

AS ITS CHANGING

Typical Viewpoint June 2026



IMPULSE

IMPULSE

HAZRA ROAD, KOLKATA - 700026

CALL +919903582403

Contents	Page No.
June	June
1) Maharashtra Mine Project: Tiger	1) 3-4
2) Oil Import	2) 5
3) Lunar Mission: NASA	3) 6-8
4) Rupee Defence Mechanism	4) 8-11
5) Health Survey: Nutrition Issue	5) 11-14
6) Right to be Forgotten :FR	6) 14-15
7) Codeine: Cough Syrup	7) 15-16
8) India – Myanmar	8) 16-20
9) STEM Education: Girls	9) 20-22
10) Paternity Disputes: BNA: SC	10) 23-25
11) Stock Market	11) 25-26
12) Pancreatic Cancer: Pill	12) 26-29
13) Urban Fire Safety	13) 29-30
14) Chemotherapy drug shortage	14) 31
15) Bladder Cancer: Radiation therapy	15) 32-33
16) Marjane Satrapi: Feminist	16) 33-34
17) India – Nepal	17) 34-36
18) Rupee Measures: RBI: Tax	18) 36-51
19) India's 'partner-less' population	19) 51-55
20) Nilgiri Thar	20) 55-57
21) Exam Leaks	21) 58-59
22) Fertilisers shortfall :remedy	22) 60-68
23) H-1B Visa fee issues	23) 68-70
24) Solar power: India	24) 71-73
25) IBM: Art 142	25) 73-77
26) French Open	26) 77-78
27) Zojila Tunnel	27) 79-80
28) ED: Accountability	28) 80-81
29) UAPA: Bail	29) 82-83
30) Space X: Commercial Space Economy	30) 84-85
31) Emergency: 1975	31) 86-89
32) IAF AN – 32 crash: Assam	32) 90-94
33) Brain Eating Amoeba: Kerala	33) 94-96
34) Multi-layered BMD System	34) 96-98
35) UFC Event: White House	35) 99-100
36) Fertiliser subsidy reform	36) 101-102
37) NRE, FCNR (B) Deposits	37) 102-107
38) Iran - US Agreement	38) 107-110
39) India – Slovakia	39) 111-113
40) Dancing Girl: NCERT	40) 113-115
41) Elon Mask: First Trillionaire	41) 115-116
42) Cough Syrup: Prescription mandatory	42) 116-118
43) Water future: Indian cities	43) 118-120
44) Punjab: Sacrilege	44) 121-122
45) Social Media: Concern	45) 122-124
46) Messi: Magic	46) 124
47) Bullet Train: India	47) 125-128
	48) 128-131

48) Seafaring workforce: India	49) 131-134
49) G7 Summit: France	50) 134-137
50) Islamabad Framework Agreement	51) 138-139
51) Vendetta Politics: WB	52) 141-143
52) Isreal-Iran-US: MoU	53) 144-146
53) Russian oil imports	54) 147-152
54) Right to Walk on Safe Footpaths	55) 153-157
55) North-East Indians: Long Prejudice	56) 157-161
56) Billa Ranga Case	57) 161-165
57) Medical Reform: Andhra Pradesh	58) 165-169
58) UK PM Resigns: Starmer	59) 169-172
59) Urban Fire Tragedy	60) 172-175
60) Reproductive Autonomy: Discussion	61) 175-180
61) India-US-Trade	62) 181-190
62) Western Ghats: Preservations	63) 191-196
63) India-Turkey	64) 197-202
64) Road Safety: India	65) 202-208
65) AI Boom: Global Market	66) 208-209
66) Egg issue: WB	67) 209-213
67) Venezuela Earthquake	68) 214-217
68) Citizenship: Passport ?	69) 217-220
69) Oxytocin: Maternal Deaths: Rajasthan	70) 220-223
70) India - Seychelles : 50 years	71) 224-225
71) India – Bangladesh	72) 225-227
72) EV two wheeler: Delhi	73) 228-229
73) West Bengal Public Safety Bills, 2026	74) 229-230
74) UCC Bill: WB	

N.B:

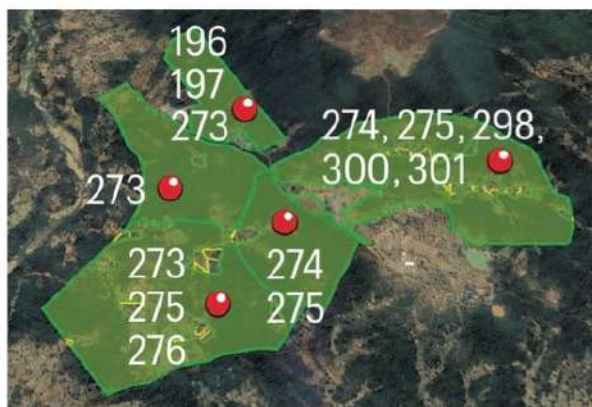
- ⊗ A detailed comprehensive discussion has been projected in this study material from the viewpoint of **INTEGRATED UPSC CSE (PrIm+Mains)** preparation.
- ⊗ If any topic has been skipped here from the events of this respective month, it had been already duly discussed in the previous editions. So, please check the previous editions.
- ⊗ We are indebted to the different authenticated published news sources for the compilation of this study material

01.06.2026

LLOYDS METALS PROJECT IN GADCHIROLI

Maharashtra clears mine project, says not in tiger area; maps show otherwise

● Project site overlaps Tadoba-Indravati tiger corridor



- ➡ **Proposed project site**
- **Forest compartments**
196, 197, 273, 274, 275, 276, 298, 300 and 301 cited as part of the project



- **Forest compartments**
196, 197, 273, 274, 275, 276, 298 and 301 marked on Tadoba-Indravati corridor in the NTCA-approved TCP

SOURCE: PARIVESH/MOEF AND NTCA

●TIMELINE

DEC 12, 2023: Applied for Forest clearance

MARCH 20, 2024: Applied for Wildlife clearance

APRIL 28, 2024: Applied for Environment clearance

MAY 12, 2024: In-principle FC approved

SEPT 20, 2025: EC approved

OCT 6, 2025: Applied for amended EC

APRIL 15, 2026: Final FC approved

MAY 12, 2026: Amended EC approved

MAY 13, 2026: Exempted from Wildlife clearance and cleared for handover of forest land

How China's reduced oil imports have helped India

Beijing's current reluctance to import oil is partly because high fuel prices and tepid economic activity have dampened demand

• Most crude via Strait of Hormuz goes to Asia

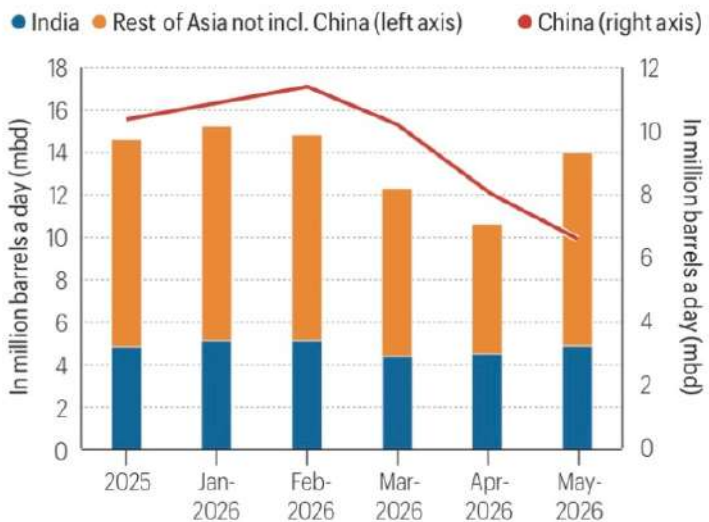
In 2025, nearly 15 million barrels a day (mbd) of crude oil, 34% of global crude trade, passed through the Strait of Hormuz. China and India combined received 44% of these exports.



NOTE: TOTAL FIGURE MENTIONED IN CHART INTRO DOES NOT MATCH THE SUM OF ADDING INDIVIDUAL NUMBERS DUE TO DESTINATIONS NOT INDICATED.
SOURCE: INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY ANALYSIS BASED ON KPLER.

• Sharp dip in China's crude imports

Chinese crude imports in May month-to-date are tracking around 6.6 mbd, the lowest level since 2016



NOTE: DATA AS OF 25TH MAY, SOURCE: KPLER

Impact on India

India is among the three Asian economies — along with Thailand and South Korea — most vulnerable to high oil prices, according to a Nomura report

Every 10% oil price increase typically widens India's current account deficit by 0.4% of the GDP

NASA and beyond, science collaboration should be the compass for space, not conflict

Unlike the largely symbolic space competition of the last century between America and the Soviet Union, the race to the Moon and beyond is about gaining early access to strategically significant regions outside the Earth.

NASA's Lunar South Pole Base Plan (2026–2035+)

Brief

- NASA has unveiled a roadmap for a **sustained human presence on the Moon**, focusing on the **Lunar South Pole**.
- The project is part of the **Artemis Programme** and aims to establish a **semi-permanent lunar base after 2032**.



Three-Phase Lunar Base Plan

Phase	Timeline	Objective
Phase I	2026–2029	Moon landing & scientific experiments
Phase II	2029–2032	Initial operations, possible nuclear power systems
Phase III	After 2032	Establishment of a semi-permanent human station

Why Lunar South Pole?

