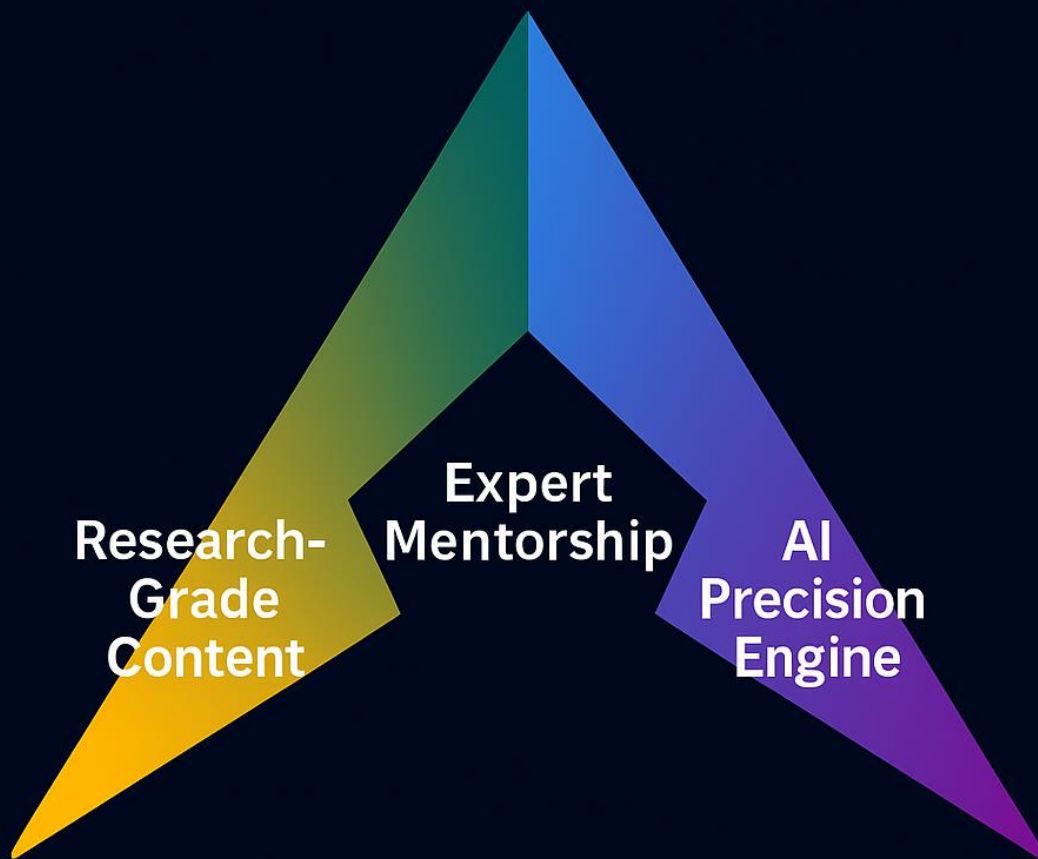


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PrepAlpine is India's next-generation UPSC institution — built by educationists, retired bureaucrats, IITians, and experienced educators, and powered by a 500+-member technology firm specialising in AI-driven education infrastructure.

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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS DATED 02.11.2025

GS Paper II: International Relations

1. India's Vision for an Open and Free Indo-Pacific Region

a. Introduction

The Indo-Pacific has become the central stage of 21st-century geopolitics and economics. Stretching from Africa's eastern coast to the western Pacific, it carries about two-thirds of global trade and energy traffic, making it the world's most dynamic maritime zone.

For India, the Indo-Pacific is not just a geographical expression but a vision of cooperation, openness, and shared prosperity. India envisions a region that is free, open, inclusive, and rule-based — where no single power dominates, and all nations, big or small, have equal rights and responsibilities. This approach reflects India's long-standing belief in peaceful coexistence, dialogue, and respect for international law.

b. Understanding the Idea of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific"

The concept of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) rests on the belief that the oceans connecting Asia, Africa, and the Pacific should remain open, peaceful, and governed by universally accepted rules.

