NEXT IAS

DAILY NEWS ANALYSIS

8th January

Explained

1. GDP growth in FY26 expected at 7.4% despite US tariff troubles
2. Why silver prices jumped 160% in 2025
3. India's Progress on its climate targets
4. Census house listing from April with option for self enumeration
5. Fine tuning this signal to sharpen India's AMR battle

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EXPLAINED

1. GDP GROWTH IN FY26 EXPECTED AT 7.4% DESPITE US TARIFF TROUBLES

Syllabus : GS 3/Economy

About the News :

- FIRST ADVANCE ESTIMATES AHEAD OF UNION BUDGET,GDP growth in FY26 expected at 7.4% despite US tariff troubles, Nominal GDP growth at 5-year low of 8%: Statistics ministry data
- INDIA'S REAL GDP growth is expected to rise sharply to 7.4 per cent in the current fiscal, according to the government's first advance estimate of the number, on the back of a sharp rebound in manufacturing sector growth to 7 per cent from 4.5 per cent last year despite problems caused by the 50 per cent US tariffs on Indian goods.
- According to data released Wednesday by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI), while the real GDP growth is projected to rise from 6.5 per cent in 2024-25, nominal growth -or growth without adjusting for price increases - is set to fall to a five-year low of just 8 per cent.
- The nominal GDP number will be a key input in calculations for the upcoming Budget for 2026-27, especially for tabulating the growth in tax collections.
- While broadly in line with expectations, MoSPI's first advance estimate confirms the view among economists that growth is set to slow down in the second half of the fiscal year.
- The last time India's nominal GDP growth was lower was in the pandemic year of 2020-21, when the economy had contracted by 1.2 per cent.
- In rupee terms, the nominal GDP in 2025-26 is seen at Rs 357 lakh crore. Using the exchange rate of 89.89 per US dollar that the rupee closed Wednesday, the GDP amounts to $3.97 trillion, just short of the $4-trillion mark.

Nominal vs Real GDP Growth Outlook (2025–26)

According to, Chief Economist at **Crisil**, the **gap between nominal and real GDP growth in 2025–26 is expected to narrow to 60 basis points**, the **lowest since 2011–12**.

- For **2026–27**, nominal and real growth are expected to "flip":
  - Nominal GDP growth: ~10.5–11% (close to long-term average)
  - **Real GDP growth**: ~**6.7%**

Role of First Advance Estimate in Budgeting

- The **first advance estimate of GDP** is crucial for the **Union Budget**, usually presented on **February 1**.
- The **Ministry of Finance** uses this estimate to **assume a nominal GDP growth rate for the next fiscal year**, which guides:
  - Expected **tax revenue growth**
  - **Fiscal deficit** and **debt-to-GDP targets** (expressed as % of GDP)

Budget Assumptions vs Actuals: 2025–26 Case

- The **2025–26 Union Budget** assumed a **nominal GDP growth of 10.1%** over the first advance estimate for **2024–25** to set the **fiscal deficit target at 4.4% of GDP**.
- However:
  - **Actual nominal GDP growth (first advance estimate, 2025–26)**: **8%**, lower than assumed.
  - Despite this, the **absolute GDP size target** was met at **₹357 lakh crore**, due to **upward revisions in the previous year's GDP**.

New GDP Series and Base Year Change


E. EXPLAINED

New GDP data from next month

This first advance estimate will have a short shelf life because GDP data released February 27 onward will be as per a new series with a base year of 2022-23 as against 2011-12 now. Updating the base year is key to a correct picture of economy.

- The **first advance estimate for 2025–26 will have an unusually short shelf life**.
- From **February 27**, all GDP data released by **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** will follow a **new GDP series**:
  - **Base year changes** from **2011–12 to 2022–23**
  - Incorporates **new data sources** and **methodological improvements**
- MoSPI cautioned that:
  - Advance and quarterly estimates will undergo **revisions** due to changes in methods, data coverage, and updated benchmarks.
  - Users should interpret revised estimates with care.

MoSPI will release:

- **GDP data for October–December 2025** under the **new series**
- Second advance estimate for 2025–26
- **Revised GDP data for the last three years** under the new base year

Under the **current (2011–12 base) series**, real GDP growth stands at:

- **2022–23**: **7.6%**
- **2023–24**: **9.2%**
- **2024–25**: **6.5%**

Revision Timeline for 2025–26 GDP

- GDP estimates for **2025–26** will continue to be **revised even after February 27**.
- The **final GDP number** will be available only in **February 2028**.