Scientific Significance

- Receives **more sunlight** than most lunar regions → suitable for **solar energy generation**
- Permanently shadowed craters contain **water ice deposits**
- Ice may preserve records of:
 - **Solar System evolution**
 - **Water transport mechanisms**
 - **Conditions that enabled life**

Strategic Significance

- Potential source of:
 - **Water**
 - **Oxygen**
 - **Rocket fuel (Hydrogen + Oxygen)**

- Launchpad for future **Mars missions**

Moon as a Gateway to Mars

- Provides opportunity to study:
 - ó Human survival in **reduced gravity**
 - ó Long-duration space habitation
 - ó Resource utilization beyond Earth

Geopolitical Dimension

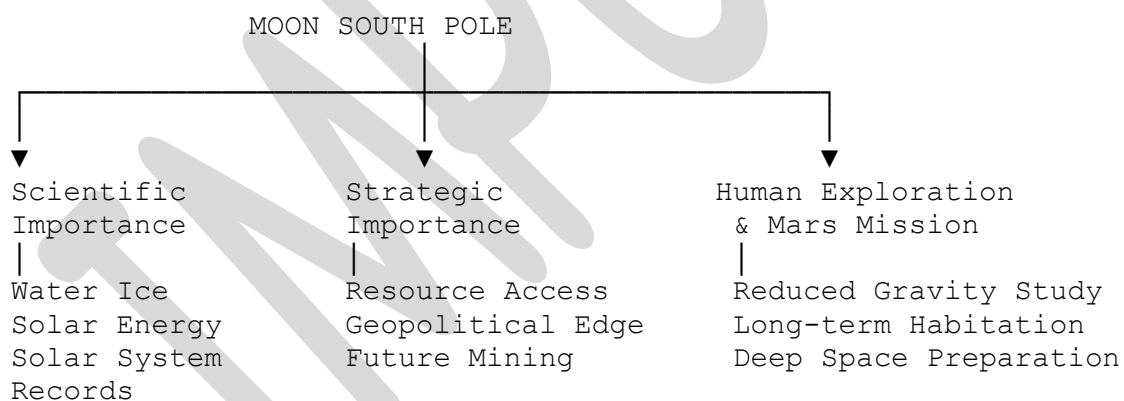
USA-led Artemis Programme

- Supported by:
 - ó **NASA**
 - ó **Blue Origin** (Jeff Bezos)
 - ó **SpaceX** (continuing partner)

China-Russia Initiative

- Planning **International Lunar Research Station (ILRS)**
- Proposed **nuclear-powered station** near South Pole

Conceptual Diagram



Challenges

- Existing **Outer Space Treaty framework** may be inadequate.
- Risk of:
 - ó Competing legal regimes
 - ó Resource disputes
 - ó Fragmentation of scientific cooperation

UPSC Mains Add on

The new space race is not merely about prestige; it is increasingly about access to strategic resources, technological leadership, and shaping the governance architecture of outer space.

Rupee defence to liquidity: RBI earned over Rs 4 lakh cr in FY26, spent a third of it

• How RBI earned and spent money in FY26

	2024-25 (Rs cr)	2025-26 (Rs cr)
Interest from rupee securities	85,525	117,740
Interest from foreign securities	97,007	107,679
Interest on foreign deposits	36,195	27,407
Net interest on liquidity operations	-10,120	-19,163
Exchange gain from forex transactions	111,143	168,906
TOTAL INCOME	338,308	427,684
Printing of notes	6,373	4,875
Employee cost	9,147	10,136
Provisions	44,862	109,380
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	69,714	141,092
Dividend to government	268,590	286,588

NOTE: INTEREST ON LIQUIDITY OPERATIONS INCLUDES LAF, SDF, MSF

SOURCE: RBI

Income	Expenditure
1) Exchange of Forex transactions	1) Provisions
2) Interest from Rupee securities	2) Employee cost
3) Interest from Foreign securities	3) Printing of notes
4) Interest on Foreign deposits	

RBI Dividend Transfer 2025-26

&

Rupee Defence Mechanism

Brief

- The **RBI transferred a record dividend** of ₹2.87 lakh crore to the Central Government for FY 2025-26.
- RBI's objective is **not profit-making**, but monetary and financial stability.
- Profits arise from managing **foreign exchange reserves, government securities, and liquidity operations**.

Key Highlights

- ✓ Total RBI income: **₹4.28 lakh crore (+26%)**
- ✓ **Forex transaction gains: ₹1.69 lakh crore (largest source)**
- ✓ Interest from Government Securities (G-Secs): ₹1.18 lakh crore
- ✓ Interest from foreign securities: ₹1.08 lakh crore
- ✓ Dividend transferred to Centre: **₹2.87 lakh crore**

Rupee Defence Mechanism

Why defend the Rupee?

- In 2025-26, foreign investors sold Indian assets.
- Higher imports (especially gold, silver, oil) increased dollar demand.
- Rupee depreciated by nearly **10% against the US dollar**.

RBI's Response

1. **Sold US Dollars** from forex reserves.
2. Received **Rupees** in return.
3. Reduced rupee liquidity in the banking system.
4. To prevent interest rates from rising, RBI:
 - Purchased **₹9 lakh crore** worth of Government Bonds (OMO).
 - Injected liquidity back into the system.

Consequences of Rupee Defence

Rupee Under Pressure



RBI Sells Dollars



Rupee Liquidity Falls



Interest Rates Tend to Rise



RBI Buys G-Secs (OMO)



Liquidity Injected Back



Stable Interest Rates + Rupee Support

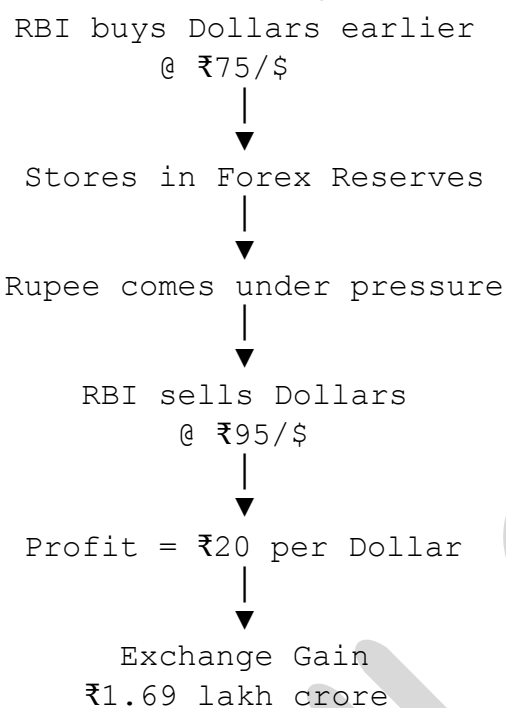
Costs of Defence

- Large provisions for:
 - Losses on foreign securities
 - Forward forex contracts
 - Market value decline of investments

Quick pick:

- ☐ **Rupee defence creates a chain reaction:** forex sales support the currency but drain liquidity, forcing RBI to conduct bond purchases and liquidity operations. Thus, exchange rate management, bond markets, interest rates, and RBI profits are deeply interconnected.
- ☐ RBI's exchange gain arises when **foreign currencies accumulated earlier at lower exchange rates are sold later at higher exchange rates during rupee-defence operations**, generating profit from the difference in purchase and sale value.

Quick Flow Diagram



Rupee Defence → Forex Sale → Exchange Gain → RBI Surplus → Dividend to Government.

02.06.2026

Health Survey Calls for a Nutrition Rethink

Brief

- **NFHS-6 (2023-24)** highlights India's growing **double burden of malnutrition**:
 - Persistent **undernutrition**
 - Rising **obesity and diabetes**

Key Findings

Rising Lifestyle Diseases

- **1 in 6 Indians** reports high blood sugar/diabetes.
- Nearly **30% of adults** are overweight or obese.
- Increases risk of:

- ó Hypertension
- ó Cardiovascular diseases
- ó Kidney disorders
- ó Pancreatic diseases
- ó Certain cancers

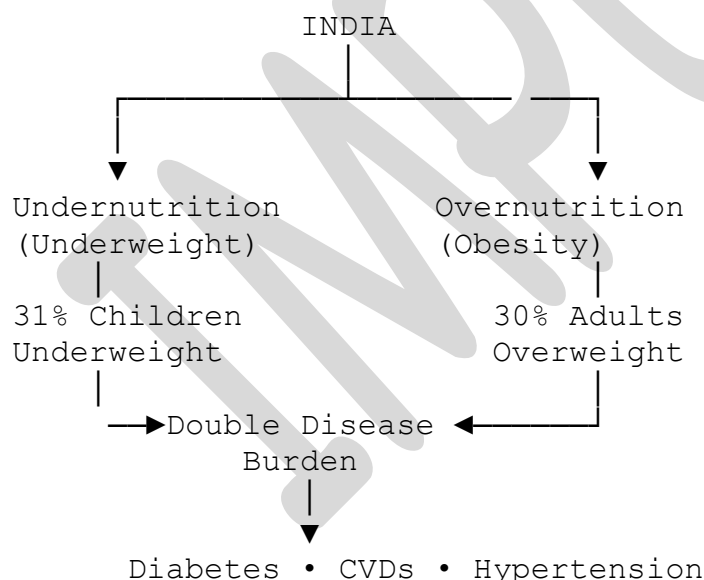
Persistent Undernutrition

- Over **31% children remain underweight**.
- More than **80% of infants (6–23 months)** do not receive an adequate diet.
- **Childhood obesity is also rising.**

Causes

- Rapid urbanisation and lifestyle changes.
- Shift towards **refined carbohydrates and processed foods**.
- Focus on calorie intake rather than **nutritional diversity**.
- Limited access to balanced diets among vulnerable communities.
- Nutrition programmes overly focused on **supply-side interventions**.

Double Burden of Malnutrition



One-liner:

India's nutrition challenge is no longer just hunger but a "double burden" of undernutrition and lifestyle diseases, requiring a shift from calorie-centric policies to nutrition-sensitive and behaviour-focused interventions.

NFHS-6 (2024) Fact Sheet: Key Changes & Concerns

About NFHS

- **National Family Health Survey (NFHS):** Large-scale survey on **health, nutrition & family welfare**.
- Conducted by **International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai** under **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare**.
- First Survey: **1992-93**.
- NFHS is **not conducted every year**. It is a large-scale, multi-round household survey typically carried out at intervals of several years, **usually every 3 to 5 years**.

