCE

- **Basava Jayanti:** Celebrated on the third day (Tritiya) of the Shukla Paksha in the month of Vaisakha.
- **Statue of Equality (London):** In 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a statue of Basaveshwara on the banks of the River Thames in London.
- **Viksit Bharat:** The government's concept of 'Antyodaya' (development until the last mile) aligns with the core teachings of Basavanna.

QUICK REVISION POINTS FOR EXAMS

- **Founded:** Anubhava Mantapa.
- **Key Principle:** Kayakave Kailasa (Work is Worship).
- **Literature:** Vachanas (Kannada).
- **Reform Focus:** A caste-less society and equal respect for women.

INDIA - SOUTH KOREA SUMMIT 2026: KEY OUTCOMES

CORE BACKGROUND

- **Partnership:** Strengthening the "**Special Strategic Partnership**" between India and South Korea.
- **Year of Friendship:** It has been decided to celebrate the year **2028-29** as the "**India-Korea Year of Friendship**."

1. STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- **Shipping & Maritime:** A comprehensive framework for **Shipbuilding**, shipping, and maritime logistics.
- **Energy Security:** A joint statement on the security and sustainability of energy resources.
- **CEPA Upgrade:** Resumption of negotiations to modernize the **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)**.

2. KEY MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING (MOUS)

Potential areas for examination questions:

- **Digital Bridge:** A framework for the establishment of the **India-Korea Digital Bridge**.
- **UPI & Payments:** An agreement between **NPCI International** and the **Korean Financial Telecommunications Institute** for digital payments.
- **Environment:** Cooperation under **Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement** and an agreement on climate change.

- **Industries:** Cooperation in the steel supply chain, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (**MSME**), and the ports sector.
- **Culture:** A Cultural Exchange Program (**CEP**) for the period **2026-2030**.

3. KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Indo-Pacific:** South Korea has joined India's "**Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative**" (**IPOI**).
- **ISA & GGGI:** South Korea joined the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, while India joined the **Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI)**.
- **Economic Security:** Launch of the "**Economic Security Dialogue**."
- **Arctic Cooperation:** Initiation of a new dialogue between the Foreign Ministries on climate change and the **Arctic region**.

4. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS ANALYSIS (UPSC CONTEXT)

- **Act East Policy:** The bond with South Korea is a vital component of India's '**Act East Policy**.'
- **Economic Security:** Both nations are striving for **Supply Chain** security while reducing dependence on China.
- **Tech Cooperation:** Korean technology is crucial for India in **semiconductors**, digital technology, and green energy.

QUICK NOTES FOR EXAMS

- **CEPA:** Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (In effect between India and Korea since 2010).
- **IPOI:** Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative, proposed by India.
- **Key City: Seoul** (Capital of South Korea).

ANDHRA PRADESH EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME (MGNREGA): 2025-26 ANALYSIS

Report Source: LibTech India (A public policy research organization).

Main Finding: A significant decline in employment generation and income in 2025-26 compared to 2024-25.

1. KEY STATISTICAL TRENDS

These are crucial for data analysis in competitive exams:

- **Decline in Persondays:** Total persondays decreased by **23.2%** (from 2,422.84 lakhs to 1,859.77 lakhs). This is the lowest performance since the state reorganization in 2015-16.
- **Household Participation:** The number of households that received employment decreased by **8.6%**.
- **100 Days of Work:** The number of families completing 100 days of work plummeted by **57.6%** (from 5.1 lakhs down to 2.16 lakhs).
- **Average Persondays:** The average days of work provided per household dropped from **51.62 to 43.37 days**.

2. DISTRICT-LEVEL ANALYSIS

- Employment generation declined across all **26 districts** of the state.
- **Districts with the highest decline:**
 1. **NTR District (46.5%)** – Highest decline.
 2. **Chittoor (38.5%)**.
 3. **Annamayya (30.9%)**.