Signs of Second-Half Growth Slowdown

- The first advance estimate suggests a **second-half slowdown**:
  - **Oct–Dec 2025 & Jan–Mar 2026 average growth**: **6.9%**
  - This compares with **7.8%** and **8.2%** in the first two quarters.
- **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** forecasts:
  - **7.0%** growth in **Oct–Dec 2025**
  - **6.5%** growth in **Jan–Mar 2026**
  - Full-year growth forecast revised up to **7.3%**

Government's Growth Assessment

- **V Anantha Nageswaran**, Chief Economic Advisor, initially projected **6.3–6.8%** growth for 2025–26.
- After stronger-than-expected **Q2 growth of 8.2%**, he stated that **full-year growth would be "north of 7%."**

Basic terms and meanings :

Nominal GDP

- Measures the **total value of goods and services at current market prices**.
- **Includes inflation** (price changes).
- If prices rise, nominal GDP can increase **even if actual production doesn't**.
- Used for:
  - Budget calculations
  - Tax revenue projections
  - Fiscal deficit & debt-to-GDP ratios

Real GDP

- Measures the **value of goods and services at constant prices** (base-year prices).
- **Excludes inflation**, showing **true growth in output**.
- Best indicator of:
  - Economic performance
  - Living standards
  - Business cycle trends

Base Effect

The base effect refers to how the level of a variable in the previous year (the base year/period) influences the current year's growth rate.

- A low base makes current growth look artificially high
- A high base makes current growth look artificially low

Even if actual performance is similar.

Types of Base Effect

- Low Base Effect
  - Previous year had contraction/slowdown
  - Current growth appears **inflated**
  - Common after **recessions, pandemics, shocks**
- High Base Effect
  - Previous year had strong growth
  - Current growth appears **suppressed**
  - Common after **boom years**

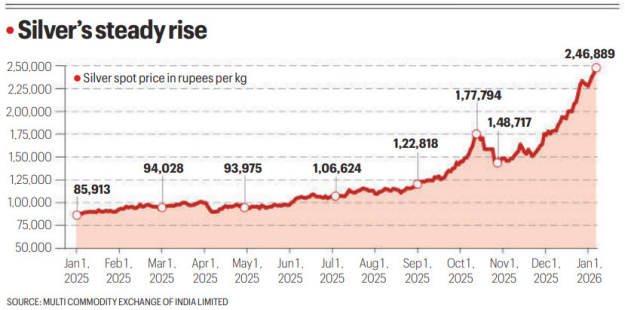
2. WHY SILVER PRICES JUMPED 160% IN 2025

Backdrop : Why silver prices surfed a 160% wave in 2025

Syllabus : GS 3/Economy, GS 1/World Geography

About the News :

- AFTER A 160%-plus rise in 2025, the price of silver has continued to surge this year, with the first week of 2026 seeing an increase of more than 7%.



- The year 2025 also witnessed record highs for gold prices. This was largely driven by dented investor confidence due to global trade tensions and continued easing of interest rates by the US Federal Reserve.
- The reasons behind silver's rise are similar, but also different.
- Unlike gold, which is primarily purchased by households and central banks as a store of value and investment, silver actually has inherent physical properties that make it a key component in the manufacture of items, such as batteries and solar panels.
- These sectors are not only in vogue now but will be crucial to the future of humanity. The "bedrock of demand" for silver also includes artificial intelligence.
- Artificial intelligence remains a powerful demand source for silver. Investment in AI-related industries is increasing silver demand over a wide scale of applications, including smart grid infrastructure and data transmission.
- Investment levels lead us to view AI-related silver demand as a growth source for the next several years.
- Silver is also used to make jewellery and coins. That is why buyers and their reasons to purchase silver are more varied than those of gold.

US And China :

1. **Structural Supply Constraints in Silver**
   - Silver's supply dynamics differ sharply from gold.
   - It is **primarily produced as a byproduct** of mining other minerals, which limits the ability of supply to respond quickly to rising demand.
   - Despite **strong and sustained demand from industrial uses**, silver output has **not increased proportionately for several years**, creating a persistent supply-side tightness that has contributed to rising prices.