NFHS-6 vs NFHS-5

NFHS-5

131 Indicators

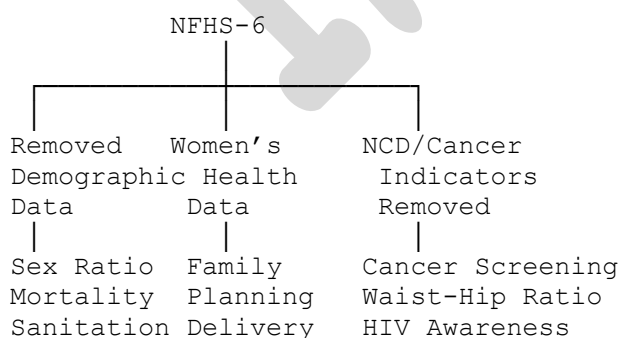
NFHS-6

101 Indicators

Major Indicators Removed

- Sex Ratio & Sex Ratio at Birth
- Mortality Rates
- Sanitation & Clean Cooking Fuel Access
- Family Planning Counselling Indicators
- Out-of-Pocket Delivery Expenditure
- HIV Awareness & ORS/Zinc Coverage
- Waist-Hip Ratio (Obesity Indicator)
- Screening Data for **Breast, Cervical & Oral Cancer**

Diagram



Quick facts

NFHS-5: Cancer screening rates were low:

- Breast/Oral Cancer: 0.9%
- Cervical Cancer: 19%

✂ Raises concerns regarding monitoring of **public health outcomes and NCD burden.**

Health Ministry rationale: Several data points in NFHS reported by other surveys, omissions an attempt at “data harmonisation”

RIGHT TO BE FORGOTTEN

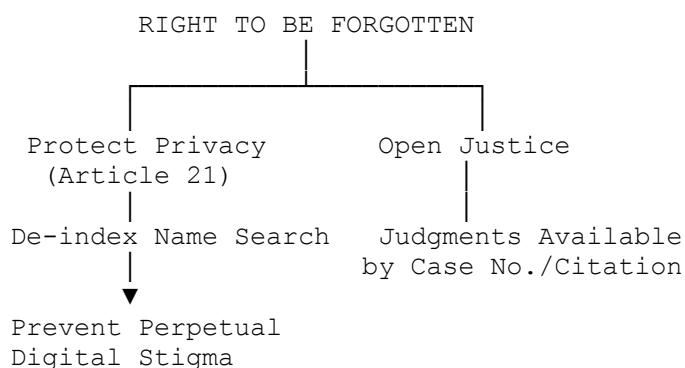
Do not index legal records online using names, rules Delhi High Court

Right to be Forgotten (RTBF) – Delhi High Court Guidelines

Key Highlights

- Article 21 (Right to Privacy) includes informational privacy.
- Delhi HC directed search engines & legal databases to de-index name-based searches of **certain** court records.
- Applies to:
 - Acquitted/discharged persons
 - Matrimonial & private civil disputes
 - Victims of sexual offences
- Judgments remain accessible via case number/citation, but not through simple name searches.
- Objective: Protect dignity, autonomy, and informational self-determination.

Diagram



Quick fact:

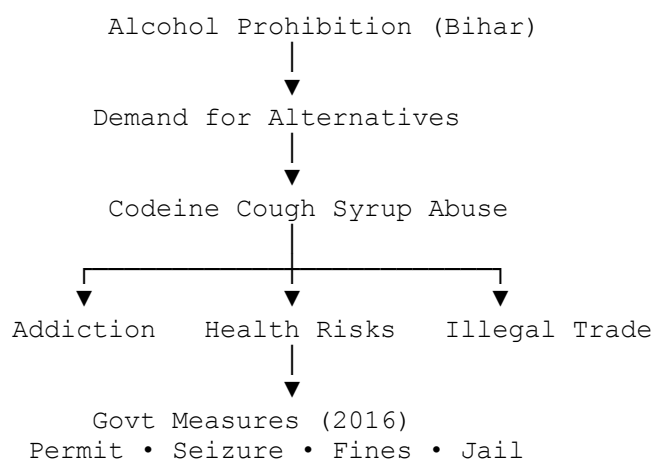
- RTBF is not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution but flows from the Right to Privacy under Article 21 (K.S. Puttaswamy Judgment, 2017).

Codeine Cough Syrup misuse in Bihar

Key Highlights

- **Codeine**: Natural **opioid** derived from **morphine** (opium poppy).
- Used as a **cough suppressant** for severe persistent dry cough.
- Misuse rising in Bihar as a substitute for alcohol after prohibition.
- Risks:
 - ▢ Addiction,
 - ▢ respiratory depression,
 - ▢ liver/kidney damage,
 - ▢ psychiatric disorders.
- Bihar declared codeine syrups as “**intoxicants**” under the **Bihar Prohibition & Excise Act, 2016**.
- Recent DRI seizure: **7,500 bottles** in Patna.

Diagram



Quick facts:

- ❑ Codeine = Opioid analgesic & antitussive (cough suppressant)
- ❑ Not recommended for children below 12 years.
- ❑ Long-term solution:
 - awareness,
 - education,
 - employment generation &
 - stronger regulation.

India-Myanmar Relations (2026 update)

Key Highlights

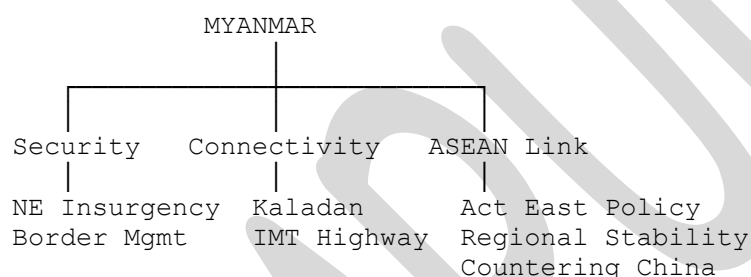
- Myanmar President U Min Aung Hlaing assured India that Myanmar territory will not be used against India's security interests.
- India raised concerns over North-east insurgent groups operating from Myanmar.
- 1,643 km India-Myanmar border makes stability crucial for security and connectivity.
- PM Modi emphasized inclusive peace process, democracy, and discussed Aung San Suu Kyi's detention.

- Cooperation areas:
 - Defence & Security
 - Critical Minerals & Rare Earths
 - Connectivity Projects
 - Capacity Building & UN Peacekeeping

Myanmar : Short info

- **2021 Military Coup** ousted elected government led by **Aung San Suu Kyi**.
- Ongoing **civil war** involving:
 - Myanmar military (Tatmadaw)
 - Pro-democracy forces
 - Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs)
- Myanmar remains crucial for **India's Act East Policy** and **Northeast security**.

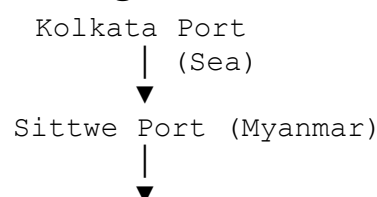
Strategic Importance Diagram

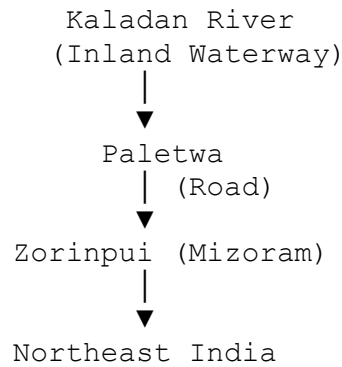


Key Projects

- **Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project (KMTTP)**
 - India's flagship **Act East Policy** connectivity project.
 - Connects **Kolkata Port** → **Sittwe Port (Myanmar)** → **Kaladan River** → **Mizoram**.
 - Provides an **alternative route to Northeast India**, reducing dependence on the Siliguri Corridor.
 - Enhances trade with Myanmar and Southeast Asia.

Diagram



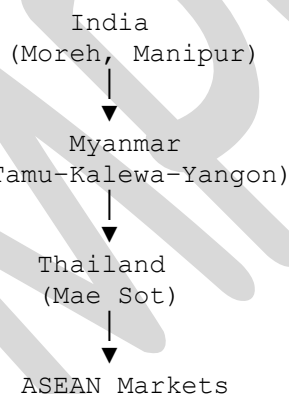


- **Significance:** Connectivity • Trade • **Strategic access to Northeast** • Regional integration.

▪ **India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway (IMT Highway)**

- Length: ~1,360 km.
- Connects **India, Myanmar and Thailand.**
- Key pillar of **Act East Policy**.
- Facilitates trade, tourism, logistics and people-to-people ties.
- Proposed future extension to **Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.**

Diagram



- **Significance:** Economic integration • **ASEAN connectivity** • Northeast development • Strategic counterbalance in Indo-Pacific.

Key Challenges

- Cross-border insurgency in Northeast.
- Refugee inflows into **Mizoram & Manipur.**
- Weak Myanmar military control over border regions.
- Expanding **Chinese strategic influence** (oil & gas projects, infrastructure).

