



## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 02-06-2025**

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## **ADB's Five-Year Plan for Urban Infrastructure in India**

**Syllabus: GS-1: Urbanisation in India.**

### **Context:**

Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Masato Kanda announced a transformative five-year plan aimed at enhancing urban infrastructure across India.

### **Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Five-Year Urban Infrastructure Plan for India**

**Announced by:** ADB President *Masato Kanda*

**Total Investment Goal:** Up to **\$10 billion** (including third-party capital)

**Focus:** Urban and rural infrastructure with special emphasis on sustainable urban growth and inclusive development

### **Key Features of the Initiative**

- **Urban Challenge Fund (UCF):** Anchor platform to attract private investment into urban infrastructure.
- **Funding Channels:** Sovereign loans, private sector financing, and technical assistance.
- **Project Preparation Support:** \$3 million earmarked for developing bankable projects and building capacity of state and urban local bodies.

### **Urban Transport and Clean Energy Focus**

- **Metro & RRTS Projects:** Includes Delhi–Meerut RRTS, Mumbai Metro, and Chennai Metro.
- **Impact:** Aims to reduce congestion and improve accessibility for all, including **persons with disabilities**.
- **Commitment:** \$4 billion already invested over the past decade in metro and transit systems in 8 cities.

### **Rural Development Commitments**

- Support for **food systems, entrepreneurship, and job creation**.
- Annual lending of **\$4–4.5 billion** in **sovereign loans** and **\$1 billion** in **private sector funding**.

### Long-Term Partnership with India

- **Since 1986:** Cumulative commitments of **\$59.5 billion** (sovereign) and **\$9.1 billion** (non-sovereign).
- **Country Partnership Strategy 2023–2027:**
  - Up to **\$5 billion/year**, including **\$1 billion** for non-sovereign/private sector projects.

### Strategic Engagements and Innovation

- Met with **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** to discuss:
  - Metro expansion
  - Rural prosperity
  - Rooftop solar scaling
- Visited the **Delhi–Meerut RRTS** corridor and interacted with women beneficiaries of skills training.
- Emphasis on **innovative financing tools** and engaging **private sector CEOs** to boost infrastructure growth.

### Vision

ADB's initiative underscores **cities as engines of growth** and aims to ensure inclusive, sustainable, and climate-resilient urban and rural development in India.

## DHRUVA Initiative

### Syllabus: GS-2: Governance

#### Context:

The DHRUVA initiative is a groundbreaking digital policy introduced by the Department of Posts in India. Launched in 2025, it aims to reshape how address information is structured and utilised across the nation.

### DHRUVA Initiative: Revolutionising India's Address Infrastructure

**Full Form:** *Digital Hub for Reference and Unique Virtual Address*

**Launched by:** Department of Posts, Government of India

**Launch Year:** 2025

## Objective

DHRUVA aims to **redefine address information as a core component of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**. It seeks to digitise, standardise, and virtualise addresses for better governance, efficient service delivery, and improved citizen empowerment.

## Key Features

### Digital Addressing System

- Builds upon the earlier *Digital Postal Index Number (DIGIPIN)*.
- Introduces **virtual geo-coded identifiers** to replace vague traditional addresses.
- Standardises address formats to promote interoperability across platforms.

### Address-as-a-Service (AaaS)

- A new model allowing **dynamic, consent-based use** of address data.
- Users have **control over their address identities**, with options to update, manage, and share information securely.
- Ensures **data privacy and protection**, aligning with India's digital rights frameworks.

### Governance and Public Service Delivery

- Facilitates **accurate targeting of government schemes**, especially in rural/underserved areas.
- Enables better emergency response and public utility access.
- Enhances **transparency and accountability** in welfare distribution.

### Private Sector Applications

- Improves **e-commerce, logistics, and fintech operations** through reliable address validation.
- Reduces delivery errors and improves **route optimisation**.
- Simplifies **KYC (Know Your Customer)** and compliance processes.

### Citizen Empowerment

- Individuals can generate and control **verified digital addresses**.
- Promotes **inclusiveness in digital services**, even for people in informal settlements or migratory populations.

### Implementation Approach

- **Consent-based sharing** and real-time verification.
- **Public consultation** invited for refining the policy.
- Collaboration across **government, private sector, and civil society**.

### Vision for the Future

- Positions addresses as **dynamic data assets**, not just static labels.
- Supports the development of **spatial intelligence** for smart urban planning, disaster response, and economic development.
- Contributes to **Digital India** and **inclusive governance** by making digital services more accessible and accurate.

### Conclusion

DHRUVA is a **pioneering initiative** that reimagines address infrastructure for the digital age. By integrating geospatial technology, citizen-centric design, and data governance, it will significantly enhance service delivery, boost economic efficiency, and empower citizens—paving the way for a **future-ready, resilient India**.

## Unified Pension Scheme for Retired Government Employees

**Syllabus: GS-2: Governance – Social Security measures.**

### Context:

The Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) was introduced by the central government to provide additional benefits to retired National Pension System (NPS) subscribers.

### Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) – Overview

The **Unified Pension Scheme (UPS)** is a new pension framework introduced by the Central Government to provide **enhanced pension benefits to retired NPS subscribers**. It seeks to ensure **predictable and secure post-retirement income** for eligible government employees.

## Key Highlights

### Eligibility Criteria

- Applicable to **central government employees** who:
  - Retired **on or before March 31, 2025**
  - Have a **minimum of 10 years** of qualifying service
- Includes retirees through:
  - **Superannuation**
  - **Voluntary Retirement (VRS)**
  - **Other applicable retirement regulations**
- **Spouses of deceased NPS subscribers** are also eligible for benefits.