2. US Policy Shifts and Stockpiling Pressures

- A key near-term driver of silver's price surge is its **addition to the US critical minerals list in November**.
- The list, revised every three years by the **US Geological Survey (USGS)**, influences **government financing decisions** and determines which minerals may be reviewed under **Section 232 tariffs** during the administration of **Donald Trump**.
  - With silver included, the total number of critical minerals rose to **60**.
  - USGS said the update followed a **new methodology** assessing economic impacts of supply-chain disruptions across **1,200+ scenarios**.
- Even before this policy change, **tariff fears had driven massive stockpiling**.
- According to the **CME Group's Commodity Exchange**, US silver inventories surged to **531 million ounces** in late September—**74% higher than a year earlier**.
- Though stocks have since fallen, they remain elevated at **449 million ounces**, around **three times normal levels**.

3. China's Export Restrictions and Global Industry Concerns
   - Adding to supply anxieties are **China's new rare metals export restrictions**, effective for the **next two years**, which include silver.
   - These controls have heightened concerns among global manufacturers reliant on silver for industrial processes.
   - Reflecting industry unease, **Elon Musk**, CEO of **Tesla**, warned on December 27 that such restrictions are problematic, noting that **silver is essential for many industrial applications**.

Fear of missing out !

1. **Global Supply Disruptions and Price Spike in London**
   - Large-scale **stockpiling of silver in the US** led to **supply mismatches in key global markets**, especially **London**, where international silver prices are benchmarked.
   - By **October (around Diwali)**, a **shortage of physical silver in London** had emerged, triggering a **sharp surge in global prices**.
   - This physical scarcity, rather than just paper trading, played a crucial role in driving prices higher.
2. **India's Investor Frenzy and ETF-Driven Demand**
   - Traditionally, **India's gold demand** drives major price movements, but in **2025 silver was pulled into the same investment frenzy**. According to the **Bank for International Settlements (BIS)**, retail **trend-chasing investors** sought to capitalise on gold's momentum and extended **speculative behaviour to silver** as well.
   - This trend is reflected in ETF data:
     - **Silver ETF inflows (September)**: **₹5,342 crore**
     - **Gold ETF inflows (September 2024)**: **₹1,233 crore**
     - A year earlier, silver ETF inflows were likely negligible, as **Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI)** did not even report them.
   - AMFI noted that **gold and silver ETFs together accounted for 71.9% of total passive fund flows**, highlighting investors' growing preference for **precious metals as portfolio diversifiers amid global volatility**.
3. **Physical Shortages, Price Premiums, and Fund Pauses**
   - Creation of new ETF units requires **purchase of physical silver**, intensifying shortages in both **London and India**.
   - This created a **self-reinforcing cycle**:
     - rising prices → fear of missing out → higher investment demand → further price increases.

- Due to acute shortages, **domestic silver prices began trading at a 5–12% premium** over international benchmarks.
- Following these developments, **silver ETF inflows moderated**, declining to **₹3,412 crore in October** and **₹2,154 crore in November**, as supply constraints and elevated prices tempered investor enthusiasm.

Commodities on the rise

1. Broad-Based Metals Rally Driven by Tariffs, Shortages, and Weak Dollar
   - Gold and silver were not alone in their 2025 rally. **Copper prices surged past $12,000 per tonne for the first time**, driven by **US tariff concerns and supply shortages**, mirroring pressures seen in silver.
   - Adding to the momentum was a **weakening US dollar**, which is on track to end **about 10% lower in 2025**.
   - This environment fuelled the so-called **"debasement trade"**, where investors buy **real and scarce assets**—including gold, silver, bitcoin, and industrial metals—expecting them to **retain value and hedge against currency depreciation**.
2. **Outlook:** Bullish Bias with Elevated Volatility

- According to **ANZ**, the **bullish case for gold and silver remains intact in the first half of 2026**. In a December 15 note, commodity strategists cited supportive factors such as:
  - Easing monetary policy
  - Fiscal concerns
  - Geopolitical risks
  - Declining trust in US assets
- However, they cautioned that **price volatility is likely to remain high** following the sharp gains seen in 2025.

Silver

- **Chemical symbol:** Ag (from Latin *Argentum*)
- **Atomic number:** 47
- **Category:** Precious metal
- **Colour & appearance:** Shiny white, highly reflective
- **Natural form:** Found as native silver or combined with ores of copper, lead, and zinc

Key Physical & Chemical Properties

- **Highest electrical conductivity** of all metals
- **Highest thermal conductivity**
- **Highly malleable and ductile**
- **Resistant to corrosion**, but tarnishes when exposed to sulphur (forms silver sulphide)
- **Melting point:** ~962°C

How Silver is Produced

- Mostly produced as a **by-product** of mining:
  - Copper
  - Lead
  - Zinc
- Very little silver is mined exclusively, which makes **supply relatively inflexible**

Major Uses of Silver

Industrial uses (largest share):