Its main principles are:

- Freedom of Navigation and Overflight: Every country should be free to use international sea lanes and air routes without obstruction.
- Rule-Based Order: Maritime activities must follow international law, especially the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
- Inclusivity: All nations, irrespective of size or power, must participate equally in shaping regional norms.
- Non-Coercion: The use of force, threats, or economic pressure to achieve dominance must be avoided.

In essence, India views the Indo-Pacific as a shared space for cooperation and connectivity, not a battleground for influence.

c. India's Approach to the Indo-Pacific

India's Indo-Pacific policy stands on four guiding pillars:

i. Commitment to Openness and Rule-Based Order

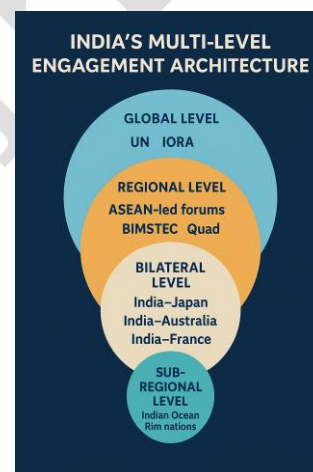
India upholds a maritime order built on sovereign equality, territorial integrity, and peaceful settlement of disputes. Power must yield to principles of legality and legitimacy.

ii. Inclusivity and Partnerships

India's approach is non-exclusionary — it welcomes cooperation with all partners including ASEAN, Japan, Australia, the United States, and Pacific Island countries. The focus is on collective progress, not power blocs.

iii. Security Linked with Development

Recognising that growth cannot exist without security, India promotes cooperation in defence, technology, infrastructure, and climate resilience, ensuring both prosperity and safety at sea.



iv. Flexible Cooperation, Not Military Alliances

India prefers issue-based, trust-driven partnerships over fixed military alliances. This approach reflects India's policy of strategic autonomy and cooperative diplomacy.

d. ASEAN and the ADMM-Plus: Anchors of India's Vision

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) lies at the heart of India's Indo-Pacific strategy. Its central role in regional diplomacy and its balanced posture make it vital for peace and stability.

Through the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) — comprising ASEAN and eight dialogue partners (including India, the U.S., China, Japan, Australia, and Russia) — India engages in:

- Joint exercises in peacekeeping and disaster relief,
- Maritime domain awareness and information-sharing,
- Capacity building in defence and technology, and
- Confidence-building measures to prevent maritime conflicts.

This deepens India's Act East Policy, linking Southeast Asia more closely with India's trade, cultural, and strategic networks.

e. Significance of India's Indo-Pacific Vision

i. Promotion of Regional Stability

By encouraging cooperation and dialogue, India reduces tensions in flashpoints like the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean.

ii. Safeguarding Economic Security

Free sea lanes ensure the smooth flow of energy and trade, vital for India's growth and global supply chains.

iii. Balancing Regional Power

India provides smaller states with a middle path — avoiding alignment with any single great power.

iv. Enhancing India's Global Standing

This vision strengthens India's reputation as a responsible maritime power and an advocate of fairness and partnership.

v. Sustainable Maritime Growth

India's initiative SAGAR — Security and Growth for All in the Region — integrates economic progress with ocean health, environmental care, and disaster resilience.

f. Key Challenges to India's Indo-Pacific Strategy

- China's Expanding Influence:**
Beijing's growing naval presence in the South China Sea and Indian Ocean threatens the principle of open seas.
- Competing Strategic Groupings:**
Platforms such as the Quad, AUKUS, and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) sometimes create overlapping or rival agendas.
- Maritime Insecurity:**
Piracy, illegal fishing, smuggling, and environmental degradation continue to endanger maritime safety.

