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UPSC MENTORSHIP & GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Xtracts

Daily Current Affairs · 4 Issues · PYQ Connections

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Mission X for UPSC

ISSUE 01 GS-I Indian Heritage & Culture · Tribal History

Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada 2026: Nation Begins 15-Day Tribute to Birsa Munda's Legacy

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched the fortnight-long Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada (1–15 November), culminating in Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas on November 15 — the birth anniversary of Dharti Aaba Birsa Munda, who led the Ulgulan against British exploitation of tribal land. The drive rolls out 300+ projects and new digital platforms for tribal health and forest-rights data nationwide.

1–15 Nov	300+	500	1 lakh	2021
PAKHWADA DURATION	PROJECTS LAUNCHED	WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS	HEALERS TO BE TRAINED	YEAR JJGD INSTITUTED

PRELIMS RELEVANCE	MAINS RELEVANCE	ETHICS RELEVANCE
★★★★☆	★★★★★	★★★★☆

PRELIMS TRIGGER

- Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas: observed 15 November, Birsa Munda's birth anniversary; the day was instituted by the Government in 2021.
- Birsa Munda led the "Ulgulan" or Great Tumult (1899–1900) in southern Ranchi against British land and forest policies in Chhotanagpur.
- Jan-HIT Portal: India's first tribe-disaggregated health data platform, built with ICMR, covering 20 States.
- National FRA Digital Platform takes forest-rights claims under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 from Gram Sabha submission to digitally signed titles in one system.
- JJGD host locations so far: Ranchi (2021), Khunti (2022, 2023), Jamui (2024), Dediapada (2025).

MAINS CONNECTION

GS-I GS-II

The Pakhwada is best read as a last-mile delivery exercise for tribal welfare entitlements rather than a one-day commemoration: it bundles scholarship camps, health/nutrition screening for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), and forest-rights legal literacy into a single nationwide calendar. Its historical anchor — Birsa Munda's resistance to the alienation of khuntkatti land — still frames today's debates on the Fifth Schedule, PESA, and the pace of Forest Rights Act implementation. **GS-II | Social Justice:** the drive is also a delivery checkpoint for PM-JANMAN, the flagship scheme for the most vulnerable PVTG habitations.

Key themes: tribal self-governance under PESA & the Fifth Schedule; forest rights and land alienation; digital inclusion (Jan-HIT, FRA platform); skilling and livelihood via the Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan.

ETHICS LENS

"Should a modern state's definition of 'development' on tribal land be set by the state, or by the tribal community itself?" The tension Birsa Munda's Ulgulan dramatized — outsiders reshaping tribal land use without consent — echoes in today's forest-rights claims, where Gram Sabha consent is the legal threshold but administrative delay often decides the outcome in practice. ***GS-IV Value: Informed consent & distributive justice*** *— honouring a community's right to decide its own relationship with its land and resources, not merely to be consulted after the decision is made.*

Tribal movements & heritage have featured in **multiple Prelims cycles** over the last decade — PYQ CONNECT

With reference to the history of India, "Ulgulan" or the Great Tumult is the description of which of the following events? (UPSC Prelims 2020)

(a) The Revolt of 1857
(b) The Mappila Rebellion of 1921
(c) The Indigo Revolt of 1859-60
(d) Birsa Munda's Revolt of 1899-1900

Answer: (d). The Munda Rebellion (1899–1900), led by Birsa Munda in southern Ranchi, protested the loss of traditional khuntkatti land to outsiders and aimed to restore Munda Raj; it led to the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908, which recognised tribal land rights and banned forced labour (beth begari).

ISSUE 02 GS-II Welfare Schemes · Social Justice

India's Social Security Net Widens: Coverage Hits 68.4% as EPFO Wage Ceiling Rises to ₹25,000

A Labour Ministry backgrounder shows social protection coverage climbing from 19% in 2015 to 68.4% in 2026, driven by a higher EPFO wage ceiling, EPFO 3.0's faster claim settlement, and a revamped national pension scheme for the unorganised sector.