India's Approach

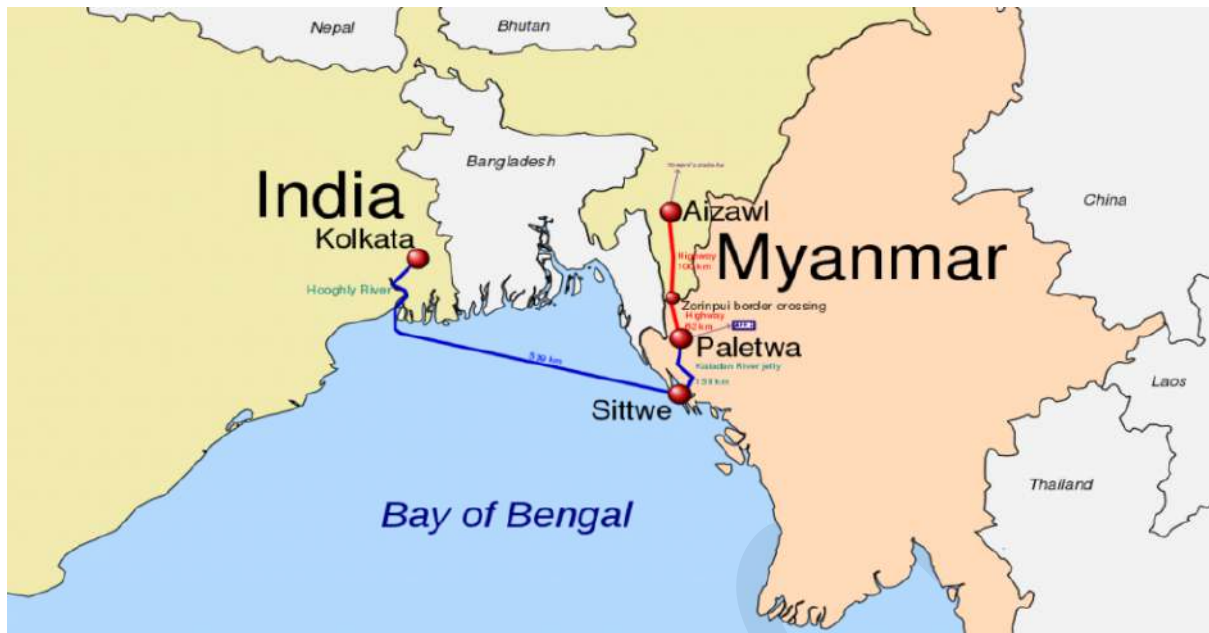
Security Cooperation
+
Development Projects
+
Dialogue with Myanmar
+
Engagement with Border Ethnic Groups
=
Strategic Balancing

Way Forward

- ✧ Continue **pragmatic engagement** with Myanmar.
- ✧ Fast-track **Kaladan Multimodal Project & India-Myanmar-Thailand Highway**.
- ✧ Strengthen border management and humanitarian assistance.
- ✧ Support an **inclusive, Myanmar-led political reconciliation** while safeguarding India's strategic interests.

Quick facts

- Myanmar is India's **gateway to Southeast Asia** under the Act East Policy.
- Security in Myanmar is vital for:
 - Northeast India
 - ASEAN stability
 - Cross-border trade & connectivity
- Over **2,400 Indians** rescued from cyber-scam compounds in Myanmar during the last 1.5 years.



03.06.2026

Girls Rewrite JEE Script: Campus Must Keep Pace

Why in News?

- For the **first time**, **10,000+** girls qualified in JEE Advanced 2026, reflecting the success of policy interventions like **supernumerary seats for women in IITs (2018)** and efforts to promote **STEM education among girls**.

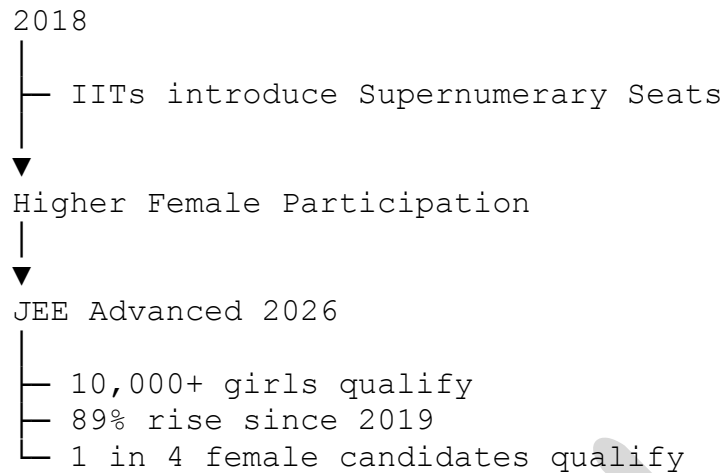
Key Highlights

- ➔ **10,000+ female qualifiers** in JEE Advanced 2026.
- ➔ Nearly **1 in 4 female candidates** who appeared qualified.
- ➔ Female qualifiers increased by **~89% since 2019**.
- ➔ Women still remain underrepresented in engineering:
 - **AISHE 2021-22:** Only **28.8%** of engineering students were women.
- ➔ Contrast with medicine:
 - **NEET-UG 2024:** Female qualifiers (**7.69 lakh**) exceeded male qualifiers.

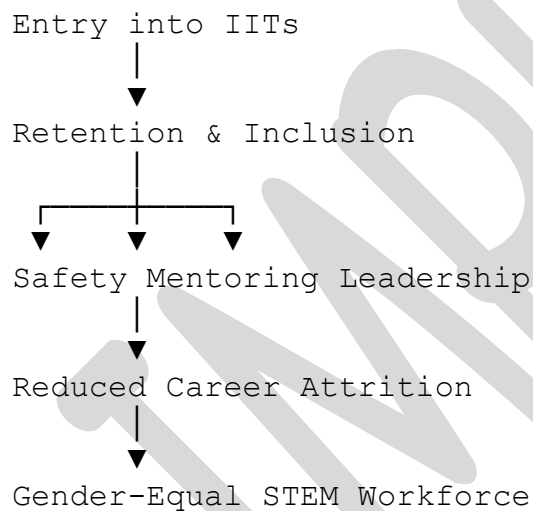
- Women increasingly entering specialties like cardiology, oncology, neurology.

Trend Diagram

Women in STEM Education



Challenges Ahead



UPSC Takeaway

- ✓ Demonstrates the impact of **affirmative action in higher education**.
- ✓ Highlights the need to move from **access** → **inclusion** → **leadership**.
- ✓ Engineering institutions must strengthen:
 - Safe hostels
 - Mentorship networks
 - Gender-sensitive grievance mechanisms
 - Leadership opportunities for women

Conclusion

- The JEE Advanced 2026 outcome is not merely an examination result; it reflects the growing participation of women in STEM and offers an opportunity to build **more inclusive, diverse, and innovation-driven engineering institutions in India.**

Quick add on

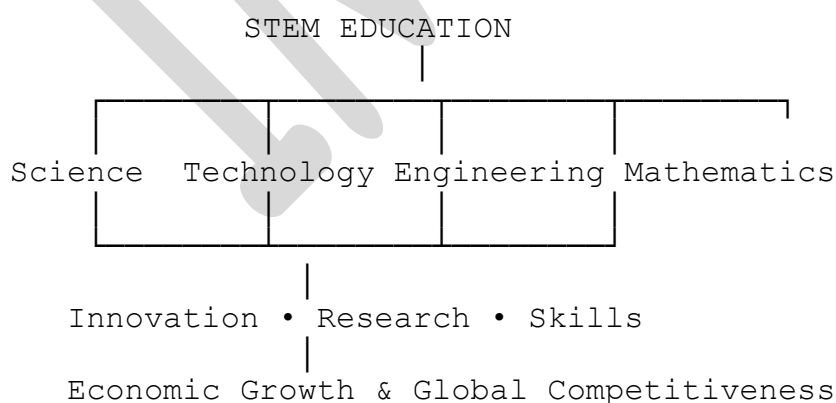
STEM Education

STEM stands for **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics**. It is an interdisciplinary approach that integrates these four fields to develop **critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation, creativity, and technical skills.**

Importance

- ✓ Drives **innovation and economic growth**
- ✓ Supports **Industry 4.0, AI, Robotics, Space & Digital Economy**
- ✓ Improves **employability** and research capacity
- ✓ Encourages **scientific temperament** (Article 51A(h))
- ✓ Promotes **women's participation** in technical fields through initiatives like **Women in STEM.**

Diagram



Supreme Court on **DNA Test in Paternity Disputes** (2026)

Brief

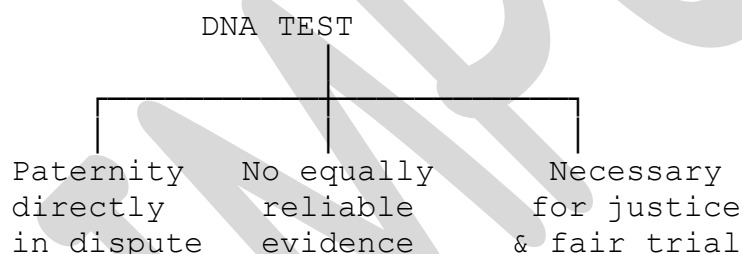
- The **Supreme Court** upheld a **DNA test** in a paternity dispute, ruling that **the right to establish parentage may outweigh privacy rights in exceptional circumstances**. The judgment reiterates the principles governing DNA testing in civil disputes.

Key Highlights

Supreme Court's Ruling

- Upheld DNA testing where **paternity is directly in issue**.
- Balanced:
 - **Article 21 Right to Privacy** ⚖️
 - **Right to know biological parentage & inheritance rights**
- Held that privacy is **not absolute** and can be restricted when justice demands.

When can a Court order a DNA Test?



- Only if **all circumstances justify** the intrusion into privacy.

Legal Framework

- **Section 116, Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023**
(*Earlier Section 112, Indian Evidence Act, 1872*)
 - Child born during a valid marriage (or within **280 days** after its dissolution) is **presumed legitimate**.
 - This presumption can be rebutted only by proving **non-access** between spouses, **not by mere suspicion**.

Important Supreme Court Precedents

Case	Principle Laid Down
Goutam Kundu (1993)	DNA test cannot be ordered as a matter of routine.
Dipanwita Roy (2014)	DNA test permissible if essential for resolving dispute.
Aparna Ajinkya Firodia (2023)	Parties must first produce other evidence; DNA test is the last resort.
Ivan Rathinam (2025)	Courts must balance privacy, dignity, legitimacy and the child's interests.
Nikhat Parveen (2026)	Reaffirmed judicial restraint in directing DNA tests.

Balancing of Rights

Right to Privacy (Art. 21)



Right to Identity &
Inheritance/Justice

Court's Principle:

DNA testing should be **exceptional, proportionate, and necessary**, not routine.