- iv. Diplomatic Balancing:
India must maintain constructive engagement with both Western powers and Asian partners without compromising autonomy.
- v. Limited Regional Capacity:
Many small coastal and island nations lack naval and technological resources for effective maritime governance.

g. Way Forward

- i. Reinforce ASEAN Centrality
Support ASEAN's inclusive leadership and ensure regional institutions remain consensus-based.
- ii. Strengthen Maritime Partnerships
Conduct joint patrols, share coastal surveillance data, and enhance humanitarian and disaster-relief cooperation.
- iii. Promote Blue-Economy Collaboration
Integrate security with sustainable use of ocean resources — fisheries, renewable energy, and marine biodiversity protection.
- iv. Uphold the Rule of Law at Sea
Stand firmly by UNCLOS (1982) as the foundation of maritime order and oppose any unilateral expansionist claims.
- v. Build Regional Trust and Connectivity
Expand cultural, digital, and educational linkages alongside defence diplomacy to deepen people-to-people ties.

Conclusion

India's Indo-Pacific vision is guided by principles, not power; by partnership, not rivalry. It aims to keep the seas as pathways of connection, commerce, and cooperation, where every nation benefits from peace and prosperity.

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi aptly stated,
"The seas connect us — they do not divide us."

GS Paper II: International Relations

2. China's Proposal for a Global AI Cooperation Organisation

a. Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping the world — influencing economies, defence, education, healthcare, and even how societies are governed. Despite its vast potential, there is still no single global body to set rules for AI's safe use, fair access, or to prevent its misuse.

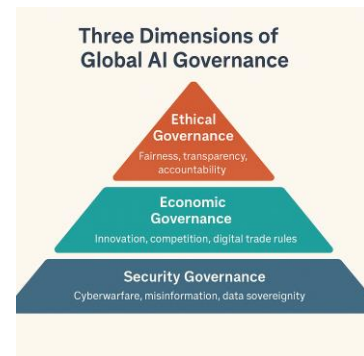
At the 2025 APEC Summit in South Korea, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the creation of the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organisation (WAICO) — a global platform meant to encourage inclusive, safe, and balanced AI development. The proposal aims to give developing nations a greater voice in shaping the future of this critical technology.

b. Background

i. The Global AI Landscape

AI has become both a tool of progress and a field of competition. Three main global approaches can be seen today:

- United States: Encourages private innovation with limited government control.
- European Union: Focuses on ethics, human rights, and safety through laws such as the EU AI Act.
- China: Promotes a globally coordinated model that prioritises inclusivity and access, particularly for developing nations.



ii. Why the Proposal Came Now

China's timing reflects major world trends:

- Rising misuse of AI in deepfakes, cyberattacks, and online manipulation.
- Growing U.S.–China rivalry, which risks dividing the world into competing tech blocs.
- Recognition that fragmented regional rules are not enough — AI needs global norms and shared safeguards.

Through WAICO, China presents itself as a proponent of multilateral cooperation in contrast to the divided approaches of Western powers.

c. The World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organisation (WAICO)

The World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organisation (WAICO) is envisioned as an international body that promotes shared research, ethical governance, and equitable access to AI.

Its core goals include:

- i. Promoting joint AI research and cross-border data sharing.
- ii. Developing global safety and ethical standards for AI use.
- iii. Ensuring fair access for developing countries to AI tools and knowledge.
- iv. Preventing misuse of AI in surveillance, warfare, and disinformation.

WAICO's structure would resemble global organisations like the WTO or WHO, with each member nation contributing to policy-making and capacity-building.

