



Topics - MINDS MAPS included (Daily current affairs 20TH March 2025



- Bagad Rath Yatra
- The Raisina Dialogue
- Embracing AI for All: India's Vision for Technology Democratization
- Introduction to the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023
- APAAR: Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry
- MAINS



By saurabh Pandey



Target Mains -2025/26 -

Q. - “Democratization of technology will help to reduce inequality “ Discuss

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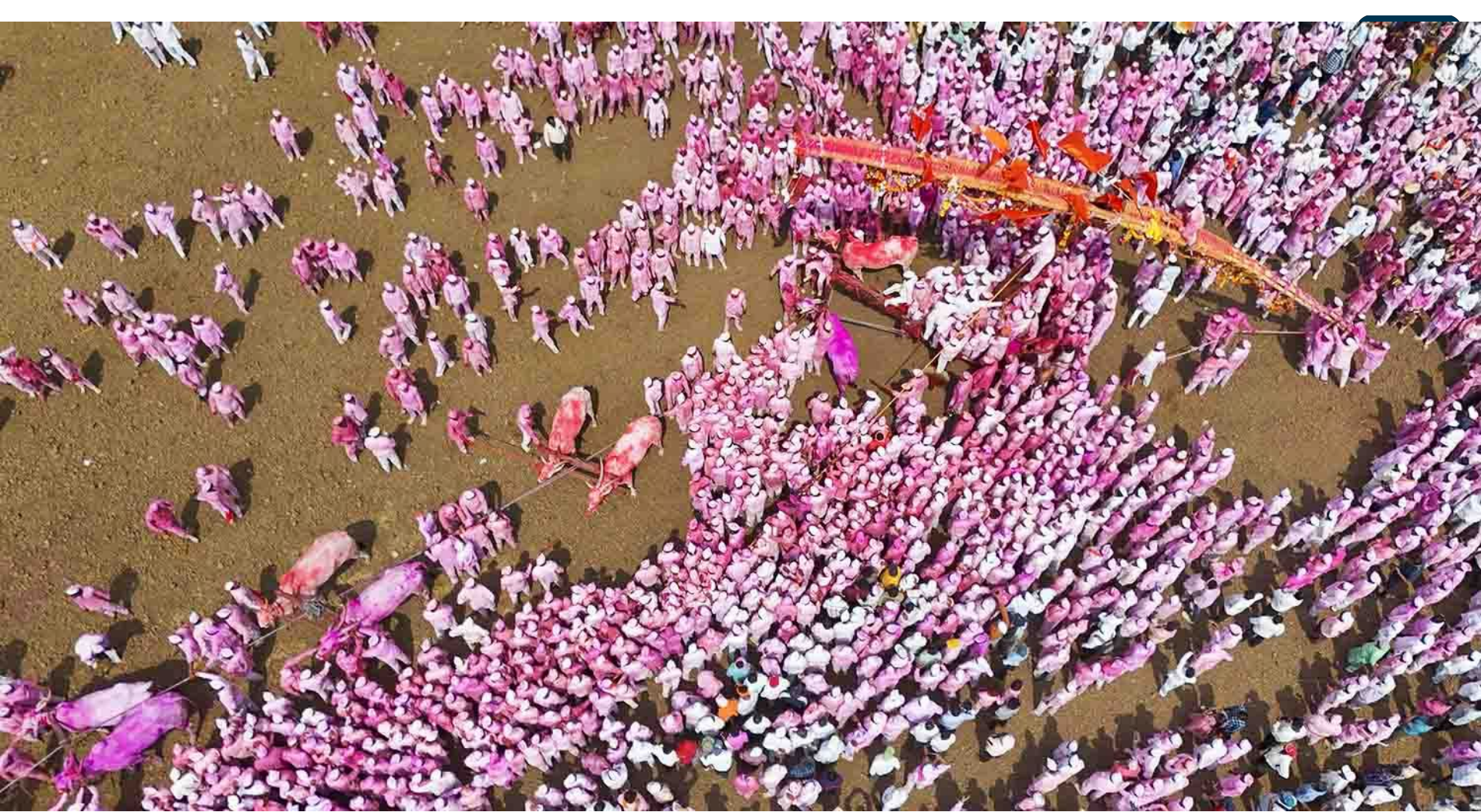
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Topic → Bagad Rath Yatra