Quick points

- Article 21 - Right to Privacy.
- Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023.

- Doctrine of **proportionality**.
 - Balancing **individual** privacy with **access to justice**, identity, and inheritance rights.
-
-

SOUTH KOREAN STOCK MARKET CAP ROSE 86% THIS YEAR

India slips to 7th spot in global stock market cap ranking

• **THE AI PLAY**

CHIPMAKERS SK Hynix and Samsung each have a market cap of over \$1 trillion and together account for almost half of South Korea's Kospi index

TSMC, THE world's largest semiconductor manufacturer, has a market cap of over \$2 trillion and makes up over 40% of Taiwan's TAIEX index

IN FACT, at 14.21%, TSMC on its own now has a greater weight in MSCI's emerging markets index than India

• TECH

How Nvidia chip reshapes AI for personal computing

Nvidia is known for dominance in AI infrastructure. Its push towards integrated 'superchips' could set off a new chip war with Intel and Apple

Behind Nvidia's dominance

Intel, the legacy chipmaker for personal computers, has struggled to keep pace with the AI boom.

Nvidia is unrivalled in the AI space because of its powerful GPUs, the demand for which has skyrocketed.

04.06.2026

How new pancreatic cancer pill doubles survival rate

Pancreatic cancer is notoriously hard to treat. But a daily pill promises to be the beginning of a new class of drugs that can transform treatment

A ticking clock

In the late 1990s, the average survival time for patients with advanced pancreatic cancer was six months.

Three decades later, it is just about 9-12 months, despite active research.

The deadliest form of the disease

● WHAT IS PANCREATIC CANCER?

Pancreatic cancer is an aggressive disease that forms when malignant cells develop in the tissues of the pancreas, which produces digestive enzymes and blood sugar-regulating hormones like insulin.

● WHY IS IT DIFFICULT TO DETECT IN ITS EARLY STAGES?

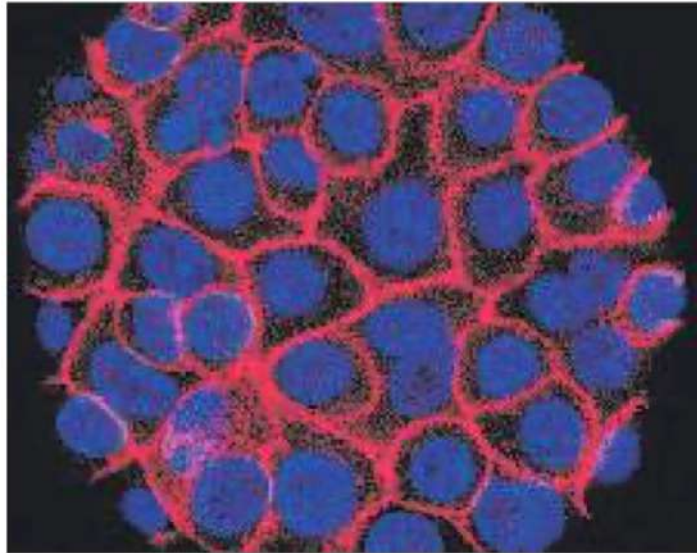
Symptoms usually do not appear until the tumour has grown large or has started to spread to surrounding organs. Common indicators include jaundice, pain, nausea, loss of appetite, unexplained weight loss & new onset diabetes.

● WHAT'S THE SURVIVAL RATE?

The overall five-year survival rate for pancreatic cancer is approximately 13%.

● HOW COMMON IS IT?

The annual incidence of pancreatic cancer in India is relatively low compared to Western countries, with approximately 23,000 new cases diagnosed each year. The crude incidence rate is about 1.6 per 100,000 people, affecting slightly more men than women.



A microscope image shows pancreatic cancer cells. AP FILE

It ranks 24th in overall cancer incidence but 18th in cancer mortality.

● INDIAN RISK PROFILE

Diabetes, tropical pancreatitis (such as in Kerala and Tamil Nadu), lifestyle and obesity

New Pancreatic Cancer Pill (Daraxonrasib) – **A Breakthrough in Precision Oncology**

Brief

- A new oral pill – **Daraxonrasib (KRAS inhibitor)** has shown promising results in **advanced pancreatic cancer**, nearly **doubling survival time** in patients whose disease progressed after chemotherapy.

Produced in USA...discovered and developed by Revolution Medicines, **California, USA**

About Pancreatic Cancer

- Aggressive cancer of the **pancreas** (produces insulin & digestive enzymes).
- **5-year survival**: ~13%.
- Often detected **late** due to non-specific symptoms.

- Common symptoms:
 - ▢ Jaundice,
 - ▢ abdominal pain,
 - ▢ weight loss,
 - ▢ nausea,
 - ▢ **new-onset diabetes.**

How Daraxonrasib Works

KRAS Mutation (~80% of pancreatic cancers)

↓
KRAS remains "ON"

↓
Uncontrolled Cancer Cell Growth



Daraxonrasib

↓
Blocks KRAS signalling

↓
↓ Tumour Growth & ↑ Survival

Significance

- First successful **KRAS inhibitor** effective across multiple KRAS mutations.
- **Once-daily oral pill.**
- Marks a major step in **Precision Medicine** (targeted therapy based on genetic mutations).
- **Potential use in lung and colon cancers**, where KRAS mutations are also common (~20% of cancers).

Limitations

- Side effects:
Rash, diarrhoea, mouth ulcers, fatigue, reduced haemoglobin.
- About one-third of patients required dose reduction.
- **Currently not available in India.**
- Presently indicated mainly for **advanced pancreatic cancer** **after chemotherapy.**

Indian Context

- Risk factors: Diabetes, obesity, chronic pancreatitis (higher in parts of Kerala & Tamil Nadu), unhealthy lifestyle.
 - India reports ~23,000 new cases/year.
-

Short pick

Conventional Chemotherapy



High toxicity & Limited survival



Precision Oncology
(Targeted Gene-based Therapy)



KRAS Inhibitors (Daraxonrasib)



Better Survival + Personalized Treatment

Urban Fire Safety & Governance in India

Brief

- A fire in Delhi's Malviya Nagar claimed 21 lives, highlighting recurring failures in urban fire safety, building regulation, and municipal governance.

Key Highlights

- Recent fire incidents:
 - Delhi (Malviya Nagar)
 - Delhi (Palam)
 - Cuttack Medical College
 - Kolkata Hotel
- Common causes:
 - ❌ Building code violations
 - ❌ Congested & narrow access roads
 - ❌ Overcrowding
 - ❌ Faulty electrical wiring
 - ❌ Poor fire safety compliance

Urban Fire Risk Cycle

Rapid Urbanisation



Congested & Mixed Land Use



Building Code Violations



Poor Fire Safety Measures



🔥 Fire Accidents



Loss of Life & Property

Institutional Framework

- **National Building Code (NBC)**
 - Prescribes fire safety norms.
- **National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), 2020 Report –**
Urban fires arise from a **complex web of vulnerabilities**.
- **Municipal Bodies –**
Responsible for
 - inspections,
 - enforcement and
 - fire safety operations.

Challenges

- **Hidden urbanisation (PM-EAC):** India may have been ~63% urban (2015) based on satellite data.
- Weak enforcement and poor municipal capacity.
- Inadequate audits of unsafe buildings.

Way Forward

- ✓ Strict enforcement of **National Building Code**
- ✓ Periodic **fire safety audits**
- ✓ Strengthen **Urban Local Bodies (74th Constitutional Amendment)**
- ✓ Upgrade electrical & emergency infrastructure
- ✓ Public awareness and accountability mechanisms

05.06.2026

West Asia Conflict & Chemotherapy Drug Shortage

Brief

- The **West Asia conflict** and **Hormuz Strait disruptions** have caused shortages of key chemotherapy drugs (**Cisplatin & Carboplatin**) across India.

Key Highlights

- **Cause:**
 - ↳ Rising **platinum** prices,
 - ↳ disrupted supply chains, and
 - ↳ dependence on imports (especially from Gulf countries/UAE).
- **Impact:** Shortage of essential cancer medicines; treatment delays for oral, lung, cervical, ovarian, breast and oesophageal cancers.
- **Challenge:** Although prices are regulated under the **Drug Price Control Order (DPCO)**, supply constraints persist.

Flow Diagram

West Asia Conflict
↓
Supply Chain Disruptions
↓
↑ Platinum Prices
↓
Shortage of Cisplatin & Carboplatin
↓
Delayed Cancer Treatment

Way Forward

✓ Diversify import sources • ✓ Promote domestic API/drug manufacturing • ✓ Strengthen strategic medicine reserves • ✓ Enhance supply-chain resilience.

Tata Memorial Study: **Radiation Therapy Reduces Bladder Cancer Recurrence by >50%**

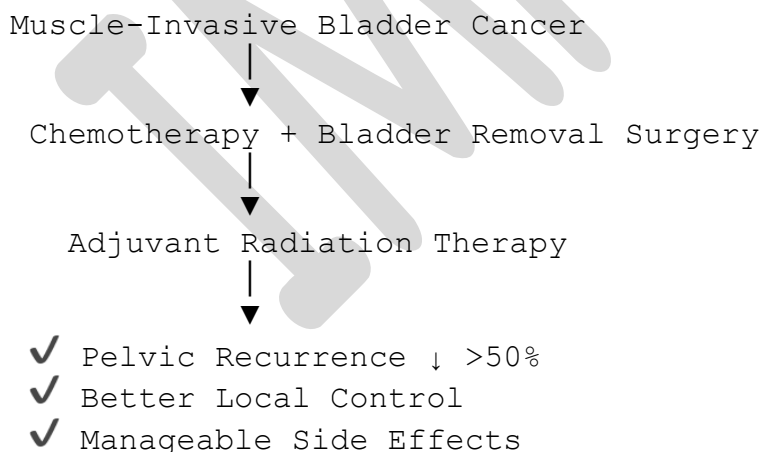
Brief

- **Tata Memorial Hospital (TMH)** led the **BART (Bladder Adjuvant Radiotherapy Trial)** across **4 Indian cancer centres (8 years)**.
- Published in the **Journal of Clinical Oncology**.
- Found that **adjuvant radiation therapy after bladder removal surgery reduces pelvic cancer recurrence by >50%**.