In essence, WAICO seeks to turn AI into a global commons — a shared space for innovation and responsibility.

d. China's Strategic Rationale

i. Leadership in Global Rule-Making

China already leads in many AI areas — from robotics to 5G infrastructure. WAICO allows Beijing to influence the emerging rules that govern these technologies.

ii. Soft Power Projection

By positioning WAICO as inclusive and developmental, China seeks to project itself as a responsible global leader, not a dominating one.

iii. Balancing Western Standards

As Western countries shape AI norms through institutions like the AI Safety Institute and OECD, WAICO provides an alternative model for the Global South.

iv. Bridging the North–South Divide

Most developing countries lack advanced AI infrastructure. WAICO could fund training, research, and technology access to make AI development more equitable.

e. Global Response: Support and Skepticism

The world’s reaction to WAICO has been mixed.

i. Supportive Views:

- It promotes cooperation instead of rivalry.
- It gives smaller and developing countries a voice in AI governance.
- It fills the current vacuum in global AI regulation.

ii. Critical Concerns:

- Western nations fear it may serve China’s strategic interests under a global label.
- Questions remain about data privacy, transparency, and freedom of information.
- Some worry it could create parallel institutions, fragmenting global governance further.

In short, while developing nations see opportunity in WAICO, developed nations remain cautious about China’s intentions.

f. Comparison with Other Global AI Frameworks

Different regions approach AI governance with different priorities:

Region / Institution	Approach	Core Emphasis
China (WAICO proposal)	South-led multilateralism	Cooperation, access, and equitable AI benefits.
United States (AI Safety Institute)	Industry-led innovation	Testing, safety, and private-sector collaboration.
European Union (AI Act)	Rights-based regulation	Ethical use, accountability, and transparency.
UNESCO (AI Ethics Framework, 2021)	Human-centred	Fairness, inclusion, and social justice.
United Kingdom (AI Safety Summit)	Global risk management	Mitigation of frontier AI threats.

These variations show that there is still no global consensus on how AI should be governed.

g. Why WAICO Matters

- Addresses the Governance Gap:
Currently, there is no international body with legal authority over AI. WAICO could become the first such institution.
- Empowers Developing Nations:
By focusing on capacity building and knowledge-sharing, it gives the Global South a greater role in the AI future.

- iii. Blends Technology and Diplomacy:
AI governance now affects geopolitics — shaping trade, security, and global influence.
- iv. Responds to Ethical Challenges:
The need for fairness, accountability, and transparency in AI systems has become urgent, making WAICO's goals timely.

h. Challenges and Structural Risks

- i. Geopolitical Polarisation:
Ongoing distrust between China and Western powers could prevent wide participation.
- ii. Institutional Overlap:
Many forums — G20, OECD, UN — already discuss AI. WAICO risks duplication rather than coordination.
- iii. Dependence on China:
Developing countries may become reliant on Chinese funding or infrastructure, limiting their autonomy.
- iv. Ethical Safeguards:
True global cooperation requires shared values — especially regarding privacy, data protection, and freedom of expression.

i. Way Forward

To make global AI governance effective and fair, the following steps are essential:

- Encourage Dialogue: Strengthen cooperation under existing global bodies like the UN, G20, and UNESCO to prevent competing blocs.
- Create Shared Ethical Principles: Build consensus on fairness, accountability, and responsible innovation.
- Support Developing Nations: Provide funding, training, and digital infrastructure to bridge the AI divide.
- Ensure Data Protection: Build international norms that balance openness with privacy.
- Link AI with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Especially SDG-9 (*Innovation and Infrastructure*) and SDG-16 (*Peace and Strong Institutions*).

Conclusion

China's proposal for WAICO is more than a policy idea — it is a statement about the future of power, ethics, and cooperation. If built on trust and shared values, WAICO could help shape AI as a force for equality and peace. But if driven by rivalry and suspicion, it may deepen divisions in the digital world. The path ahead will test the world's ability to use technology wisely and collectively.

GS Paper III: Science and Technology

3. LVM-3 and India's Heavy-Lift Launch Capability

a. Introduction

India's progress in space technology is a story of gradual, indigenous development and remarkable self-reliance. From launching small experimental satellites to now sending complex missions to the Moon, ISRO has emerged as one of the most trusted and cost-efficient space agencies in the world.

