



## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 21-04-2026**

### **Mapping Perspective**

1. Amchang WLS

### **Prelims Perspective**

2. Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool

### **Mains Perspective**

3. National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust
4. Delimitation Commission Controversy
5. Maoist Insurgency Nearing Its End

## Amchang WLS

Syllabus: GS-3: Environment – Protected Areas – Wildlife Sanctuary.

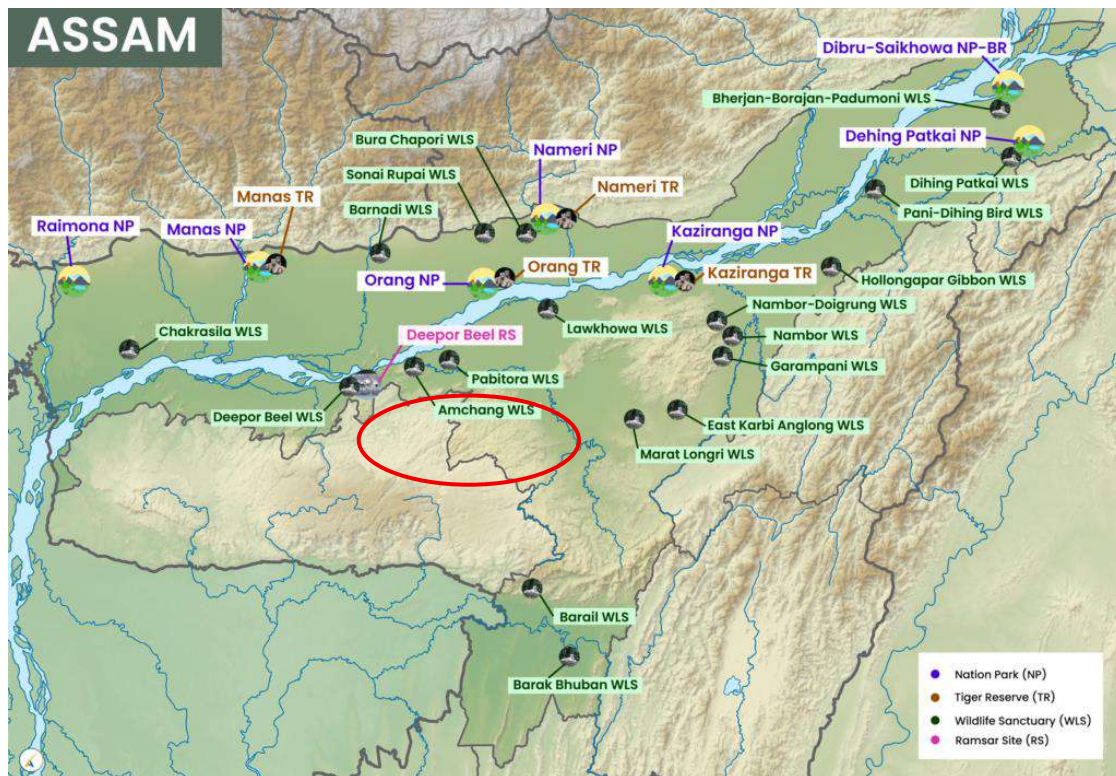
Context:

- The Gauhati High Court directed the Assam govt to respond to a petition alleging forest department floated an e-tender for felling trees in Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary without obtaining mandatory forest clearance from the central govt

### About Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary

#### Location & Formation

- Located in the eastern fringe of Guwahati in Assam
- Formed by merging three reserve forest areas:
  - South Amchang Reserve Forest
  - Amchang Reserve Forest
  - Khanapara Reserve Forest
- Extends from the Brahmaputra River in the north to the hilly forests of Meghalaya in the south
- Forms a continuous forest belt through Meghalaya's Maradakdola Reserve Forests



### Vegetation

- Khasi Hill Sal Forests
- East Himalayan Mixed Deciduous Forest
- Eastern Alluvial Secondary Semi-evergreen Forests
- East Himalayan Sal Forests