Facts

- 🎯 **Target:** Muscle-Invasive Bladder Cancer (MIBC).
- 📊 **Outcome:** >50% reduction in **pelvic recurrence**.
- ✅ **Benefit:** Better local disease control with **manageable side effects**.
- 🌐 **Global Burden:** **9th most common cancer** (IARC, 2022).
- 🇮🇳 **India (2022):**
 - 22,548 new cases
 - 12,353 deaths
 - **17th most common cancer**
- 🚬 **Major Risk Factor:**
Tobacco consumption (especially in men).

Diagram



Current Standard vs New Evidence

Current Standard

Chemotherapy + Surgery
High recurrence risk
Limited survival

New Evidence (BART Trial)

Surgery + Adjuvant Radiotherapy
>50% lower pelvic recurrence
Improved local disease control

Quick facts

- ➔ Institution: Tata Memorial Hospital (Mumbai)
 - ➔ Trial: BART (Bladder Adjuvant Radiotherapy Trial)
 - ➔ Journal: *Journal of Clinical Oncology*
 - ➔ Keywords: Adjuvant Radiotherapy • Muscle-Invasive Bladder Cancer • Precision Oncology • Cancer Recurrence Reduction
-

Marjane Satrapi: Voice of Freedom Beyond Polarisation

Brief

- **Marjane Satrapi**, acclaimed Iranian-French graphic novelist and filmmaker, passed away at **56**.
- Best known for **Persepolis**, an autobiographical graphic novel depicting life during and after the **1979 Iranian Revolution**.

Key Facts

- 🗞️ **Balanced Stand:** Opposed **both forced veiling and forced unveiling**, advocating **individual choice**.
- 📖 **Persepolis:** Narrates experiences under Iran's theocratic regime, exile, and identity struggles.
- 🧑 **Women's Rights:** Supported the "**Woman, Life, Freedom**" movement after **Mahsa Amini's** death (2022).
- 🎬 Directed films including **Persepolis (2007)** and **Radioactive (2019)**.
- 🌐 Challenged stereotypes about Iran while criticizing both **authoritarianism** and **uncritical Western universalism**.

Diagram



UPSC Relevance

GS Paper

GS-I

GS-II

Essay

Topic

Women, Society, Iranian Revolution

Human Rights, Freedom of Expression

Individual Liberty, Feminism, Identity, Secularism

India–Nepal Relations: Navigating a New Political Landscape

Brief

- Nepal's ruling **Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP)** chief **Rabi Lamichhane** visited India, signalling efforts to reset bilateral ties amid Nepal's changing political dynamics.

Key Facts

- ▽ **India's Priority:** Security, connectivity, trade, digital cooperation, and people-to-people ties.
- ▽ **Political Shift:** Rise of new political forces (Gen Z movement, RSP) replacing traditional elites.

▽ Challenges:

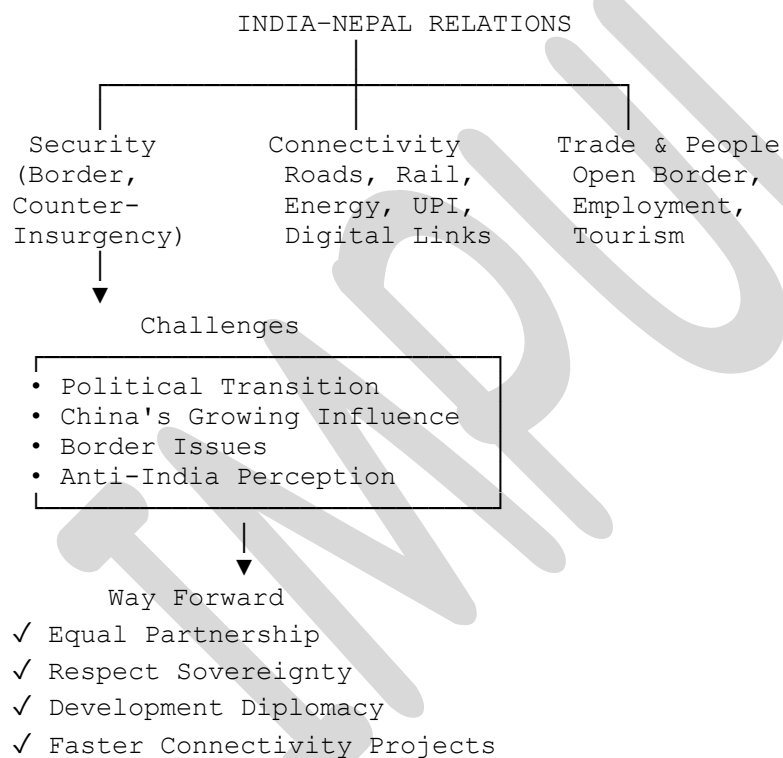
- Perception of India as a "**big brother**".
- Border disputes (**Kalapani, Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura**).
- **Madhesi issue** and legacy of the 2015 blockade.

▽ **China Factor:** Expanding influence through infrastructure, investments, and strategic engagement.

▽ India's Response:

- Development diplomacy,
- digital connectivity (UPI),
- cross-border infrastructure, and
- mutual respect.

Diagram



Issues vs Way Forward

Challenges	Suggested Approach
China's strategic influence	Strengthen economic & infrastructure cooperation
Political mistrust	Engage all democratic stakeholders
Border disputes	Peaceful dialogue & confidence-building
Youth perception	Enhance educational, cultural & digital exchanges

UPSC Add on

- Border Length: ~1,751 km (India-Nepal).
- Frameworks: Treaty of Peace and Friendship (1950), BBIN, BIMSTEC, Act East Policy.
- Keywords: Neighbourhood First • Development Diplomacy • Strategic Balancing • Himalayan Geopolitics • Equal Partnership

Mains Enrichment

- *India should move from the perception of a "big brother" to that of an "equal development partner", balancing strategic interests with sensitivity towards Nepal's democratic aspirations.*

06.06.2026

FII's HOLD Rs 3.75 LAKH CRORE, OR 3.34%, OF Rs 112 LAKH CRORE GOVT DEBT

To draw funds, prop rupee, Govt scraps FII capital gains, withholding tax on bonds

With the rupee under pressure and BoP deficit likely to be around \$50-60 billion, the move is expected to result in good foreign fund inflows.

Brief:

- The Government of India has abolished

– Long-Term Capital Gains Tax (LTCG), – Short-Term Capital Gains Tax (STCG), and – Withholding Tax	on Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) investing in Government Securities (G-Secs) from April 1, 2026.
---	---

This move aims to:

- Attract foreign capital,
- Stabilise the rupee,
- Reduce Balance of Payments (BoP) pressures,
- Support government borrowing.

Key Policy Changes

Tax Type	Earlier	Now
LTCG on Govt Bonds	12.5%	✗ Nil
STCG on Govt Bonds	30%	✗ Nil
Withholding Tax on Interest Income	~20%	✗ Nil

Applicable to:

- Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs)
- Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs)
- Bank for International Settlements (BIS)

Why Was the Decision Taken?

1. Rising Balance of Payments (BoP) Deficit

Economists estimate:

 FY 2026-27 BoP Deficit could reach \$40–60 billion

Reasons:

- Rising oil import bill
- West Asia conflict
- Weak FDI inflows
- FPI outflows from equities

2. Pressure on Rupee

- Rupee depreciated by 10.3% in one year
- Nearly touched ₹97/\$ recently
- Foreign inflows can strengthen the rupee

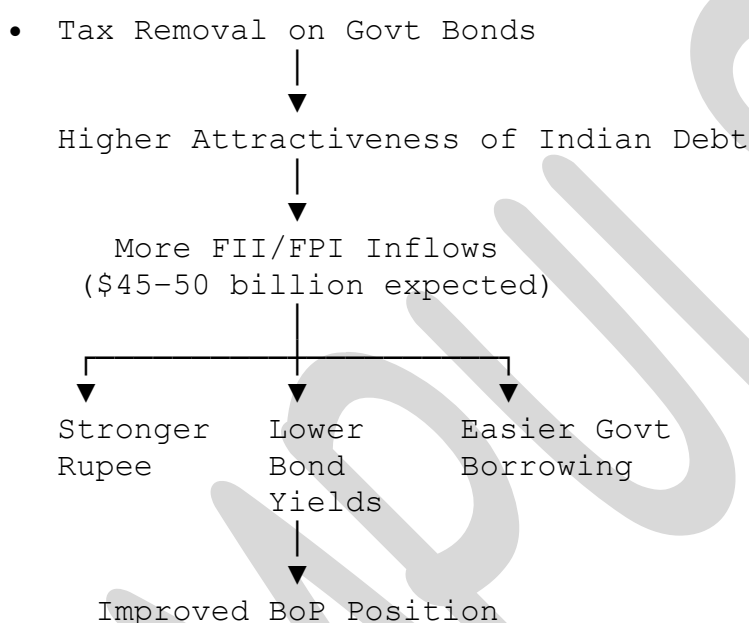
3. Attract Global Debt Investors

- Current FII holding in Indian Government Bonds:

Indicator	Value
Total Govt Bond Market	₹112.42 lakh crore
FII Holding	₹3.75 lakh crore
<u>Share</u>	<u>Only 3.34%</u>

➡ Huge scope for foreign participation.