At the heart of this achievement lies the Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM-3) — India's most powerful rocket, capable of placing heavy satellites into high orbits. The successful launch of CMS-03, a communication satellite weighing over 4 tonnes, marked India's entry into the league of nations with independent heavy-lift capability — a critical step toward *Atmanirbhar Bharat* and strategic autonomy in space.

b. Understanding Launch Vehicles

A launch vehicle is a large rocket system designed to carry a satellite or spacecraft into space. It works on the principle of Newton's Third Law of Motion — every action has an equal and opposite reaction. When fuel burns and gases are expelled downward, the rocket is pushed upward.

ISRO's launch vehicle programme evolved step by step:

- SLV (Satellite Launch Vehicle): The first experimental rocket, capable of placing only very small satellites in low Earth orbit.
- ASLV (Augmented SLV): Improved version with more thrust, but still limited payload.
- PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle): A major success, capable of launching multiple satellites into polar and sun-synchronous orbits.
- GSLV (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle): Extended reach to higher orbits used for communication satellites.
- LVM-3: The heaviest and most advanced launcher, bridging India's move from medium-lift to heavy-lift capability.

Thus, LVM-3 represents a quantum leap in India's ability to launch large communication satellites and deep-space missions without foreign support.



c. Key Features of LVM-3

The LVM-3 is a three-stage rocket designed for both high payload capacity and flexibility across missions.

- First Stage (Solid Stage): Provides the initial thrust needed to lift the rocket off the ground.
- Second Stage (Liquid Stage): Maintains acceleration and stability after the solid boosters separate.
- Third Stage (Cryogenic Stage): Uses liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen. This stage operates in space and provides the final push to place the satellite in orbit.

Its total lift-off mass is around 640 tonnes, roughly equivalent to five fully loaded jumbo jets. It can carry about 8 tonnes to Low Earth Orbit (LEO) and 4 tonnes to Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO).

The rocket's C25 cryogenic engine is a landmark achievement — completely designed and built in India. Work is also underway on an upgraded C32 version with higher thrust, and a semi-cryogenic engine using refined kerosene (RP-1) for future missions.

The LVM-3 has already powered major missions like Chandrayaan-2, Chandrayaan-3, and OneWeb satellite launches. It will also carry astronauts for India's upcoming Gaganyaan mission.

d. Strategic Significance of LVM-3

i. Indigenous Heavy-Lift Capability

Earlier, India depended on foreign launchers like Europe's Ariane-5 for sending heavy communication satellites into space. LVM-3 ended this dependence, showcasing India's full autonomy in satellite deployment.

ii. Technological Self-Reliance

Developing complex systems like cryogenic engines was once considered beyond India's reach. Today, LVM-3 symbolizes India's ability to master high-end space technology entirely on its own.

iii. Foundation for Human Spaceflight

The Gaganyaan mission, which will carry Indian astronauts into orbit, will use a specially modified, human-rated version of LVM-3 with added safety and re-entry systems.

iv. Platform for Deep Space Exploration

LVM-3 has proven its reliability by launching lunar missions like Chandrayaan-2 and 3. It will serve as the foundation for future interplanetary missions — to Mars, Venus, and beyond.

v. Boost to Commercial and Strategic Strength

Through NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) and IN-SPaCe, India now offers affordable and reliable launch services to global clients, enhancing both revenue and international cooperation.

e. Challenges Ahead

While LVM-3 is a milestone, India still faces important challenges:

- **Technical:** To match rockets like SpaceX's Falcon Heavy, India must increase payload capacity and adopt reusable technology.
- **Infrastructure:** More advanced testing and assembly facilities are needed for larger engines and future missions.
- **Financial:** Launch vehicle development is costly and requires sustained funding for R&D and upgrades.
- **Competition:** Global players like SpaceX, China's Long March, and Europe's Ariane are investing heavily in innovation.
- **Human Spaceflight:** Crewed missions demand extremely high reliability, precision, and advanced safety systems.