3. WAGES AND INCOME

- **Wage Change:** Although the wage rate increased from **₹300 to ₹307**, the total income of workers decreased due to the reduction in available working days.
- **Annual Income:** The average annual household income fell from **₹13,190 to ₹11,464**.

4. THE TRANSITION (POLICY CHANGE)

Exam questions are likely to focus on this new mission:

- **Repeal of MGNREGA:** The MGNREGA Act was repealed in **December 2025** and replaced with a new scheme.
- **New Scheme: VB-GRAMG** (Viksit Bharat–Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission - Gramin).
- **Impact:** The report states that institutional gaps during this transition period caused disruptions in employment generation.

5. WORKFORCE CONTRACTION (JOB CARD DELETIONS)

- While the addition of new job cards was high across the rest of the country, in Andhra Pradesh, **4.58 lakh job cards** and **12.33 lakh workers** were removed from the employment rolls.

QUICK NOTES FOR EXAMS

- **LibTech India:** A research organization focusing on the delivery of welfare schemes.
- **VB-GRAMG:** The new rural employment mission that replaced MGNREGA.
- **Record Low:** This marks the weakest year for the implementation of the employment guarantee scheme in AP since the state bifurcation.

VISAKHAPATNAM: INTERNATIONAL CRUISE TOURISM HUB

MAJOR DEVELOPMENT

- **Operator:** Cordelia Cruises.
- **Highlight:** The first international cruise voyage from Visakhapatnam is set to begin.
- **Launch Dates:** Domestic services (from Chennai) start on **June 22**, and international services (from Vizag) start on **July 15**.

1. ITINERARY DETAILS

- **Domestic Service:** Chennai – Visakhapatnam – Puducherry – Chennai.
- **International Service (14 Days):** Visakhapatnam – Chennai – Phuket (Thailand) – Langkawi & Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) – Singapore.
- **Significance:** This establishes a sustainable cruise circuit connecting Chennai, Visakhapatnam, and Southeast Asian countries.

2. ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

- **State Revenue:** The Andhra Pradesh government will receive significant revenue in the form of **18% GST** on every cabin sale.
- **Employment:** Tourism growth will increase job opportunities for local hotels, transport services, and guides.
- **Stability:** Cruise voyages are planned 2–3 years in advance; therefore, initial success will likely attract more cruise liners to Visakhapatnam in the future.

3. VESSEL CAPACITY AND AMENITIES

- **Passenger Capacity:** 1,800 people (793 cabins).
- **Crew:** Approximately 650 members.
- **Facilities:** State-of-the-art amenities including restaurants, a theater, spa, swimming pool, and a casino.
- **Cost:** Approximately ₹10,000 per person per night.

4. TOURISM SECTOR - AP POLICIES (UPSC/APPSC CONTEXT)

- **Marine Tourism:** The Andhra Pradesh government is specifically focusing on cruise tourism as part of leveraging its long coastline (approx. **974 km**).
- **Visakhapatnam Port:** The availability of a modern '**International Cruise Terminal**' in Vizag is the primary driver for this development.

QUICK NOTES FOR EXAMS

- **Cordelia Cruises:** A leading cruise operator in India.
- **International Destinations:** Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand.
- **GST Rate:** 18% for cruise services.
- **Vizag Cruise Terminal:** Jointly constructed by the Union Ministry of Tourism and the Visakhapatnam Port Trust.

HUNGARY ELECTION RESULTS

BACKGROUND

- **Viktor Orbán:** Prime Minister of Hungary for the past 16 years. He is known as the father of "**Illiberal Democracy**" or "**Electoral Autocracy**."
- **Winner: Péter Magyar.** He defeated the '**Tisza**' party led by Orbán.

KEY TERMINOLOGY FOR EXAMS

- **Illiberal Democracy:** A system where elections take place, but civil rights, freedom of the press, and the independence of the judiciary are compromised.
- **Electoral Autocracy:** A regime that is elected through the electoral process but rules in an authoritarian or despotic manner.
- **Cronyism:** The practice where politicians provide unfair financial benefits or advantages to their friends and close associates.
- **Viksit Bharat 2047:** Using the example of Hungary, countries like India can draw lessons on the importance of achieving development while strictly safeguarding democratic values.