- Electronics and electrical contacts
- Solar panels (photovoltaic cells)
- Electric vehicles and batteries
- Medical instruments and antimicrobial coatings

Other uses:

- Jewellery and silverware
- Coins and bullion
- Photography (traditional)
- Investment products (bars, coins, ETFs)

Top Silver-Producing Countries

Based on recent global mining data, the **largest producers of silver** are:

1. Mexico

- **World's largest silver producer**
- Major mining regions: Zacatecas, Durango, Chihuahua
- Strong production due to rich polymetallic deposits

1.China

- Silver mainly produced as a **by-product** of lead, zinc, and copper mining
- Large domestic industrial consumption

2. Peru

- Long history of silver mining
- Andes region hosts major deposits

3. Chile

- By-product from copper mining

4. Australia

- Important polymetallic mines

Silver Reserves: Country-wise Estimates

Top Countries by Silver Reserves

(Reserves = economically recoverable silver with current technology)

1. **Peru** – Largest known reserves
2. Australia
3. Poland
4. Russia
5. Mexico
   - **Global silver reserves: ~530,000 tonnes**

Silver Reserves and Production in India

1. Silver Reserves in India

- India has **limited primary silver reserves**.
- Silver is **not mined independently** in India; it occurs mainly as a **by-product of lead–zinc ores**.
- Major reserve-bearing region:
  - **Rajasthan** – accounts for **over 90% of India's known silver resources**, associated with lead–zinc belts.

Key silver-bearing mining belts:

- Zawar belt
- Rampura–Agucha
- Sindesar Khurd
- (All located in Rajasthan)

2. Silver Production in India

- India is a **significant silver producer**, despite limited reserves, due to efficient extraction from polymetallic ores.
- **Hindustan Zinc Limited** is the **largest and virtually the only primary producer of silver** in India.

3. INDIA'S PROGRESS ON ITS CLIMATE TARGETS

Backdrop : While the country has successfully reduced emissions intensity, and increased non-fossil power capacity, challenges remain in translating these achievements into absolute emissions reductions. The next few years will be critical in addressing these gaps and ensuring a sustainable future

Syllabus : GS 3/Environment, GS 2/Policies and schemes

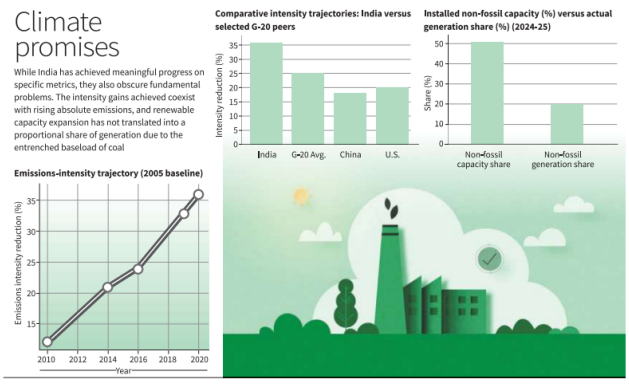
About the News :

- There has been a lot of focus on the recent Aravalli judgment and its implications for mining operations across the green belt as well as the government's

commitments regarding environmental standards and regulatory protection for ecologically sensitive areas.

- In the Paris summit, India had committed to four quantified climate targets, grounded in the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" — a position that reflects how, historically, India's per capita emissions were fractions compared to emissions of other major countries like the U.S. (however, currently India is the world's third largest absolute emitter).
- **The centrepiece of Prime Minister Modi's statement at the Paris summit was the pledge to reduce emissions intensity by 33-35% by 2030 (based on the 2005 baseline), coupled with commitments to enhance non-fossil power capacity to 40%, 175 GW of renewable energy, and 2.5-3 billion tonnes of carbon sequestration through forests.**
- Now, more than 10 years later, one needs to evaluate whether these promises have actually been delivered.