- **Bagad Rath Yatra festival is celebrated in MAHARASHTRA .**
- **During the festival the sacred Bagad or chariot of God with stone wheels is pulled by eight bullocks out of hundreds brought from various parts of Maharashtra**

Topic → FACT(SUNITA WILLIAMS RETURN)

- **Mr. Wilmore and Ms. Williams, veterans of two prior space missions, flew to the orbital lab in June last year, on what was supposed to be a days-long roundtrip to test out Boeing's Starliner on its first crewed flight.**
- **But the spaceship developed problems and was deemed unfit to fly them back, instead returning empty.**
- **Their 286-day stay exceeds the usual six-month ISS rotation but ranks only sixth among U.S. records for single-mission duration.**
- **Frank Rubio holds the top spot at 371 days in 2023, while the world record remains with Russian cosmonaut Valeri Polyakov, who spent 437 consecutive days aboard the Mir station**



Topic → The Raisina Dialogue

- **The Raisina Dialogue is India's premier conference on geopolitics and geoeconomics committed to addressing the most challenging issues facing the global community.**
- **Every year, leaders in politics, business, media, and civil society converge in New Delhi to discuss the state of the world and explore opportunities for cooperation on a wide range of contemporary matters.**
- **The Dialogue is structured as a multi-stakeholder, cross-sectoral discussion, involving heads of state, cabinet ministers and local government officials, who are joined by thought leaders from the private sector, media and academia.**

- **The conference is hosted by the Observer Research Foundation in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.**
- **This effort is supported by a number of institutions, organisations and individuals, who are committed to the mission of the conference**
- **The 10th edition of the Raisina Dialogue will be held from 17-19 March, 2025**
- **Prime Minister of New Zealand, The Right Honourable Christopher Luxon, will join the inaugural session as the Chief Guest, and deliver the keynote address.**



- **The theme of the 2025 edition is "Kālachakra - People, Peace and Planet". Over the course of three days, decision makers and thought leaders of the world will engage each other across conversations in various formats, over six thematic pillars: (i) Politics Interrupted: Shifting Sands and Rising Tides; (ii) Resolving the Green Trilemma: Who, Where, & How; (iii) Digital Planet: Agents, Agencies and Absences; (iv) Militant Mercantilism: Trade, Supply Chains & the Exchange Rate Addiction; (v) The Tiger's Tale: Rewriting Development with a New Plan; and (vi) Investing in Peace: Drivers, Institutions, & Leadership.**



Topic → Embracing AI for All: India's Vision for Technology Democratization

The Vision of 'AI for All'

The Indian Government, under the aegis of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, has conceptualized the transformative initiative dubbed 'AI for All'. This ambitious vision seeks to democratize the utilization of technology, ensuring its advantages permeate every strata of society.

Democratization of Technology: The initiative aims to bridge the digital divide, making AI accessible and beneficial across various sectors.

Catalyst for Innovation: By fostering an environment where AI can thrive, India is poised to drive substantial innovation and growth.





India's Position in the Global AI Landscape

India has emerged as a formidable player in the realm of Artificial Intelligence, often hailed as the skills capital of technology. Recent rankings by Stanford University place India among the elite quartet of nations—alongside the US, China, and the UK—reflecting its prowess in AI skills and capabilities.

Global Recognition: India commands a staggering 24% share of all global AI projects, as noted by GitHub.

AI Policies: The government's proactive stance in formulating policies to harness AI's potential is a critical factor in this ranking



The IndiaAI Mission: A Strategic Initiative

On 7th March 2024, the Union Cabinet endorsed the IndiaAI Mission, a pivotal initiative designed to create a robust and inclusive AI ecosystem. This mission is anchored on seven foundational pillars aimed at positioning India as a global AI leader.