68.4%	₹25,000	7.98 cr	<3 days	31.89 cr
SOCIAL SECURITY COVERAGE	NEW EPFO WAGE CEILING	EPFO CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS	EPFO 3.0 CLAIM TARGET	E-SHRAM REGISTRATIONS

PRELIMS RELEVANCE	MAINS RELEVANCE	ETHICS RELEVANCE
★★★★☆	★★★★★	★★★★☆

PRELIMS TRIGGER

- Social protection coverage rose from 19% (2015) to 68.4% (2026), per the Labour Ministry.
- EPFO mandatory wage ceiling raised from ₹15,000 to ₹25,000 (Cabinet approval, September 2026); set to bring over 51 lakh more employees under cover.
- EPFO: 7.98 crore contributing members (as of 16 September 2026), up from 3.49 crore in 2014-15; about 82 lakh pensioners.
- Revamped NSAP, now the Pradhan Mantri Samajik Sahayata Yojana (2026-27 to 2030-31): old-age pension of ₹200 (ages 60–79) and ₹500 (80+); ₹20,000 family benefit on a breadwinner's death.
- The Code on Social Security, 2020 has been in force since 21 November 2025.

MAINS CONNECTION

GS-II GS-III

The wage-ceiling hike and EPFO 3.0's faster settlement are incremental fixes within a bigger consolidation: 29 central labour laws folded into four Codes, of which the Code on Social Security, 2020 is the welfare pillar. The real test is implementation — state-level notification has lagged, and portability of benefits for migrant and gig workers remains incomplete even as coverage numbers rise on paper. **GS-III | Inclusive Growth:** wider formal-sector coverage is also tied to productivity and tax-base arguments made in recent Economic Survey discussions.

Key themes: Code on Social Security, 2020; EPFO & ESIC architecture; gig and platform worker coverage; direct benefit transfer in welfare delivery.

ETHICS LENS

"Is a 'minimum' social security net enough, or does the state owe its informal workforce something closer to dignity by design?" With over 90% of India's workforce still informal, a wage-ceiling increase helps those already near the formal boundary, but does little for workers who never cross it at all — raising the question of whether incremental expansion or a more universal floor better serves distributive fairness. ***GS-IV Value: Distributive justice & the welfare obligation of the state*** *— weighing fiscal prudence against a state's duty to ensure basic security for its most precarious workers.*

EPF/social security coverage has been tested directly in **recent Prelims papers** — PYQ CONNECT

With reference to casual workers employed in India, consider the following statements: (UPSC Prelims 2021)
1. All casual workers are entitled for Employees Provident Fund coverage.
2. All casual workers are entitled for regular working hours and overtime payment.
3. The government can by a notification specify that an establishment or industry shall pay wages only through its bank account.
Which of the above statements are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b). Not all casual workers are automatically entitled to EPF coverage — certain conditions must be met — so Statement 1 is false. The Supreme Court (2020) affirmed casual workers' entitlement to regular hours, overtime and equal treatment with permanent staff (Statement 2), and the Payment of Wages (Amendment) Act, 2017 lets government mandate bank-only wage payment for specified establishments (Statement 3).

ISSUE 03 GS-III Security & Disaster Management

CISF Scraps Decades-Old Territorial Command, Moves to Sector-Based Security Architecture

From 1 November 2026, the Central Industrial Security Force replaced its single territorial command system with eight new functional sectors — covering power, coal, steel, oil & gas, ports and government buildings — to sharpen critical-infrastructure protection against drone, cyber and sabotage threats.

1 Nov '26	8	50+	2001	MHA
EFFECTIVE DATE	NEW FUNCTIONAL SECTORS	UNITS UNDER OLD SYSTEM	AVIATION SECTOR PRECEDENT	APPROVING AUTHORITY

PRELIMS RELEVANCE	MAINS RELEVANCE	ETHICS RELEVANCE
★★★★☆	★★★★☆	★★★☆☆

PRELIMS TRIGGER

- CISF is a Central Armed Police Force under the Ministry of Home Affairs, guarding airports, ports, power plants, mines and government buildings.
- The 8 new sectors: Power-I (New Delhi), Power-II (Kolkata), Coal (Ranchi), Steel (Bhilai), Petroleum & Natural Gas (Guwahati), West Coast Port (Mumbai), East Coast Port (Chennai), and GBMM & MRTS — Government Buildings, Museums & Monuments and Mass Rapid Transit System (New Delhi).
- These join CISF's existing functional models: the Aviation Sector (functional since 2001) and the DAE & DoS Sector for atomic energy and space (since 2018).
- Under the old system, a single Sector Headquarters supervised over 50 units across mixed installation types, requiring coordination with multiple ministries.
- Rationale cited: faster decisions, a single point of contact per installation-type, and a more risk-based response to drones, cyberattacks and sabotage.