QUICK REVISION POINTS

- **Country:** Hungary (Capital: Budapest).
- **Political Shift:** The 16-year dominance of Viktor Orbán has faced a significant challenge from Péter Magyar's Tisza party.
- **Geographical Context:** Hungary is a landlocked country in Central Europe and is a member of the European Union (EU) and NATO.

LABOUR MOVEMENTS AND NEW LABOUR CODES IN INDIA

CURRENT CONTEXT

- **Noida Protests:** Workers in the Noida industrial belt have mobilized on a large scale demanding wage hikes, regulation of working hours, and other fundamental rights.
- **Motivation:** The Haryana government's decision to increase wages for its workers by 35% has led to growing resentment among Noida workers regarding their own low pay scales.

1. NEW LABOUR CODES: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The new Labour Codes, implemented by the Central Government starting late 2025, are significantly impacting the workforce:

- **Working Hours:** The new codes permit a **12-hour workday**. Consequently, employers often expect more productivity for the same minimum wage.
- **Wage Determination:** While the Center sets a '**Wage Floor**', the actual determination of wages is left to the states. This has widened wage disparities between different states.
- **Contract Labour:** The percentage of contract labor in the formal manufacturing sector is currently at its highest since 1997-98. The new codes appear to favor contractualization over job security.
- **Restrictions on Strikes:** The new codes impose severe limitations on the right to strike, hindering workers' ability to voice their protests.

2. TIMELINE OF RECENT LABOUR UNREST

These incidents reflect the current state of labor rights across various regions in India:

1. **Sriperumbudur (Tamil Nadu):** Samsung workers' strike (over wages and union recognition).
2. **Panipat (Haryana):** IOCL refinery workers' strike (demanding an 8-hour workday).

3. Patratu (Jharkhand) & Raipur (Chhattisgarh): Protests at NTPC and Adani plants.

3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

Beyond wages, several other factors contribute to worker unrest:

- **Inflation:** Rising prices for food and LPG have eroded real income. An average worker now spends nearly **1/6th** of their income just on cooking costs.
- **Lack of Tripartite Consultation:** The **Indian Labour Conference (ILC)** has not met since 2015. Trade unions oppose the new laws as they were drafted without sufficient dialogue between workers, employers, and the government.

4. CIVIL RIGHTS CONCERNS

- **Social Exclusion:** Instances of residential societies boycotting domestic workers who participated in protests—including displaying their photos at gates—are being viewed as serious violations of civil rights.

WAY FORWARD

- **Humane Working Hours:** Regulating work hours to ensure physical and mental well-being is not compromised.
- **Genuine Reforms:** Implementing labor reforms that are effective on the ground, not just on paper.
- **Restoring Dialogue:** Reviving platforms like the Indian Labour Conference to ensure decisions are made through inclusive consultation.

KEY TERMS FOR EXAMS

- **Wage Floor:** The base minimum wage set by the Central Government.
- **Contractualization:** The shift from permanent employment to contract-based jobs.
- **Tripartite Consultation:** Three-way discussions between the Government, Employers, and Workers.
- **ILC:** Indian Labour Conference.

SHANTI ACT, 2025: REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES IN INDIA'S NUCLEAR ENERGY SECTOR

BACKGROUND

- **Full Name:** Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Act, 2025.
- **Primary Objective:** To increase the current nuclear power capacity from **8.7 GW** to **100 GW** by 2047.
- **Key Change:** Permitting private companies to manage nuclear power plants and allowing for the mobilization of foreign funding.

1. REGULATORY AND RESPONSIBILITY FRAMEWORK

- **Unified Legal Framework:** This Act clearly separates the protocols for **Regulation (Control)** and **Safety**.