Incomplete decoupling



1. **Decline in Emissions Intensity: A Policy Achievement**
   - India has achieved a **significant reduction in GDP emissions-intensity** (greenhouse gas emissions per unit of economic output).
   - Using **2005 as the baseline**, emissions intensity fell by **about 36% by 2020**, allowing India to **meet its original 33–35% target well ahead of the 2030 deadline**.
   - This performance places India among the **faster-improving economies globally** in terms of emissions intensity, according to analyses by **Climate Transparency** and the **International Energy Agency**.
2. **Structural Drivers Behind the Intensity Reduction**
   - Three key structural factors explain India's declining emissions intensity:
     - **Energy transition:** Rapid expansion of **non-fossil power capacity** (solar, wind, hydro, nuclear) reduced the carbon intensity of electricity. Non-fossil capacity crossed **~43% by 2023** and reached **around 50% by mid-2025**.
     - **Economic restructuring:** A shift toward **services and digital sectors**, which are less carbon-intensive than manufacturing, lowered emissions per unit of GDP.
     - **Efficiency programmes:** National initiatives such as **Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT)** and **UJALA** curbed energy demand growth in industry and households, delivering **measurable electricity savings and avoided emissions in FY2020–21**.
3. **Limits of Intensity Gains and the Net-Zero Challenge**
   - Despite falling emissions intensity, **absolute emissions remain high**.
   - India's territorial GHG emissions were about **2,959 MtCO$_2$e in 2020**, with levels staying elevated thereafter.
   - This reflects **partial decoupling**—GDP growth has outpaced emissions growth, reducing intensity without causing an economy-wide decline in total emissions.
   - Moreover, **sectoral divergence persists**: emissions from **cement, steel, and transport** continue to rise, even as power-sector CO_2 growth moderated in **2024–25**.
   - While India's intensity decline outperforms many G-20 peers, **coal's dominant role** keeps per-unit emissions high.
   - For India's **2070 net-zero pledge** to be credible, remaining intensity gains must translate into **absolute emissions reductions**, requiring a **transparent coal phase-down strategy** and **clear industrial decarbonisation roadmaps**.

Generation gap

1. Rapid Expansion of Renewable Capacity, Led by Solar
   - India has seen a **dramatic scale-up of renewable energy capacity**, with **non-fossil capacity rising from ~29.5% in 2015 to about 51.4% by June 2025**.

- **Solar power** has driven this growth, expanding from **~2.8 GW in 2014 to ~110.9 GW by mid-2025**, aided by competitive tariffs and domestic photovoltaic manufacturing.
- **Wind power** grew more moderately, from **~21 GW to ~51.3 GW**, constrained by land availability, grid-connection delays, and state-level regulatory bottlenecks.
- As of June 2025, **non-fossil sources account for 51% of India's total installed capacity of 495 GW**, fulfilling India's revised capacity-based commitment ahead of 2030.

2. Capacity vs Generation: Coal Still Dominates Baseload

- Despite renewables forming over half of installed capacity, they supplied only **~22% of actual electricity generation in 2024–25**.
- This gap arises because **renewables have lower capacity factors and intermittent output**, unlike coal, which provides continuous **baseload power**.
  - **Coal-based (thermal) capacity remained ~240–253 GW in mid-2025**, and
  - **More than 70% of India's electricity generation still comes from coal**, underscoring the structural reliance on fossil fuels.
  - Thus, headline success in capacity addition masks the reality that **renewables have not yet replaced fossil baseload**.

3. Storage, Grid Constraints, and the Path Ahead

- The biggest bottleneck in translating capacity into emissions reduction is **energy storage**.
- The **Central Electricity Authority (CEA)** estimates a requirement of **336 GWh of storage by 2029–30**, but as of **September 2025**, only **~500 MWh** of battery storage is operational.
- Government programmes—**National Solar Mission**, **Solar Parks Scheme**, **UDAY**, **PM-KUSUM**, and **rooftop solar initiatives**—have enabled additions of roughly **25 GW of renewables annually**, yet execution challenges persist due to **grid delays and land acquisition issues**.
- While the **500 GW renewables ambition for 2030** is technically feasible, achieving **sustained generation and real emissions reductions** will require rapid scaling of storage, major transmission upgrades, and stronger policy delivery—especially as **coal remains the backbone of India's power system**.

Forests only on paper

1. Forest Carbon Sink Target: Numerically Within Reach

- India's pledge to create an **additional forest and tree carbon sink of 2.5–3.0 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent by 2030** appears achievable on paper.
- The **Forest Survey of India's** India State of Forest Report 2023 estimates a **total carbon stock of 30.43 billion tonnes of CO_2e**, representing an **increase of 2.29 billion tonnes over 2005 levels**.
- This leaves **only about 0.2 billion tonnes** to be added by 2030.
- Satellite data shows **7,15,343 sq km of forest cover in 2023**, though the increase since 2021 was marginal (**156 sq km**).