### Flora

- Dominated by species such as teak, white iris, axle wood, terminalia, wild java plum, elephant rope tree, beechwood, bitter champa, black dammer tree, cluster fig, and arjun trees

### Fauna

#### Mammals

- Asian elephants, leopards, fishing cat, Asian palm civet, tadpole, different species of monkeys
- Gaur or Indian bison, sambar, barking deer, porcupines, mongooses, wild pigs, rabbit, flying squirrel, and otter

#### Birds

- Both resident and migratory birds such as jungle fowl, doves, egrets, teals, partridges, woodpeckers, hornbills, kingfishers, bulbuls, and many others

#### Butterflies

- Tree yellow butterflies (*gancana harina*) found here; indigenous to Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and Northeast India

## **Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool**

**Syllabus: GS-3: Indian Economy – Insurance.**

#### **Context:**

- Recently, the Union Government took a decisive step to shield its seaborne trade from global disruptions with the creation of the **Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMI Pool)**.

#### **About Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool**

- It is a **new domestic maritime insurance scheme** designed to safeguard the country's shipping and trade interests during periods of global instability.

- It is a **Centre-backed mechanism** designed to ensure uninterrupted and affordable maritime insurance coverage.
- It is **backed by a sovereign guarantee of Rs 12,980 crore**.
- The BMI Pool will provide **insurance support to Indian-flagged vessels, Indian-controlled ships, and vessels carrying cargo to or from India**, including those passing through volatile maritime routes.
- It will cover a **wide range of risks**, including **hull and machinery, cargo, protection and indemnity, and war risk insurance**.
- The BMI Pool will initially run for **10 years, with the possibility of a five-year extension**.

### Significance

- It is expected to **strengthen India's self-reliance in marine insurance**.
- It will **build domestic expertise in underwriting and claims management**.
- It will **ensure continuity of coverage in case of global disruptions or sanctions**.

## **National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust**

### Syllabus: GS-1: Resource Geography – Mineral Exploration

#### Context:

- The Standing Committee on Coal, Mines and Steel (23rd report) highlighted **offshore exploration** as a “significant opportunity” to harness largely untapped seabed minerals

#### About National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust (NMEDT)

- **Establishment:** Set up by the Central Government for regional and detailed exploration of minerals using accrued funds
- **Legal Basis:** Established under the *Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Amendment Act, 2015 (MMDR Act, 2015)*
- **Objective:** Promote systematic exploration and development of mineral resources in the country

#### Structure (Two-tier)

#### Apex Body (Governing Body)

- Chaired by the **Minister of Mines**

- Exercises **overall control of the Trust**

#### **Executive Committee**

- Chaired by the **Secretary, Ministry of Mines**
- **Administers and manages** day-to-day activities

#### **Funding Mechanism**

- **NMET Fund** established to implement mandated activities
- Source: Contributions from holders of **mining lease or prospecting license-cum-mining lease**
- Contribution: **2% of royalty** paid as per the Second Schedule of the MMDR Act

#### **Functions of NMET**

- **Funding special studies/projects** for identifying, exploring, extracting, beneficiating and refining deep-seated or concealed mineral deposits
- **Undertaking studies** on mineral development, sustainable mining, advanced scientific & technological practices, and mineral extraction metallurgy
- **Detailed and regional exploration** for strategic and critical minerals
- **Facilitating a national core repository** to encourage research in earth sciences and evaluate mineral prospects

#### **Analytical Note**

- Focus on **critical minerals security** and **self-reliance in resources**
- Offshore exploration aligns with **blue economy and resource diversification**
- Institutional mechanism like NMET ensures **systematic exploration + scientific mining practices**
- Key challenge: Efficient utilisation of funds and translating exploration into **commercial mining outcomes**

## **Delimitation Commission Controversy**

**Syllabus: GS-2: Indian Polity – parliament-Elections - Delimitation**

**Context:**

- Defeat of the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026 in Lok Sabha, along with associated Delimitation Bill and Union Territory Bill, has reignited a politically charged constitutional debate.
- Immediate legislative push failed, but core issue — redrawing parliamentary constituency boundaries based on updated population data — remains active.
- Issue will demand resolution before publication of Census figures.