Key Pillars:

IndiaAI Compute

IndiaAIFutureSkills

IndiaAI Startup Financing

IndiaAI Innovation Centre

IndiaAI Datasets Platform

IndiaAI Applications Development Initiative

Safe & Trusted AI

The IndiaAI Innovation Centre (IAIC) has already initiated a Call for Proposals to foster collaboration among startups and researchers, with 67 proposals received in just one month, showcasing the vibrant interest in building foundational AI models.



Digital India Bhashini: Language Technology Solutions

The Government's Digital India Bhashini initiative aims to provide AI-driven language technology solutions across all 22 Scheduled Indian Languages. This initiative not only enhances digital inclusion but also aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 10, which emphasizes reducing inequality.

Language Models: The Bhashini platform hosts over 350 AI-based language models for speech recognition, translation, and more.

Collaboration: In partnership with over 70 research institutes, Bhashini is pioneering advancements in language AI technologies



Future Skills and Cybersecurity Training

To meet the burgeoning demand for AI professionals, the Government has initiated various programs aimed at integrating AI training into existing skill development frameworks.

FutureSkills PRIME: This program offers 119 courses focused on emerging technologies including AI and cybersecurity.

Collaboration with CERT-In: Joint training programs are enhancing the capabilities of the cybersecurity workforce to combat AI-powered threats



Topic → El Niño and La Niña & Indian Monsoon

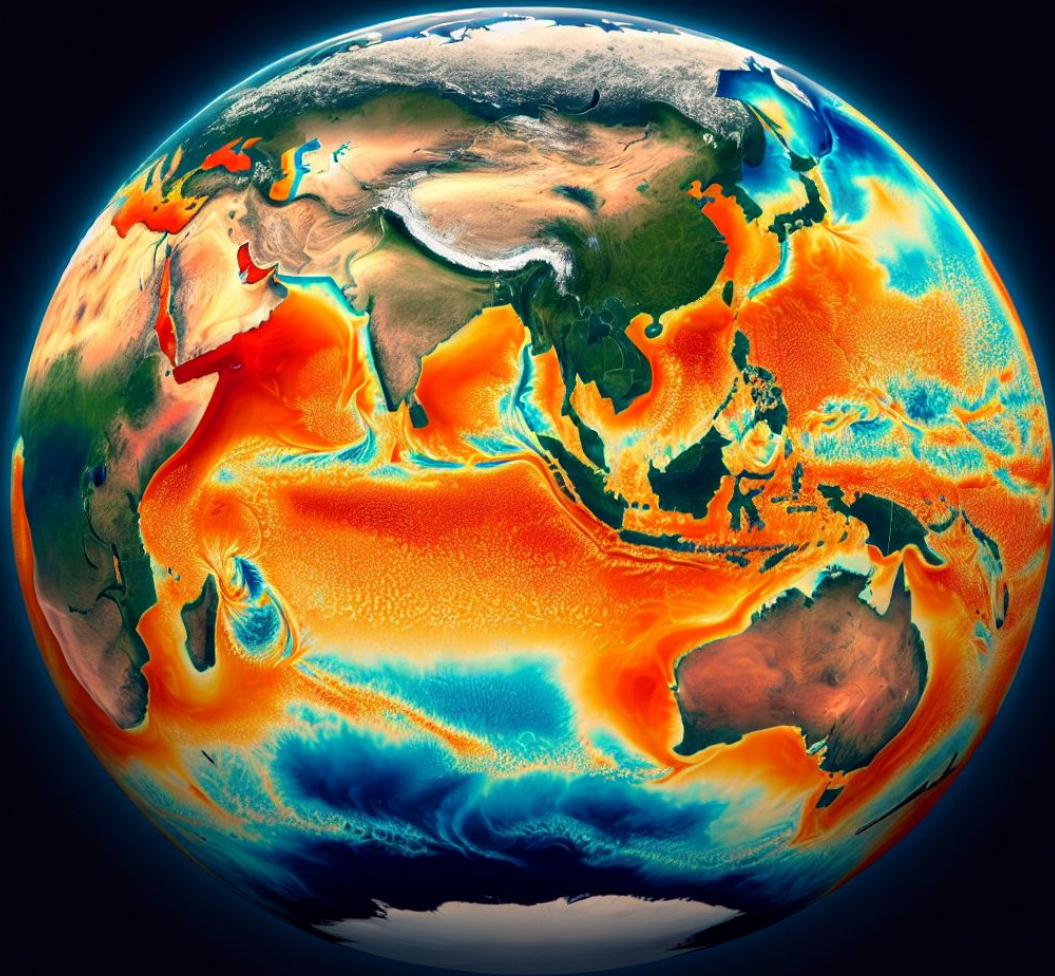
El Niño and La Niña are two sides of the same coin, influencing the global climate and specifically the Indian monsoon.