### Benefits Under UPS

- **One-time Lump Sum Payment:**
  - Calculated as **1/10th of last drawn Basic Pay + DA** for **every 6 months** of qualifying service.
- **Monthly Top-up Pension:**
  - If the NPS annuity is lower, a **guaranteed top-up** is provided.

### Monthly Pension Calculation

- Guaranteed at **50% of the average Basic Pay** (last 12 months) for those with **25+ years** of service.
- For those with **less than 25 years**, pension is **proportionate to qualifying service**.

### Claim Process

- **Deadline:** Submit claims by **June 30, 2025**
- **Offline:** Fill specified forms and submit to the **Drawing & Disbursing Officer** of the last office.
- **Online:** Apply through the **official government portal**.

### Interest on Arrears

- Arrears due under UPS will accrue **interest at PPF rates** until disbursed.

### Implementation Timeline

- **Effective Date: April 1, 2025**
- Targets over **23 lakh government employees**
- Provides an **opt-in option** between **existing NPS** and the **new UPS**

### Impact and Significance

- Offers a **stable and predictable pension** in contrast to the **market-linked returns** of NPS.
- Enhances **financial security and confidence** among government retirees.
- A landmark reform in aligning post-retirement benefits with long-term welfare goals.

## India AI Mission

**Syllabus: GS-3: Science and Technology – Policies and Schemes.**

### Context:

India has added 15,916 graphics processing units (GPUs) to its national artificial intelligence infrastructure while selecting three new startups to develop indigenous AI models.

### IndiaAI Mission – At a Glance

IndiaAI is a national initiative by the **Government of India**, spearheaded by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**, to develop a robust and self-reliant **Artificial Intelligence ecosystem** in India. It emphasizes public-private collaboration to drive indigenous AI innovation, infrastructure, and ethical deployment.

**Approved by:** Union Cabinet

**Date of Approval:** March 2024

**Total Outlay:** ₹10,300+ crore

### Objectives

- **“Make AI in India” and “Make AI work for India”**

- Democratize access and use of AI for governance, startups, and citizens.
- Develop **indigenous foundational models** and **language models** tailored for India.
- Promote the **ethical, safe, and responsible use** of AI.
- Build a **self-reliant AI innovation ecosystem**.
- Position India as a **global leader in AI**.

## Key Features

### Massive Compute Expansion

- Addition of **15,916 GPUs**, taking India's national AI infrastructure to **over 34,000 GPUs**.
- Enables training of **large-scale AI models** including Indian LLMs.

### Foundational Model Development

- Support for Indian startups such as:
  - **Sarvam AI**
  - **Soket AI**
  - **Gnani AI**
  - **Gan AI**
- Focus on building **multilingual LLMs** and **Voice AI models** tailored for Indian contexts.

### IndiaAI Innovation Centre (IAIC)

- To be set up in collaboration with a **leading academic institution**.
- Focus on:
  - Research & innovation
  - Retaining top AI talent
  - Building foundational AI technologies

### AI Kosh – Open Datasets Platform

- Repository of over **367 datasets** (and growing).
- Enhances access to **public data** for AI research, governance, and innovation.



### Startup Financing & Talent Development

- Financial support for AI startups.
- Establishment of **AI Labs in Tier-II cities**.
- **AI skill development programs** for graduates and postgraduates to boost talent pipeline.

### Ethical & Responsible AI

- Frameworks for **safe, inclusive, and trusted AI**.
- Focus on **regulatory mechanisms**, bias mitigation, and responsible use across sectors.

### Global AI Leadership

- Strategic goal to place India among the **top AI-powered nations**.
- Promote **international collaborations** and **indigenous innovation** to lead in global AI advancement.

This mission is a pivotal step in India's journey to becoming a global AI hub, enabling inclusive growth, strengthening national capabilities, and addressing India-specific challenges with cutting-edge technologies.

## **International Conference on Glaciers' Preservation – 2025**

### Syllabus: GS-3: Environmental Conservation – Conferences and Summits.

#### Context:

Held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, this high-level global summit marks the **International Year of Glaciers' Preservation (2025)**, declared under a **UN Resolution**. It is **organized by the Republic of Tajikistan** with the **support of UN agencies**.

#### Purpose:

To take **urgent global action** against glacier retreat and ensure **sustainable freshwater supply** from glaciers and cryospheric sources.

#### Key Objectives:

- Promote **climate-resilient water resource management**.
- Raise awareness of **glacier melt threats**.

- Encourage **multilateral climate action** aligned with the **Paris Agreement** and **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

#### Key Features:

- **Scientific Collaboration:**
  - Foster glacier monitoring and international **cryosphere data sharing**.
  - Promote coordinated **glaciological research**.
- **Policy Integration:**
  - Align **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** and **National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)** with practical water governance and climate investment strategies.
- **Early Warning Systems:**
  - Develop **mountain-specific climate risk prediction** and **disaster response roadmaps**.
- **Knowledge Exchange:**
  - Share **best practices, innovations, and case studies** from glacial risk zones.
- **Gender Inclusion:**
  - Encourage **women's participation** in glacier-related water policy and decision-making.
- **UN Glacier Preservation Fund:**
  - Proposal to establish a **UN-supported trust fund** for long-term glacier preservation financing.
- **Urban Water Security:**
  - Focus on **resilient urban and agricultural water systems** through **smart climate investments**.

#### Expected Impact:

- Improved **hydro-meteorological services** for glacier-dependent regions.
- Strengthened **global efforts to protect the cryosphere**.
- Enhanced resilience of **communities vulnerable** to glacier retreat and water scarcity.

02 June 2025

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