2. Measurement Ambiguities, Governance Gaps, and Ecological Limits

- Despite favourable numbers, the achievement is clouded by **definitional elasticity and implementation challenges**.
- The Forest Survey of India's definition of **"forest cover"** includes **any land over one hectare with at least 10% canopy**, encompassing **eucalyptus monocultures, mango and tea plantations, and roadside trees**, thereby blurring the line between **natural forests and plantations**.
- Policy execution also shows friction. Under the **Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act (2016)**, around **₹95,000 crore** has accumulated, but utilisation is uneven—**Delhi used only 23%** of allocated funds between **2019–20 and 2023–24**.
- The **Green India Mission (Revised)**, relaunched in **June 2025** after a decade of moderate progress, aims to regenerate **five million hectares** across regions such as the **Aravallis, Western Ghats, and Himalayas**, yet continues to **equate plantations with natural regeneration**.
- Climate stress further complicates outcomes: although satellite indices suggest "greening," **warming and water stress** are reducing **net primary productivity and actual carbon assimilation**, especially in the **Western Ghats and northeast India**.
- Consequently, while India is likely to meet its **forest sink target by 2030**, it may do so

through **plantation-heavy approaches and limited governance**, prioritising **carbon accounting over genuine ecological restoration**.

The road ahead

- India has made **notable progress on headline climate metrics**, such as reducing emissions intensity and rapidly expanding renewable energy capacity.
- However, these achievements **mask deeper structural challenges**.
- Emissions intensity has declined, yet **absolute greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise**, and despite large renewable capacity additions, **electricity generation remains dominated by coal**, limiting real ecological gains.
- Going forward, India's climate transition will require **systemic and coordinated governance**, not just technology or capital.
- Priority areas include **rapid scaling of battery storage** to close the gap between installed capacity and actual generation, development of a **credible coal transition roadmap**, **reformed forest governance** to ensure biodiversity outcomes alongside carbon targets, and **greater data transparency** to track sectoral and regional progress.
- The **next five years constitute a critical window** to accelerate renewable energy deployment, resolve storage constraints, and improve coordination on **grid connectivity and land acquisition**.
- Ultimately, while India has largely met its quantified commitments, **meaningful climate success depends on translating capacity into sustained clean generation and converting intensity gains into genuine moderation of absolute emissions**, beyond headline indicators.

4. CENSUS HOUSE LISTING FROM APRIL WITH OPTION FOR SELF ENUMERATION

Backdrop : Census house-listing from April 1 with option for self-enumeration

Syllabus : GS 2/Policy and Schemes, GS 1/Society

About the News :

- THE MINISTRY of Home Affairs notified the commencement of house-listing operations for the Census of India 2027, to be conducted between April 1 and September 30, 2026, across all States/UTs, kick-starting preparations for the 16th Census, the first in 16 years.
- Each state and UT will carry out the exercise during a 30-day window within this period, according to notification by the Office of the Registrar General of India (RGI).
- Census 2027 will be India's first digital census, with enumerators using apps.

1. New Notification and Introduction of Self-Enumeration

- The government has issued a fresh notification under **Sections 3 and 17A of the Census Act, 1948**, formally paving the way for **Census 2027** and superseding the January 2020 notification for the postponed 2021 Census.
- A major departure from past exercises is the **introduction of self-enumeration**, allowing households to submit their details digitally during a **15-day window** prior to the house-to-house listing by census enumerators.

2. Phased Census Schedule and Reference Dates

As earlier announced, Census 2027 will be conducted in **two phases**:

- **House-listing and Housing Census** in **2026**
- **Population Enumeration** in **early 2027**

- The **reference date** for population enumeration will be **March 1, 2027** for most of India, while for snow-bound and remote regions—such as **Ladakh**, **Jammu and Kashmir**, **Himachal Pradesh**, and **Uttarakhand**—it will be **October 1, 2026**.

3. Political Significance and Expanded Data Collection

- Census 2027 carries major **political and administrative importance** as it will be the **first nationwide caste enumeration since 1931**, excluding the routine counting of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- It will also serve as the **base for future delimitation of electoral constituencies** once the constitutional freeze is lifted.
- The **house-listing phase** will involve a door-to-door survey of every structure, collecting information on housing conditions and amenities.
- The updated schedule will have **34 columns**, introducing new questions that reflect changes in **living standards and technology**

use, including a **new question on the type of cereal consumed by households**.

The Census :

The Census of India is a **complete count of the population** along with data on **housing, education, occupation, migration, fertility, language, and socio-economic conditions**.

It is conducted **once every 10 years** and is the **largest administrative exercise** in the country.

Legal Basis & Authority

- Conducted under the **Census Act, 1948**
- Administered by the **Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India**
- Ensures **confidentiality** of individual information; data cannot be used for legal or tax purposes.