Overcoming these challenges will determine India's long-term leadership in the global space sector.

f. India and the World: Heavy-Lift Comparisons

Globally, countries like the United States, China, and Russia have decades of experience in heavy-lift launches. India's LVM-3 currently places it in the same category, though with smaller capacity:

Country	Rocket	Payload to LEO
India	LVM-3	8 tonnes
USA	Falcon 9 / Falcon Heavy	22–63 tonnes
China	Long March 5	25 tonnes
Russia	Proton-M	22 tonnes
Europe	Ariane 6 (upcoming)	21 tonnes

g. The Road Ahead

India's future space roadmap is both ambitious and inspiring:

- i. Semi-Cryogenic Engine (SCE-200): A new engine under development will offer more power and efficiency.
- ii. Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV): Aims to recover and reuse parts of the rocket, reducing cost and waste.
- iii. Bharatiya Antariksha Station (2035): India's planned space station will enable continuous human presence in orbit.
- iv. Human Missions: The Gaganyaan mission is just the beginning; future plans include lunar and planetary exploration.
- v. Private Sector Growth: New startups and private partnerships are emerging under IN-SPACe, bringing innovation and speed to India's space sector.

Conclusion

The LVM-3 is more than just a rocket; it is a symbol of India's scientific confidence and self-reliance. It marks the transformation of India from a user of foreign technology to an independent spacefaring power. With advancements in cryogenic and reusable systems, India is ready to lead not only in affordability but also in innovation — making space exploration truly inclusive and global.

GS Paper III: Security

4. Case Study: Bastar's Transformation – A Model of Peace Through Development and Inclusive Governance

a. Introduction

For decades, Bastar in southern Chhattisgarh symbolised the deep wounds of India's internal conflict. Once a stronghold of Left Wing Extremism (LWE), it was marked by poverty, fear, and isolation — where development rarely reached and hope seemed distant.

Today, Bastar is redefining its identity. Roads, schools, and health centres now replace bunkers and fear zones. The same villages that once shunned officials now host sports events, cultural fairs, and livelihood programmes. The region is slowly moving from conflict to confidence, from violence to vibrancy, demonstrating that inclusive development can succeed where force alone could not.

b. Foundations of Change — Peace and Trust

The turning point in Bastar's story came when security was paired with sensitivity.

Security with Sensitivity:

Police and paramilitary forces began engaging communities beyond combing operations — conducting health camps, cultural events, and youth outreach programmes.

Community Participation:

Villagers began partnering with local administration in maintaining roads, hosting markets, and reporting threats — gradually dissolving barriers of fear.

Return of Normalcy:

Schools reopened, weekly markets resumed, and government officers started visiting remote hamlets.



Peace, thus, became the foundation upon which development could finally stand.

i. Education and Youth Empowerment

Education has been at the heart of Bastar's transformation.

- **Reopening of Schools:** Hundreds of schools destroyed or abandoned during the conflict have been rebuilt. *Eklavya Model Residential Schools* and hostels now educate thousands of tribal children.
- **Skill Training:** Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and rural skill centres teach practical trades like carpentry, tailoring, and food processing.
- **Youth Aspirations:** Scholarships, mentoring, and sports initiatives encourage students to join nursing, teaching, and police services.

The younger generation is now choosing education over migration, building careers within Bastar rather than leaving it behind.

ii. Women at the Centre of Change

Bastar's transformation is woman-led at its core.

- **Self-Help Groups (SHGs):** Thousands of women manage tamarind, mahua, and tendu leaf processing units — turning local produce into profitable goods.
- **Entrepreneurship and Nutrition:** SHGs run tailoring centres, school mid-day meal kitchens, and Anganwadi supply chains.
- **Leadership:** Women lead village committees, promoting community confidence and inclusive decision-making.

Their economic empowerment has made women the anchors of peace, family stability, and community progress.

iii. Infrastructure and Connectivity

The development of physical and digital infrastructure has reconnected Bastar with the rest of India.

- **All-weather Roads:** New highways and bridges link interior villages to towns and markets.
- **Electricity and Mobile Coverage:** Villages that were once dark and silent now enjoy power supply and mobile connectivity.
- **Digital Inclusion:** Internet access enables online education, banking, and tele-medicine.