Conceptual Flow Diagram



RBI's Supporting Measures

The RBI simultaneously expanded the **Fully Accessible Route (FAR)**:

FAR (Fully Accessible Route)

Allows foreign investors to buy specified government securities **without investment limits.**

New Measures

All new:

- 15-year bonds
 - 30-year bonds
 - 40-year bonds
- } added under FAR

Restrictions removed on:

- Short-term investments
- Investor concentration limits
- Individual security limits

Diagram : BoP

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Current Account} \\ (\text{Trade} + \text{Services}) \\ \\ + \\ \text{Capital Account} \\ (\text{FDI} + \text{FPI} + \text{Loans}) \\ \\ = \\ \text{Balance of Payments (BoP)} \end{array}$$

Current Situation

Item	Trend
Merchandise Trade	Deficit
Services Trade	Surplus
FDI Inflows	Weak
Equity FPI Flows	Negative
Debt FPI Flows	Positive

Expected Benefits

Economic

- ☞ \$45-50 billion debt inflows over 2 years
- ☞ Lower borrowing cost for government
- ☞ Improved external sector stability

Currency

- ☞ Appreciation bias for rupee
- ☞ Reduced volatility

Fiscal

- ☞ Easier financing of fiscal deficit

Potential Concerns

Risks of Excessive Foreign Debt Flows

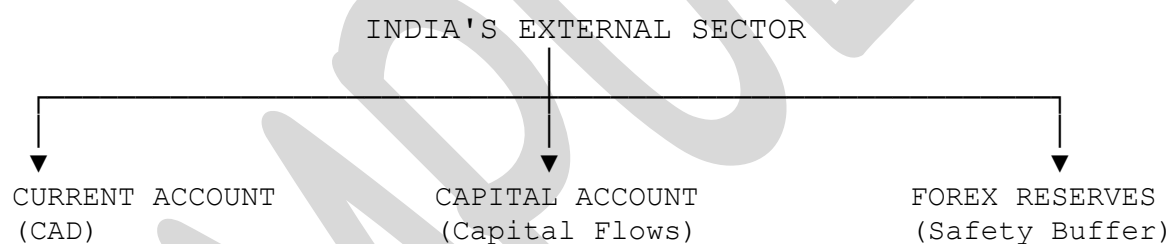
- Sudden capital reversal ("hot money")
- External vulnerability
- Greater dependence on global interest-rate cycles

One-line summary

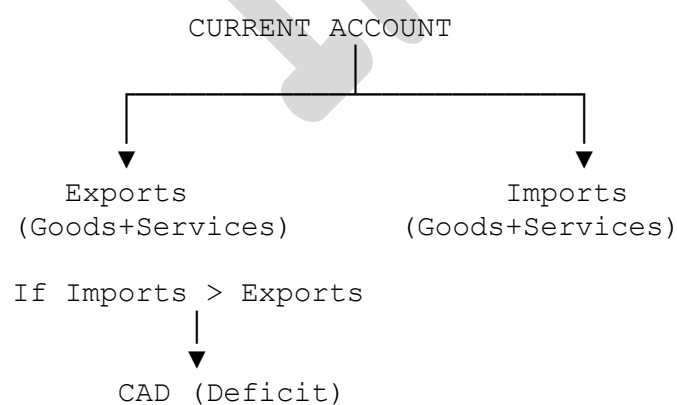
The abolition of taxes on foreign investment in government bonds marks a major external-sector reform aimed at attracting global capital, stabilising the rupee, and addressing India's emerging Balance of Payments challenges amid global economic uncertainties.

Quick concept:

External Sector & Government Bond Investment: Complete Concept Map



1 CURRENT ACCOUNT DEFICIT (CAD)



Example

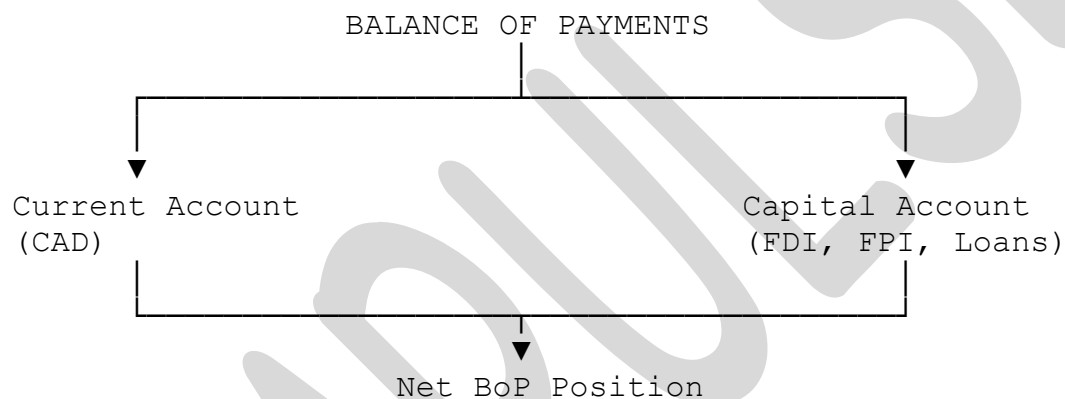
Exports	= \$800 bn
Imports	= \$900 bn

CAD	= -\$100 bn

India generally runs a CAD because:

- Oil imports are high
- Gold imports are high
- Merchandise trade deficit is large

2 BALANCE OF PAYMENTS (BoP)



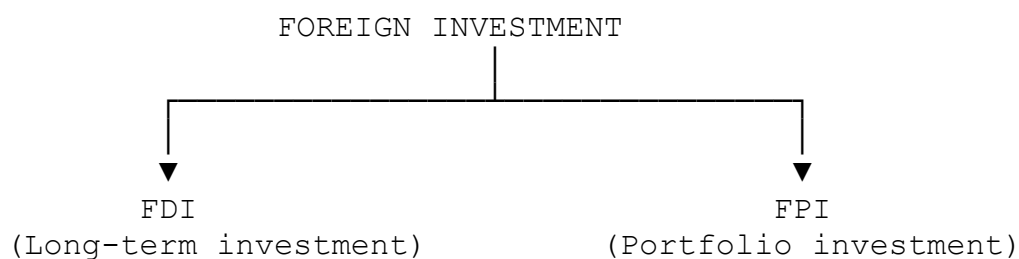
Formula

$\text{BoP} = \text{Current Account} + \text{Capital Account}$

Positive = BoP Surplus

Negative = BoP Deficit

3 FPI vs FDI



FDI

Factory

Plant

Business Control

Stable

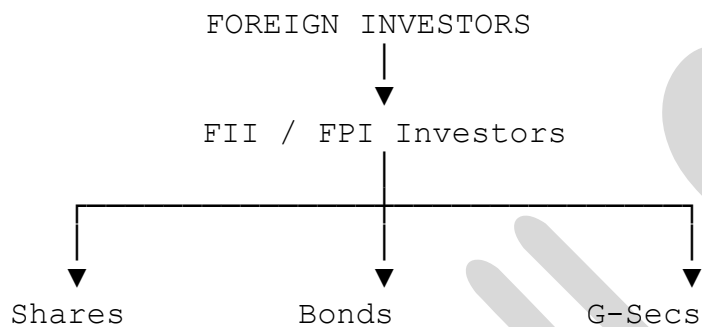
FPI

Stocks

Bonds

No Control

Volatile

4 **FII & FPI****Evolution**Before 2014

FII (Foreign Institutional Investor)

QFI (Qualified Foreign Investor)

Sub-accounts

↓ SEBI Reform (2014)

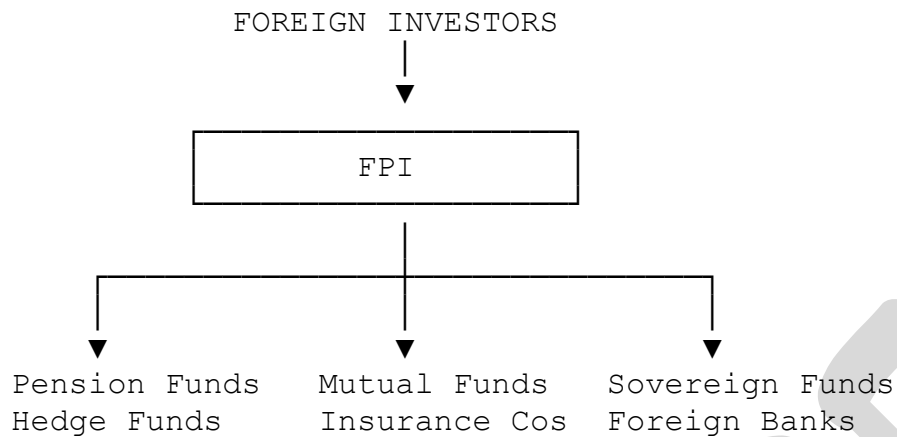
After 2014

FPI (Foreign Portfolio Investor)

(Umbrella Category)

✂ Today, **FPI is the official term** used by SEBI.

Simple Diagram



✂ What we earlier called **FII**s are now mostly registered as **FPI**s.