Key Features of India's Census

- **Universal coverage** (every person counted)
- **Simultaneous nationwide operation**
- **Self-enumeration (digital option)** introduced for upcoming censuses
- Historically included **caste data** (full enumeration last done in 1931, apart from SC/ST)

5. FINE TUNING THIS SIGNAL TO SHARPEN INDIA'S AMR BATTLE

Backdrop : The 'Mann Ki Baat' broadcast of December 2025 will increase awareness, but expanding the surveillance network for AMR is crucial.

Syllabus ; GS 2/Health, GS 3/S&T

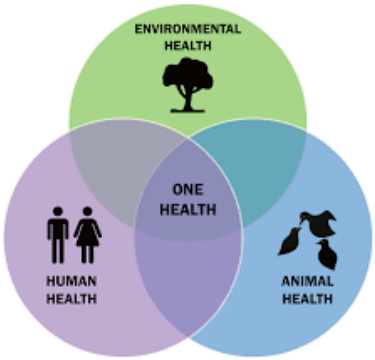
About the News :

- Will Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement on antimicrobial resistance, in his last 'Mann Ki Baat" broadcast for the year 2025 be the anagnorisis that we have been waiting for to galvanise action on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in India?
- Doctors feel that it might well be the one fell swoop to stop in its tracks what could easily be the biggest emerging health crisis of India.
- In his address (129th edition) on December 28, Mr. Modi mentioned antimicrobial resistance as a "matter of concern for us."
- Quoting from the Indian Council for Medical Research's (ICMR) dataset, he mentioned that antibiotics are proving to be less effective against pneumonia and urinary tract infections.
- He went on to hit at the heart of the AMR crisis in India — "thoughtless and indiscriminate use of antibiotics by people".
- These were not medicines to be taken casually or without the advice of doctors, the Prime Minister stressed.
- **"People have started believing that popping a pill will solve everything. But it is because of this that diseases and infections are overpowering antibiotics."**
- Appreciably, he ended with a piece of advice that his listeners and followers will do well to religiously practise: **"Avoid taking medicines by yourself, particularly antibiotics."**

AMR and the Importance of Public Awareness

- Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in India is driven primarily by the **irrational use of antibiotics**, commonly described as misuse and overuse.
- Until recently, AMR largely remained a concern confined to **infectious disease experts, hospitals, and policy circles**.
- This changed with remarks by **Narendra Modi**, which brought AMR into the **public mainstream**.
- By citing national data and directly urging citizens to avoid **over-the-counter antibiotic use**, the Prime Minister translated technical, laboratory-based warnings into a **nationwide public call to action**.
- This approach is expected to have a broader impact than earlier interventions such as the **National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance** or the **ban on colistin as a growth promoter**, because it targets public behaviour at scale.
- Public awareness, therefore, becomes a decisive factor in determining whether AMR trends worsen or begin to decline.

Need for a One Health Approach Beyond Awareness



- While public awareness is crucial, it is **no longer sufficient on its own** given the advanced stage of AMR in India.
- Experts argue that AMR has grown into a **multi-dimensional problem**, requiring a **One Health approach** that recognises the interconnectedness of **human, animal, and environmental health**.
- Addressing AMR effectively now demands coordinated solutions across these domains, rather than isolated actions limited to human healthcare.

Gaps in Surveillance and Urban Bias

- A major weakness in India's AMR response lies in **inadequate and unrepresentative surveillance**.
- Although surveillance networks are expanding, India still lacks a **comprehensive national dataset** that reflects regional and community-level variations.
- Most surveillance sites are concentrated in **urban areas and tertiary care hospitals**, which may inflate resistance averages while **excluding large non-urban populations**.
- Experts stress the urgent need to expand surveillance into **secondary and primary healthcare centres** to accurately assess **community prevalence of AMR**.

Status of India's AMR Surveillance Network

- India's **National AMR Surveillance Network (NARS-Net)**, established in 2013, currently includes **60 sentinel medical college laboratories** and feeds data into the **World Health Organization's Global Antimicrobial Resistance and Use Surveillance System (GLASS)**.
- However, for the latest GLASS report (January–December 2023), data were drawn from only **41 sites across 31 States and Union Territories**.
- These laboratories, primarily government medical colleges, track resistance patterns in **nine priority bacterial pathogens of public health importance**, along with selected fungal pathogens.