MAINS CONNECTION

GS-III GS-II

The shift from territorial to functional command is a textbook case of internal-security architecture catching up with the nature of modern threats: a coal mine, a port and a government building each face a different risk profile, and a single geography-based commander was stretched thin in specialised judgement across all of them. Counter-drone systems, cyber-risk management and sector-specific emergency plans are explicitly cited as the operational payoff. **GS-II | Governance:** the restructuring is also a case study in institutional reform as a tool of administrative accountability, distinct from any budgetary or legislative change.

Key themes: Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) reform; Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP); counter-drone and cyber-risk management; inter-agency coordination doctrine.

ETHICS LENS

"When security forces reorganise 'for efficiency', whose accountability gets sharper — and whose gets diluted?" Specialised sectoral command brings clearer domain expertise and faster decisions within a sector, but it also removes the single territorial officer who could once be held answerable for a region's overall security performance across unrelated installations. ***GS-IV Value: Accountability in public institutions*** *— ensuring that a gain in technical efficiency does not come at the cost of a clear, traceable chain of responsibility when something goes wrong.*

Internal-security force structure is a **recurring Prelims theme** PYQ CONNECT

With reference to Home Guards, consider the following statements: (UPSC Prelims 2023)
1. Home Guards are raised under the Home Guards Act and Rules of the Central Government.
2. The role of the Home Guards is to serve as an auxiliary force to the police in maintenance of internal security.
3. To prevent infiltration on the international border/coastal areas, the Border Wing Home Guards Battalions have been raised in some States.
How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Answer: (b). Home Guards are raised under respective State/UT Acts and Rules, not a Central Government Act — so Statement 1 is false. Statements 2 and 3 are correct: they serve as an auxiliary force to the police, and Border Wing Home Guards Battalions exist in some border/coastal States.

ISSUE 04 GS-III Science & Technology · Space

ISRO Launches NVS-03, Its Third Next-Gen NavIC Satellite, Aboard GSLV-F18

On the night of 30 October, ISRO's 20th GSLV flight placed NVS-03 — carrying an indigenous atomic clock and L1/L5/S-band signals — into orbit, reinforcing NavIC's independent positioning coverage over India and a belt extending 1,500 km beyond its borders.

GSLV-F18	NVS-03	L1, L5, S	1,500 km	111.75°E
20TH GSLV FLIGHT	3RD OF 5 NVS SATELLITES	SIGNAL BANDS CARRIED	COVERAGE BEYOND BORDERS	FINAL ORBITAL SLOT

PRELIMS RELEVANCE	MAINS RELEVANCE	ETHICS RELEVANCE
★★★★★	★★★★☆	★★★☆☆

PRELIMS TRIGGER

- GSLV-F18 launched from the Second Launch Pad, Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, on 30 October 2026 at 23:51 hrs.
- NVS-03 was placed in Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit; after orbit-raising manoeuvres, its final slot is at 111.75°E.
- It carries an indigenous atomic clock alongside procured ones, reducing import dependence after earlier NVS clock issues.
- NavIC/IRNSS service area: the Indian landmass plus about 1,500 km beyond its borders; offers an open Standard Positioning Service and an encrypted Restricted Service for strategic users.
- NVS-03 is the third of five planned second-generation NavIC satellites (NVS-01 to NVS-05).

MAINS CONNECTION

GS-III GS-II

NVS-03's indigenous atomic clock is the headline technical detail: earlier NavIC satellites had to rely on procured clocks after indigenous units underperformed in orbit, so flying a working domestic clock alongside imported ones is a direct test of atmanirbharta in a component few countries can build. The mission also feeds into disaster management, maritime and aviation safety, and location-based services across the digital economy. **GS-II | International Relations:** NavIC's open civilian service positions India as a provider — not only a consumer — of satellite navigation infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific neighbourhood.

Key themes: space technology indigenisation; NavIC compared with GPS, GLONASS and Galileo; strategic autonomy in critical technologies; Atmanirbhar Bharat in Science & Technology.