- **Licensee Responsibility:** The operating organization (Licensee) bears full responsibility for safety, security, and the implementation of regulations.
- **Lifetime Commitment:** Since nuclear plants operate longer than other power plants, it is mandatory to maintain design support throughout the plant's lifetime and conduct a **Periodic Safety Review (PSR)** every 10 years.

2. FINANCIAL & WASTE MANAGEMENT

Private entities must provide financial security for the following aspects:

- **Waste Management:** Ensuring the safe storage of nuclear waste.
- **Compensation:** Settlement of claims for damages caused by radiation.
- **Decommissioning:** Safely closing and dismantling the plant after its operational lifespan ends.

3. TECHNOLOGY CHOICES

- **Indigenous Reactors:** Experts suggest that the **700 MW Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWR)** are the ideal choice for the private sector.
- **Foreign Technology Challenges:** Importing foreign reactors involves high costs, and **Design Validation** to adapt them to Indian conditions can take 2-3 years.

4. INVESTOR PRIORITIES

Private companies consider these four factors before investing:

1. **Site Selection:** Choosing the right location.
2. **Affordable Technology:** Access to cost-effective tech.
3. **Government Hand-holding:** Support from the administration.
4. **Tariff Viability:** Efficiency and competitiveness of electricity pricing.

5. SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY CONTEXT (UPSC/SSC)

- **Radioisotopes & Half-life:** The half-life of radioactive isotopes is constant (e.g., if it is 30 years, it remains unchanged). Safety standards must be designed with this physical property in mind.
- **NPCIL: Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd** is currently the sole public sector undertaking managing nuclear plants in India.

IMPORTANT POINTS FOR EXAMS

- **SHANTI Act:** The legislation that opened doors for private participation and foreign investment in nuclear energy.
- **Goal: 100 GW** of nuclear power by 2047.
- **Section 10:** Specifically defines the duties and responsibilities of private entities entering this sector.
- **AEC: Atomic Energy Commission.**

NORTH KOREA MISSILE TESTS - APRIL 2026

CURRENT DEVELOPMENT

- **Event:** On Sunday, North Korea launched a series of **Short-range Ballistic Missiles (SRBMs)** toward the sea.
- **Range:** These missiles traveled approximately **140 km** before falling into the eastern waters.
- **Context:** These launches occurred just days after the **IAEA** (UN nuclear watchdog) warned that North Korea is making "very serious" progress in its nuclear weapons production.

1. WHAT IS A BALLISTIC MISSILE? (UPSC/SSC STATIC GK)

- **Definition:** Ballistic missiles are those that follow a suborbital flight path. After launch, they travel to the upper atmosphere and use gravity to fall onto their target.
- **Classification:** Based on range, they are classified as:
 - **SRBM** (Short Range) – *North Korea's recent test falls here.*
 - **MRBM** (Medium Range)
 - **IRBM** (Intermediate Range)
 - **ICBM** (Intercontinental Ballistic Missile)

2. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND SECURITY CHALLENGES

- **IAEA Warning:** According to the International Atomic Energy Agency, North Korea is continuously expanding its nuclear test sites and uranium enrichment plants.
- **UN Sanctions:** The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has already imposed numerous sanctions on North Korea's ballistic missile and nuclear testing; however, the country continues to defy them.
- **Regional Impact:** These tests pose a significant security threat to **South Korea** and **Japan**.

3. ABOUT IAEA (QUICK REVISION FOR EXAMS)

- **Full Name:** International Atomic Energy Agency.
- **Established:** 1957.
- **Headquarters:** Vienna, Austria.
- **Motto/Objective:** "Atoms for Peace and Development" – ensuring nuclear energy is used for peaceful purposes and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

IMPORTANT POINTS FOR EXAMS

- **Distance Travelled:** 140 km.
- **Missile Type:** Short-range Ballistic Missile (SRBM).
- **IAEA Report:** Expressed concern over the expansion of North Korea's nuclear capabilities.
- **Geographic Region:** Korean Peninsula.