Connectivity is no longer just physical — it is a symbol of integration and dignity.

iv Health and Nutrition

Health services have penetrated deep into tribal interiors:

- **Mobile Medical Units:** Regular visits by doctors and nurses ensure doorstep healthcare.
- **Tele-Medicine:** Remote consultations connect rural patients to urban specialists.
- **Poshan Vatikas (Nutrition Gardens):** Households and Anganwadis grow vegetables and fruits to fight malnutrition.
- **Maternal and Child Care:** Focused campaigns track pregnancies and childhood nutrition, improving survival rates.

These measures have not only improved health outcomes but also strengthened trust in government welfare.

v. Water, Livelihood, and Basic Services

Development in Bastar now reaches every home and haat.

- Jal Jeevan Mission: Villages receive clean tap water connections, reducing the burden on women.
- Electricity and Sanitation: Basic services now cover most of rural Bastar, improving living standards.
- Forest-Based Livelihoods: People earn through sustainable harvesting of minor forest produce, balancing ecology with economy.
- Revived Local Markets: Weekly haats have become hubs of trade, interaction, and community life.

Access to basic services has restored self-reliance and social dignity.

c. What Makes Bastar's Model Unique

- i. Peace through Development: Security measures were paired with welfare outreach.
- ii. People-Led Growth: Villagers themselves plan, monitor, and benefit from local projects.
- iii. Women's Leadership: SHGs have become engines of local economies.
- iv. Centre-State Coordination: Joint planning ensures resources reach without delay.
- v. Human Dignity First: Development emphasises empowerment, not charity.

Bastar's revival shows that trust is the strongest foundation of governance.

d. Continuing Challenges

Despite remarkable progress, challenges persist:

- Remaining Maoist Pockets: Remote forests like Abujhmad still require sustained security presence.
- Employment Generation: The growing youth population needs stable, local jobs.
- Environmental Balance: Infrastructure and mining projects must preserve forest ecology.
- Administrative Continuity: Governance must remain consistent to prevent relapse into neglect.

Sustaining peace demands patience, partnership, and perseverance.

e. The Road Ahead

- i. Build Lasting Trust: Maintain transparent communication with tribal communities and ensure timely welfare delivery.
- ii. Empower Gram Sabhas: Implement the PESA Act effectively to give tribals control over natural and community resources.
- iii. Invest in People: Expand education, healthcare, and digital literacy programmes.
- iv. Encourage Local Industry: Develop eco-tourism, forest-based enterprises, and handicrafts as sustainable job creators.
- v. Include Women in Governance: Recognise SHGs as equal partners in district and block-level development planning.

Conclusion

Bastar stands today as living proof that development is the most powerful answer to extremism. When children attend school, when women lead enterprises, and when villages shine with light and hope — violence loses its ground.

Bastar's journey from fear to faith reflects the spirit of India's democracy — resilient, compassionate, and inclusive — where justice, dignity, and opportunity together rebuild peace from within.

Reader's Note — About This Current Affairs Compilation

Dear Aspirant,

This document is part of the PrepAlpine Current Affairs Series — designed to bring clarity, structure, and precision to your daily UPSC learning.

While every effort has been made to balance depth with brevity, please keep the following in mind:

1. Orientation & Purpose

This compilation is curated primarily from the UPSC Mains perspective — with emphasis on conceptual clarity, analytical depth, and interlinkages across GS papers.

However, the PrepAlpine team is simultaneously developing a dedicated Prelims-focused Current Affairs Series, designed for:

- factual coverage
- data recall
- Prelims-style MCQs
- objective pattern analysis

This Prelims Edition will be released separately as a standalone publication.

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Some sections may feel shorter or longer depending on topic relevance and news density. To fit your personal preference, you may freely resize or summarize sections using any LLM tool (ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, etc.) at your convenience.

3. Format Flexibility

The formatting combines:

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- lists
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- visual cues

—all optimised for retention.

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