### The Three Bills

#### Objectives

- Advance operationalisation of Women’s Reservation Law (106th Constitutional Amendment, 2023) — reservation effective only after delimitation.
- Expand total number of seats in Lok Sabha in an enlarged House.

#### Implication of Defeat

- Women’s reservation in Parliament remains stalled.
- Expansion of Lok Sabha seats also stalled.

#### Constitutional Framework

##### Article 81 – Composition of Lok Sabha

- **Article 81(2)(a) — Inter-State seat distribution**
  - Seats allotted to each state in proportion to its population → ensures “one person, one vote, one value”.
  - Frozen at 1971 Census levels.
- **Article 81(2)(b) — Intra-State delimitation**
  - Constituencies within each state drawn proportionally.
  - Frozen at 2001 Census levels.
- **Article 81(3) — Freeze clause**
  - Extends freeze “until the relevant figures for the first census taken after 2026 are published”.

#### History of the Freeze

- **1976 (42nd Amendment)** — First freeze to incentivise family planning.
- **2001 (84th Amendment)** — Extended freeze by 25 years to 2026 to protect southern states.
- **2026** — Freeze set to expire → triggers renewed political contestation.

#### North–South Divide

## Likely Gainers

- States with higher population growth since 1971 → Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra.

## Likely Losers

- States with lower population growth → Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana.

## Core Concerns

- Principle of “one person, one vote, one value” favours larger populations → indirectly rewards higher birth rates.
- Southern states view this as constitutionally unjust given demographic success and effective population control.

## Census Timeline & Legal Trigger

- Cabinet (Dec 12, 2025) announced **Census 2026 in two phases**:
  - Houselisting & Housing Census — April–September 2026.
  - Population Enumeration — February 2027 (earlier for snow-bound regions).
- Census figures expected by late 2027.
- Once published → **Article 81(3) freeze automatically expires**.
- Fresh delimitation becomes constitutionally mandatory unless Article 81 is amended again.

## Key Challenges

- **Federal trust deficit** → Southern states fear penalisation for better governance and population control.
- **Political arithmetic** → Reduction in southern representation will face strong regional resistance.
- **Women’s reservation in limbo** → 2023 law cannot be implemented without delimitation.
- **Constitutional rigidity** → Article 81 leaves limited flexibility without amendment.
- **Thin parliamentary majority** → Defeat of Amendment Bill shows lack of numbers for divisive reforms.

## Way Forward

- **Another freeze** → Requires constitutional amendment with special majority → needs political consensus.

- **Compensatory mechanisms** → Increase total Lok Sabha seats without reducing any state's current share.
- **Coalition factor** → Dependence on southern allies (e.g., TDP) may restrain aggressive delimitation.
- **Timely action** → Before Census publication (likely late 2027) to avoid automatic triggering.

### Conclusion

- Defeat of the 131st Amendment Bill has only postponed the issue.
- Core tension:
  - Population-based democratic representation **vs** fair federal balance among states.
- Delimitation debate will test cooperative federalism, constitutional adaptability, and political maturity.
- A negotiated solution is essential to preserve national unity and representative democracy.