FRANCE - GREECE SECURITY PACT (2026)

BASIC INFORMATION

- **Visit:** French President Emmanuel Macron is scheduled to visit Greece on April 24–25, 2026.

- **Primary Objective:** To renew the existing security agreement between the two nations for an additional five years.

1. KEY PROVISIONS OF THE PACT

- **Duration:** The agreement will remain in effect for five years, after which it will be renewed "automatically."
- **Context:** This security cooperation has gained significance against the backdrop of geopolitical uncertainty and conflict in the Middle East (specifically involving Iran).
- **Mutual Defense:** Under this pact, both countries commit to providing military assistance to each other if a threat arises from a third party.

2. GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT (UPSC PERSPECTIVE)

- **Eastern Mediterranean:** Alliance between France and Greece is crucial due to energy resource interests and border disputes in this region.
- **Impact of Iran Conflict:** As tensions centered around Iran affect global oil supplies and European security, European nations are strengthening their individual defense ties.
- **Cooperation within NATO:** Although both France and Greece are members of **NATO** (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), this bilateral agreement serves as an additional defensive shield.

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND - DEFENSE PROCUREMENTS

- In the past, the Greek government signed deals to purchase advanced **Rafale** fighter jets and **Belharra-class** frigates (warships) from France. The current security pact further bolsters this defense trade relationship.

QUICK REVISION POINTS FOR EXAMS

- **Emmanuel Macron:** President of France.
- **Region of Focus:** The Aegean Sea and Eastern Mediterranean waters.
- **Nature of Agreement:** Security Pact.
- **International Relations:** Strong economic and defense ties exist between these two nations within the framework of the **EU (European Union)** and **NATO**.

ARGENTINA - ISRAEL RELATIONS AND THE ISAAC ACCORDS

CURRENT NEWS

- **Announcement:** Argentine President Javier Milei has declared his support for the U.S.-Israel military actions against Iran, describing them as a "correct action."
- **Isaac Accords:** President Milei has signed the **Isaac Accords**, an agreement aimed at strengthening ties between Israel and Latin American nations.

1. THE ISAAC ACCORDS - KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Potential exam focus areas:

- **Objective:** To deepen diplomatic, economic, and defense relations between Israel and Latin American (South American) countries.
- **Significance:** Similar to the previously established '**Abraham Accords**' (between Arab nations and Israel), these are intended to expand Israel's influence across Latin America.

2. DESIGNATION OF IRGC AS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

- **Decision:** The Argentine government has officially designated Iran's **Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)** as a "terrorist organization."
- **Background:** Argentina has long accused Iran of involvement in the **1994 AMIA Center bombing** in Buenos Aires. In this context, the current decision is diplomatically significant.

3. GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT (UPSC PERSPECTIVE)

- **Shift in Foreign Policy:** Previous leftist governments in Argentina maintained a softer stance toward Iran. However, President Javier Milei is distancing the country from Russia, China, and Iran, while leaning decisively toward the **U.S. and Israel**.
- **Divide in Latin America:** While countries like Colombia and Brazil have criticized Israel's actions, Argentina's vocal support indicates a diplomatic rift within the continent.

4. IRAN CONFLICT - INTERNATIONAL IMPACT

- Argentina's support provides further international moral backing to the U.S.-Israel alliance.
- The Isaac Accords are expected to serve as a platform to curb the activities of Iran and **Hezbollah** in Latin America.

QUICK REVISION POINTS FOR EXAMS

- **Javier Milei:** President of Argentina.
- **Isaac Accords:** Diplomatic agreement between Israel and Latin American countries.
- **IRGC:** Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (Iran's powerful military wing).
- **AMIA Attack (1994):** The largest terrorist attack in Argentina's history, which fundamentally impacted Iran-Argentina relations.

INDIA - SRI LANKA BILATERAL RELATIONS (APRIL 2026)

Significance: This marks the first-ever bilateral visit to Sri Lanka by a Vice President of India.