Call to Broaden Data Sources and Include Private Sector

- Experts argue that surveillance limited to tertiary government hospitals cannot reflect India's true resistance burden.
- In a letter to the **National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC)**, **Abdul Ghafur**, associated with the Chennai Declaration on AMR, emphasised that **credible national data must include secondary, primary, and private healthcare facilities**.
- Inclusion of private hospitals, he noted, would yield a **more balanced and representative national resistance picture**.

Way Forward: Awareness Plus Systemic Action

- The **WHO Global Action Plan on AMR (2015)** outlines five priorities:
  - **awareness, surveillance and research, infection prevention, optimal antimicrobial use, and sustained investment in new medicines, diagnostics, and vaccines**.
- While the Prime Minister's intervention strengthens the awareness pillar, the article underscores that **expanding and strengthening AMR surveillance** now requires **financial investment, clear strategies, monitoring, enforcement, and strong political will**.
- Without these systemic efforts, awareness alone will not be enough to curb India's growing AMR challenge.

GLASS

The **World Health Organization's Global Antimicrobial Resistance and Use Surveillance System (GLASS)** is a **global platform launched in 2015** to **standardise, collect, analyse, and share data** on **antimicrobial resistance (AMR)** and **antimicrobial use (AMU)** across countries.

Its core aim is to generate **comparable, high-quality national and global data** to guide **policy, public health action, and research**.

Key Objectives of GLASS

- Establish a **standardised global surveillance system** for AMR
- Track **trends in resistance and antimicrobial use** over time
- Support **evidence-based policymaking** and national action plans
- Strengthen **laboratory capacity and data quality** in member countries
- Enable **early detection of emerging resistance threats**

What Does GLASS Monitor?

GLASS collects data on:

- **Antimicrobial resistance** in priority pathogens (initially focusing on common bacterial infections)

- **Antimicrobial use** in humans (and progressively in animals and food systems)
- **Epidemiological context**, including patient age, sex, infection site, and care setting

It covers infections such as:

- Bloodstream infections
- Urinary tract infections
- Gastrointestinal and respiratory infections

How GLASS Works

- Countries voluntarily **enrol** and submit data annually
- National surveillance networks compile and validate data
- WHO aggregates and publishes findings in **global GLASS reports**
- Data is reported in a **tiered manner**, allowing countries with varying capacities to participate

India and GLASS

- India contributes data through **NARS-Net (National AMR Surveillance Network)** coordinated by the **National Centre for Disease Control**
- Data from selected sentinel laboratories is submitted to GLASS
- India's participation helps:
  - Compare resistance patterns internationally
  - Identify national gaps in surveillance coverage

Why GLASS is Important

- AMR is a **global health security threat** that crosses borders
- Without standardised surveillance, resistance trends remain **fragmented and unreliable**
- GLASS supports the **WHO Global Action Plan on AMR** and national strategies like India's **NAP-AMR**

Limitations and Challenges

- Participation and data coverage vary widely between countries
- Many low- and middle-income countries face:
  - Limited laboratory infrastructure
  - Urban and tertiary-care bias in data
- Community and private-sector data remain under-represented

PRACTISE QUESTION :

1. Consider the following statements :

1. Nominal GDP Measures the total value of goods and services at current market prices while Real GDP does this at constant prices (base-year prices).
2. Only real GDP figures are used for the budget estimates and nominal GDP figures are not at all considered in estimation of budget parameters.
3. In India, RBI releases both nominal and real GDP figures on quarterly basis.

How many statements given above is/are correct?

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

2. Consider the following statements :

1. India is a net importer of silver while Mexico is the largest producer of the silver metal.
2. Silver prices in last 5 years have shown modest decline compared to earlier decade despite the rally in demand for the metal

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

3. Which of the options correctly describes the meaning of emissions intensity as described often in context of India's climate targets ?

(a) Greenhouse gas emissions per unit of economic output
(b) Greenhouse gas emissions per unit of use of CO_2 in industries
(c) Emission of only CO_2 per unit of economic output
(d) None of the above

4. Consider the following statements :

1. India's census exercise is administered by the independent state governments and ultimately it is compiled by the ministry of statistics and programme implementation at central level.
2. The census in 2027 will be India's first digital census ever.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c0 Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

5. The use of chemical colistin was banned in food producing animals particularly poultry in India in recent times, the reason for this is…. ?

(a) To combat illegal imports of these drugs from China

(b) To combat addiction and to promote homegrown industries in this chemical production

(c) To combat rising antimicrobial resistance (AMR)

(d) To combat rising cases of fatty liver disease in food producing animals

Answer				
1. (b)	2. (a)	3. (a)	4. (b)	5. (c)

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