## **Maoist Insurgency Nearing Its End**

### Syllabus: GS-3: Internal Security –Naxalism.

#### Context:

- Killing of top Maoist leader Nambala Keshava Rao (May 2025) and surrender of successor Thippiri Tirupati (early 2026) have significantly weakened CPI (Maoist)
- With most top leadership eliminated/arrested, organisation appears largely leaderless
- Claims (incl. by Amit Shah) that insurgency is nearing its end, though questions remain on its finality

#### Decline of India's Maoist Insurgency: Near End or Strategic Lull

- Recent operations, especially Operation Kagar (2024), dealt severe blows to LWE movement
- Security forces recorded large-scale outcomes: surrenders (≈3,840), arrests (≈2,220), deaths (≈600)
- Elimination/capture of Central Committee & Politburo members → structurally weakened, leaderless organisation

#### Collapse of Organisational Structure

- Central Committee strength reduced from ~40 members to just 2
- Many senior leaders killed, arrested, or surrendered
- Reflects near breakdown of command, coordination, and decision-making

### **Shrinking Geographical Influence**

- Territorial control reduced from ~180 districts (2013) to just 2 districts (Bijapur, Sukma – Chhattisgarh)
- Collapse of “Red Corridor” → end of large-scale insurgent dominance

### **History of Resilience and Regrouping**

- Reduced to minimal strength in early 1990s but re-emerged by 2000 with expanded influence
- Formation of CPI (Maoist) (2004) strengthened organisational reach
- Secretive and tightly controlled structure makes assessment of residual capacity difficult

### **Current Reality: Weak but Not Eliminated**

- Armed dominance nearly ended, but complete elimination uncertain
- Residual networks + potential for regrouping remain (given past revival patterns)

### **Origins and Expansion of Maoist Movement**

- Began with Naxalbari uprising (1967, West Bengal) led by Charu Majumdar
- Ideological base: Marxism-Leninism + Mao Zedong Thought
- Emphasised armed struggle by landless peasants against “class enemies” (feudal landlords)
- By 1972, most early leaders (incl. Majumdar) killed → temporary decline

### **Revival through People’s War Group (PWG)**

- Revival in late 1970s by Kondapalli Seetharamaiah (Telangana)
- Mobilisation of educated youth from universities/technical institutions → expanded base
- Formation of CPI (Maoist) under Muppala Lakshmana Rao marked turning point
- Development of structured insurgent force incl. PLGA → well-organised guerrilla movement
- Militarisation included alleged training links with LTTE
- Peak phase: termed “biggest internal security threat” by Manmohan Singh

## **Decline of Maoist Movement: Key Factors**

### **1. Ideological Fragmentation**

- Internal conflicts (violent annihilation vs mass mobilisation) → factionalism, leadership instability

### **2. Militarisation and State Response**

- Militarisation provoked strong countermeasures
- Special forces (Greyhounds) + coordinated operations (Operation Kagar) weakened strongholds

### **3. Tribal vs Non-Tribal Leadership Rift**

- Core fighters largely tribal; leadership largely non-tribal → internal contradictions
- Efforts to promote tribal leaders (e.g., MadviHidma) indicate organisational stress

### **4. Declining Ideological Relevance**

- Expansion of welfare schemes in tribal areas reduced grievances
- “Class enemy” narrative weakened in changing socio-economic conditions

### **5. Strategic Reassessment & Dialogue Attempts**

- Internal documents by Muppala Lakshmana Rao stressed reconnecting with society/intellectuals
- Leaders like Cherukuri Rajkumar explored peace talks → strategic uncertainty

### **6. Declining Recruitment & Democratic Alternatives**

- Falling recruitment + sustained security pressure
- Rise of democratic protest mechanisms reduced appeal of armed struggle
- Attempts to enter mainstream politics reflect diminishing influence

## **Prospects of Maoist Revival: Constraints & Uncertainties**

- Large-scale revival unlikely in near term due to weakened leadership, structure, territorial control
- Reports of tactical surrenders to rebuild overground networks
- Future depends on effectiveness of rehabilitation measures

## **Reintegration Challenges**

- Many surrendered cadres face serious criminal charges (incl. murder)
- Withdrawal of prosecution requires judicial approval
- Victims' families can file protest petitions (strong legal standing)

### Overall Assessment

- Full-scale insurgent revival difficult, but residual risks persist
- Outcome contingent on:
  - Rehabilitation effectiveness
  - Legal processes
  - Successful reintegration of former cadres into mainstream society