1. ENERGY COOPERATION

Questions regarding the significance of 'Trincomalee' are likely in exams:

- **Trincomalee Energy Hub:** India is keen on transforming Trincomalee, an eastern district of Sri Lanka, into a major energy hub.
- **Key Projects:** * Construction of a crude oil pipeline from South India to Sri Lanka.
- Development of the World War II-era **Oil Tank Farms**.

- **Objective:** Sri Lanka stated that the Trincomalee project serves as a "permanent solution" to energy crises caused by conflicts in West Asia.

2. ECONOMIC AND RECONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE

- **Cyclone Recovery:** Several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were signed under the **\$450 million package** announced by India for cyclone relief and recovery efforts.
- **Housing:** Discussions were held on the progress of housing projects in Sri Lanka being executed with Indian financial assistance.

3. FISHERMEN ISSUES

- **Humanitarian Perspective:** India urged that the fishermen issue be resolved not just legally, but through a humanitarian lens.
- **Recent Development:** India expressed gratitude for the release of **47 Indian fishermen** who were in Sri Lankan custody.

4. PEOPLE OF INDIAN ORIGIN (MALAIYAH TAMILS) - OCI CARD

This is a crucial point from Diaspora and Polity perspectives:

- **OCI Card Expansion:** Rules have been amended to grant **Overseas Citizen of India (OCI)** cards to the **6th generation** of Sri Lankan Tamils of Indian origin.
- **Simplification:** The Vice President announced that the process of obtaining OCI cards will be further simplified.

5. STRATEGIC CONVERGENCE

- **"Affectionate Elder Brother":** India emphasized that it will always stand by Sri Lanka like an "affectionate elder brother," echoing the sentiment, **"We grow together."**

QUICK REVISION POINTS FOR EXAMS

- **Anura Kumara Dissanayake:** President of Sri Lanka.
- **Harini Amarasuriya:** Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.
- **Trincomalee:** A strategic natural harbor located on the eastern coast of Sri Lanka.
- **OCI Card:** A lifelong visa issued to individuals of Indian origin who hold foreign citizenship.

WTA STUTTGART OPEN 2026

Winner: Elena Rybakina (Kazakhstan).

Runner-up: Karolina Muchova (Czech Republic).

1. KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Score:** Rybakina defeated Muchova 7-5, 6-1 in the final.
- **Second Title:** This is Rybakina's second title of the year 2026. (She also won the Australian Open earlier this year).
- **Career Record:** This marks the 13th singles title of Rybakina's career. It is her second title at Stuttgart (having previously won it two years ago).
- **Court Type:** This is an **Indoor Clay-court** tournament. It is considered one of the most prestigious lead-up events to the French Open (the clay-court Grand Slam).

2. ELENA RYBAKINA'S ACHIEVEMENTS (EXAM RELEVANCE)

- **Ranking:** Currently holds the **World No. 2** spot.
- **Grand Slam History:** She is a two-time Grand Slam champion (Wimbledon and Australian Open).
- **Clay Court Record:** She has now secured 5 titles on clay courts throughout her career.

3. TOURNAMENT SPECIALITY

- **The Prize:** Along with the cash prize, the winner of the Stuttgart Open traditionally receives a **Porsche** sports car. This is Rybakina's second car from this tournament.
- **Muchova's Performance:** Karolina Muchova, the 2023 French Open runner-up, reached a 500-level tournament final for the first time in her career.

4. SPORTS - STATIC GK

- **WTA:** Women's Tennis Association.
- **The Grand Slam Sequence:** The four Grand Slams held annually are:
 1. **Australian Open** (Hard Court)
 2. **French Open** (Clay Court)
 3. **Wimbledon** (Grass Court)
 4. **US Open** (Hard Court)

QUICK REVISION POINTS FOR EXAMS

- **Winner:** Elena Rybakina (Kazakhstan).
- **Tournament:** WTA Stuttgart Open 2026.
- **Key Opponent:** She defeated World No. 6 Mirra Andrejeva in the semifinals.
- **Next Goal:** The upcoming French Open (**Roland-Garros**) next month.