ETHICS LENS

"Should a nation keep investing in 'self-reliance' for a strategic technology even when buying it off the shelf would be faster and cheaper?" NavIC's atomic-clock setbacks show that indigenisation in frontier technology is rarely efficient in the short run; the ethical weighing lies in whether the long-term gain in strategic autonomy — not depending on another country's goodwill for positioning data during a crisis — justifies the near-term cost and delay. ***GS-IV Value: Prioritising long-term national interest over short-term efficiency*** *— a recurring test for public investment in strategic self-sufficiency.*

NavIC/IRNSS is a **high-frequency Prelims favourite** in Space Science PYQ CONNECT

With reference to the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS), consider the following statements: (UPSC Prelims 2018)
1. IRNSS has three satellites in geostationary and four satellites in geosynchronous orbits.
2. IRNSS covers the entire India and about 5,500 sq. km beyond its borders.
3. India will have its own satellite navigation system with full global coverage by the middle of 2021.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) None

Answer: (a). Statement 1 is correct — NavIC has 3 satellites in geostationary orbit and 4 in inclined geosynchronous orbit. Statement 2 is wrong: actual coverage extends about 1,500 km beyond India's borders, not 5,500 sq. km. Statement 3 is wrong: NavIC was always designed as a regional system, with no plan for full global coverage.

🧠 Memory Lab

Rapid revision · High-retention formats · Today's key concepts

TUESDAY · 03 NOV 2026

✕ XTRACTS IN 30 SECONDS

1. Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada 2026: a nationwide 1–15 November tribal-welfare drive honouring Birsa Munda, rolling out 300+ projects and new Jan-HIT & FRA digital platforms.

2. Social security coverage hits 68.4%: EPFO's wage ceiling rose to ₹25,000, and EPFO 3.0 now targets claim settlement in under 3 days.

3. CISF goes sector-based: the territorial command system was scrapped for 8 functional sectors covering power, coal, steel, oil & gas and ports from 1 November.

4. ISRO launches NVS-03: GSLV-F18 placed India's third next-gen NavIC satellite — with an indigenous atomic clock — into orbit, strengthening independent positioning.

🔥 NUMBERS TO REMEMBER

68.4% SOCIAL SECURITY COVERAGE, 2026	**₹25,000** NEW EPFO WAGE CEILING	**300+** TRIBAL PROJECTS UNDER JJGD 2026
8 NEW CISF FUNCTIONAL SECTORS	**1,500 km** NAVIC COVERAGE BEYOND INDIA	**7.98 cr** EPFO CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS
20th GSLV FLIGHT (GSLV-F18)	**15 Nov** JANJATIYA GAURAV DIWAS DATE	**5** TOTAL NVS-SERIES SATELLITES PLANNED

🟣 ETHICS QUICK REFERENCE

ISSUE 01 — TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

Forest-rights claims hinge on Gram Sabha consent, echoing Birsa Munda's fight against land alienation. **Value:** Informed consent & distributive justice.

ISSUE 02 — SOCIAL SECURITY

Over 90% of India's workforce is still informal even as coverage rises on paper. **Value:** Distributive justice & the welfare obligation of the state.

ISSUE 03 — SECURITY REFORM

Sector-based CISF command sharpens technical expertise but disperses single-point territorial responsibility. **Value:** Accountability in public institutions.

ISSUE 04 — SPACE TECHNOLOGY

NavIC's indigenous atomic clock cost more time and money than an imported one. **Value:** Long-term national interest over short-term efficiency.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

One thread across today's four issues

Each story is a different face of the same question: how far should the state go — in time, cost, or consent — to secure a long-term public good, whether that good is tribal land justice, a worker's safety net, critical-infrastructure security, or technological self-reliance.

◎ QUICK REVISION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Birsa Munda led the Ulgulan (1899–1900) against British land/forest policy in Chhotanagpur.
- ☐ Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas (15 Nov) was instituted in 2021.
- ☐ The Code on Social Security, 2020 has been in force since 21 Nov 2025.
- ☐ EPFO wage ceiling: ₹15,000 → ₹25,000 (Cabinet decision, Sept 2026).
- ☐ CISF is a Central Armed Police Force under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- ☐ CISF's Aviation Sector model (functional since 2001) is the template for the new sectors.
- ☐ NavIC/IRNSS has 3 geostationary + 4 geosynchronous satellites; covers India plus ~1,500 km beyond.
- ☐ NVS-03 is the third of five second-generation NavIC satellites (NVS-01 to NVS-05).

📊 PYQ FREQUENCY — 10-YEAR VIEW

Space & satellite navigation	7/10
Govt. schemes (PM-JANMAN, NSAP)	6/10
Sci-tech indigenisation	6/10
Tribal movements & welfare	6/10
Forest Rights Act & PVTGs	5/10
Labour codes & social security	5/10
Internal security forces (CAPFs)	4/10

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