Definition: El Niño refers to the warming of ocean waters in the central and eastern Pacific, while La Niña signifies cooler waters.

Link to Monsoon: Historically, about 60% of surplus and deficit years in monsoon rainfall have been correlated with these phenomena.

Perceptions: El Niño is often viewed negatively, while La Niña is seen as advantageous for the monsoon.











Current Climate Patterns: What's Happening?

As we look toward the future, what do the latest climate patterns reveal about the monsoon forecast for 2025-2026?

Recent Developments: Reports indicate that La Niña is making a resurgence, which could significantly impact rainfall.

Sea Surface Temperatures: The shifting patterns in sea surface temperatures (SST) are crucial indicators of what's to come.

Implications: The interplay of these factors could lead to above-normal or below-normal rainfall in the upcoming seasons.



The Role of ENSO in Monsoon Predictions

ENSO (El Niño Southern Oscillation) is a critical player in understanding and predicting monsoon behavior.

ENSO Dynamics: ENSO oscillates between warm (El Niño) and cold (La Niña) states, creating fluctuations in global weather patterns.

ENSO Transition Mode (ETM): This mode determines whether SST anomalies during the summer are warm or cool, impacting monsoon predictions.

Forecast Conflicts: Mixed signals from various weather models leave uncertainty about the upcoming monsoon.

Conflicting Forecasts and the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)

Forecasts for the 2025 monsoon season are rife with contradictions, complicating the outlook for farmers.

Conflicting Predictions: Some models suggest a La Niña, while others predict normal conditions or even a strong El Niño.

Role of the IOD: The Indian Ocean Dipole can significantly influence monsoon outcomes, acting as a wild card in weather predictions.

Interaction: The complex relationship between the IOD and ENSO adds layers of uncertainty to monsoon forecasts.



The Impact of Climate Change on Monsoon Patterns

Climate change introduces a new variable in the already intricate dance of monsoon predictions.

Changing Dynamics: The relationship between ENSO and the monsoon has evolved, affecting rainfall patterns and jet streams.

Temperature Anomalies: Rising global temperatures can exacerbate the effects of El Niño and La Niña on the monsoon.

Pre-monsoon Cyclones: Increased cyclonic activity can disrupt the onset and intensity of the monsoon season.



Conclusion: Preparing for Uncertainty

As we navigate the uncertain waters of monsoon forecasts, one thing remains clear: managing expectations is paramount.

Hopeful yet Prepared: Farmers must balance optimism with caution as they await the rains.

Continuous Monitoring: Meteorologists and climate scientists are tirelessly working to refine their predictions, but the unpredictable nature of the climate keeps everyone on their toes



Topic → Introduction to the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023

In early January this year, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) unveiled the draft Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025, under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023. This legislation aims to safeguard personal data in an increasingly digital world. But, as with any new law, it has sparked a flurry of discussions and criticisms



Key Features of the Draft Rules

The draft rules introduce several pivotal provisions aimed at fostering a robust data protection framework. Here are the highlights:

Establishment of a Data Protection Board (DPB): This board will oversee compliance and address grievances regarding personal data handling.

Quasi-Judicial Functions of the DPB: The board's ability to make binding decisions underscores its importance in the enforcement of data protection standards.



The Role of the Data Protection Board (DPB)

At the heart of the draft rules is the Data Protection Board (DPB), which is tasked with overseeing data protection issues. This board is crucial because it has quasi-judicial functions, meaning it can make decisions that have legal implications.

Quasi-Judicial Functions of the DPB

The DPB's quasi-judicial nature raises eyebrows, especially regarding how its members are appointed. Critics argue that the Union government's discretion in appointing these members could compromise the board's independence.

Criticisms of the Draft Rules

Concerns Over Government Appointments

One of the most significant criticisms revolves around the government's control over the DPB's appointments. This control raises questions about the separation of powers, a fundamental principle in democratic governance. If the executive can appoint members, how can we ensure that the DPB operates independently?

The Separation of Powers

The independence of the DPB is crucial for maintaining public trust in the data protection framework. If the board is perceived as an extension of the government, it could undermine its authority and effectiveness.



The Appeal Process: TDSAT's Role

Digital Filing of Appeals

According to the draft rules, appeals from the DPB's decisions will be filed digitally before the Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT). This move towards digitalization is commendable, but it also raises questions about the tribunal's readiness to handle such appeals.

Timeline for Disposing Appeals

The TDSAT is required to dispose of appeals within six months. However, the feasibility of this timeline is questionable, given the current workload of the tribunal.

Institutional Reforms Needed for TDSAT

- **Appointment of a Technical Member:** To effectively handle data protection appeals, the TDSAT must appoint a technical member with expertise in data protection.
- **Capacity to Handle Appeals:** The TDSAT is already burdened with a backlog of cases, and expecting it to manage additional data protection appeals within the stipulated timeline seems unrealistic.
- **Technological Updates Required:** The TDSAT must enhance its technological infrastructure to support digital filings



The Need for Specialized Knowledge

The complexities of data protection law require specialized knowledge. The TDSAT must adapt to these challenges by ensuring that its members are well-versed in data protection principles.

Addressing the Burden of Cases

Increased budget allocations and additional benches could help alleviate the TDSAT's caseload. Without these reforms, the tribunal may struggle to keep up with the demands placed upon it.

Updating Digital Infrastructure

A robust digital infrastructure is critical for managing the anticipated volume of data protection appeals. The TDSAT must implement a comprehensive legal case management system to streamline processes and improve public access to information.




Topic → APAAR: Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry

\ Overview of APAAR

 **Definition of APAAR:** APAAR stands for Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry, aimed at creating a unified student ID system for tracking academic achievements.


 **Link to Aadhaar:** The APAAR ID is linked to the Aadhaar system and is stored in DigiLocker, ensuring secure access to academic records.

 **Data Standardization:** The registry provides standardized data on students' marksheets and institutional affiliations, facilitating easier transitions between educational institutions.

 **Integration with UDISE+:** The APAAR ID is generated through the Unified District Information System For Education Plus (UDISE+) portal, which collects regional academic data.

 **Relation to NEP 2020:** The initiative aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which aims to improve education data collection for better policymaking.

? Voluntary Nature: While APAAR is not mandatory, there is confusion due to circulars from CBSE and state governments encouraging its adoption without clearly stating its voluntary status.

 July 17 Government Clarification: The Union government reaffirmed the optional nature of APAAR in December 2024, despite expectations from educational authorities for widespread registration.

Summary: The APAAR ID is a voluntary system designed to standardize and secure students' academic records, linked to Aadhaar and integrated with UDISE+, but its mandatory status remains unclear.

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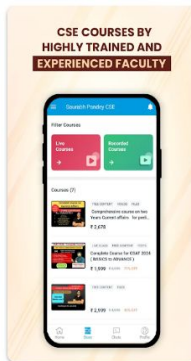
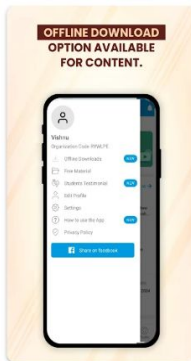
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