Crux understanding

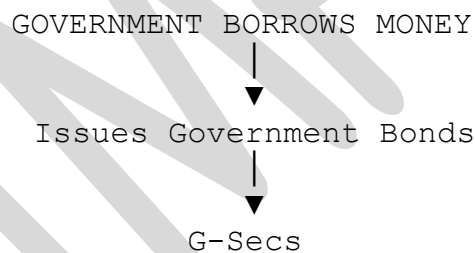
FDI = Control + Long-term

FPI = Investment + No Control

FII = Old term

FPI = Current SEBI term

5 GOVERNMENT SECURITIES (G-Secs)



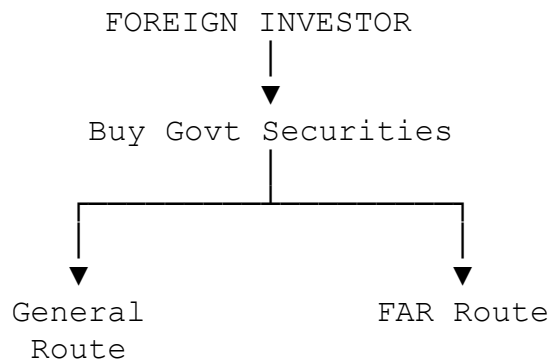
Examples:

- Treasury Bills
- 5-Year Bonds
- 10-Year Bonds
- 30-Year Bonds
- 40-Year Bonds

Purpose:

- Fund Fiscal Deficit
- Infrastructure Spending
- Government Expenditure

6 FULLY ACCESSIBLE ROUTE (FAR)



FAR

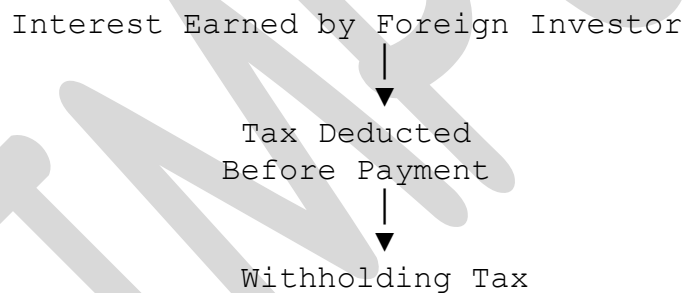
- No Investment Limits
- No Quota Restrictions
- Easy Global Access

✧ Introduced by RBI in 2020.

Purpose:

- Increase foreign participation in G-Secs.

7 WITHHOLDING TAX



Example:

Interest Earned = ₹100

Tax (20%) = ₹20

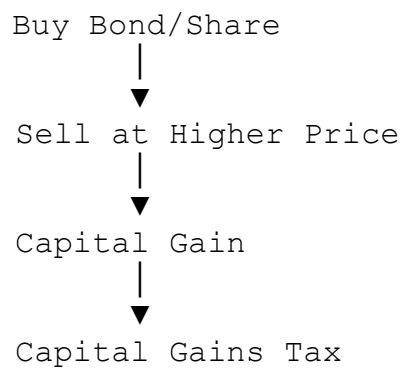
Investor Receives = ₹80

Current Reform

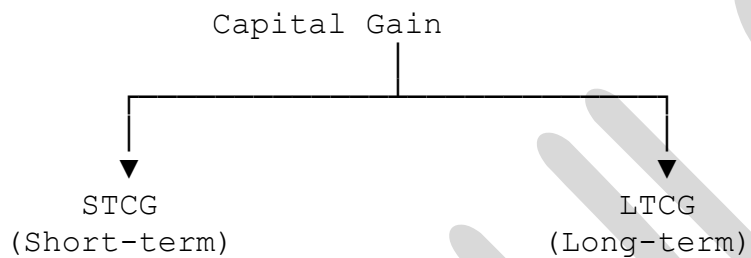
Earlier = ~20%

Now = 0%

CAPITAL GAINS TAX



Types



Before Reform

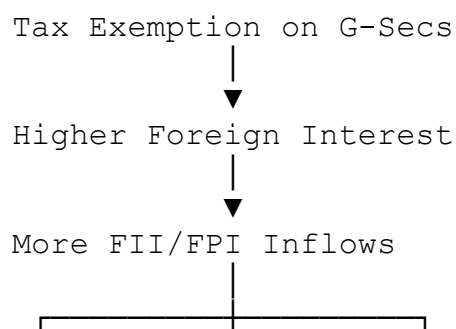
Tax	Rate
LTCG	12.5%
STCG	30%

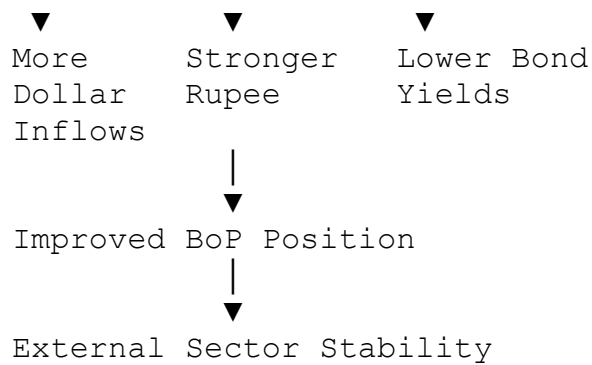
After Reform

LTCG = 0%
STCG = 0%



How the Entire System Works





UPSC One-Line Revision

CAD → Creates need for foreign capital

BoP → Overall external account balance

FPI/FII → Foreign portfolio investors

G-Secs → Government borrowing instruments

FAR → Unrestricted foreign access to selected G-Secs

Withholding Tax → Tax on interest income

Capital Gains Tax → Tax on profit from sale of bonds/shares

Tax Removal → More foreign inflows → Stronger Rupee → Better BoP

RBI Measures to Attract Foreign Capital Inflows (2026)

Background

- To strengthen **Balance of Payments (BoP)** and support the **rupee**, RBI eased norms for:
 - **External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs)** by PSUs.
 - **FCNR(B)** deposits by banks.
 - **FII investment in Government Securities (G-Secs).**

- Complements government's removal of **capital gains tax** and **withholding tax** on foreign investment in G-Secs.

Key RBI Measures

1. ECB Support for PSUs

- ✓ Concessional **Forex Swap Facility** till **Sept 2026**.

Benefit:

- Reduces hedging cost.
- Enables cheaper overseas borrowing.
- Supports infrastructure, oil and power PSUs.

2. FCNR(B) Deposit Promotion

- ✓ RBI to provide **full hedging support** for 3–5 year FCNR(B) deposits.

FCNR(B):

- Foreign Currency Non-Resident Bank Account.
- NRI deposits held in foreign currency (USD, GBP, EUR etc.).

Expected Outcome:

- Higher NRI deposits.
- Greater dollar liquidity.

3. Relaxation for FII Investments

- ✓ FAR expanded to include new **15, 30 and 40-year G-Secs**.

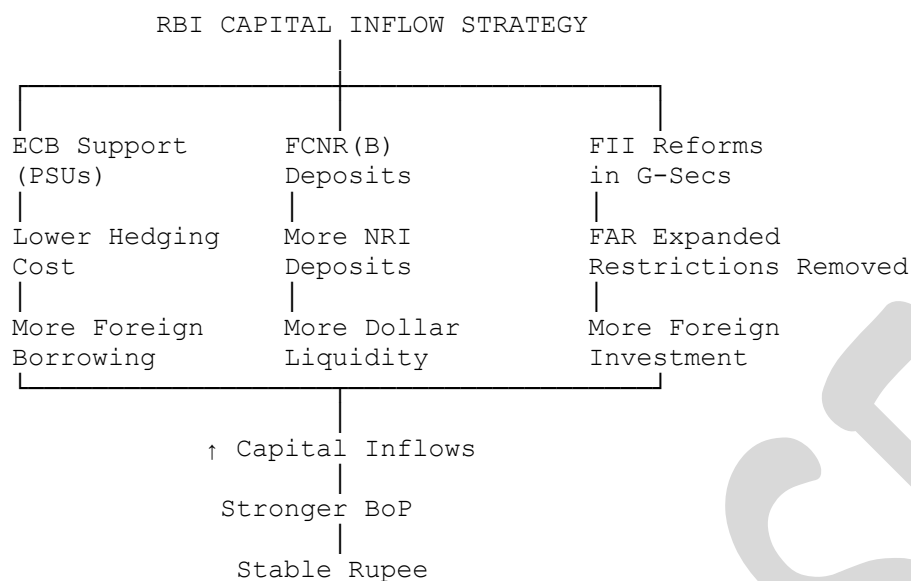
✓ **Removed:**

- Short-term investment limits
- Concentration limits
- Individual security restrictions

4. NRI/OCI Investments

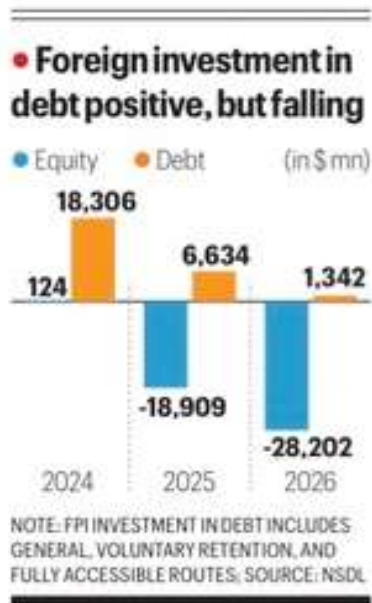
- ✓ Higher limits in listed equities.
- ✓ Extended to all **Persons Resident Outside India (PROIs)**.

Conceptual Diagram



UPSC Quick Prelims

- ✓ **FCNR (B)** - Foreign currency fixed deposit for NRIs.
 - ✓ **ECB** - Loans raised by Indian entities from foreign lenders.
 - ✓ **FAR** - Allows unrestricted foreign investment in specified G-Secs.
 - ✓ **RBI measures aim to:**
 - Increase foreign capital inflows.
 - Improve BoP.
 - Stabilise rupee.
 - Support economic growth and investment.
-



• **GDP growth improved in FY26**

	2024-25	2025-26
Agriculture	4.2%	3.0%
Mining	11.7%	5.2%
Manufacturing	9.3%	10.7%
Electricity, other utility services	2.9%	1.7%
Construction	7.3%	7.4%
Trade, hotels, transport	6.6%	11.0%
Financial, real estate, IT	10.0%	10.4%
Public administration, defence, other services	5.0%	5.0%
Gross Value Added	7.3%	7.9%
GDP	7.1%	7.7%

NOTE: GROWTH RATES ARE IN REAL TERMS; SOURCE: MOSPI

RBI does well to hold rates, shift focus to foreign capital

All these are steps in the right direction. Measures are needed to attract foreign capital. The economic situation calls for agile management

The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) kept the **repo rate unchanged at 5.25%** and retained a **neutral stance** amid rising inflation risks, capital outflows, rupee depreciation, and uncertain growth prospects.

Key Decisions

1. Monetary Policy

✓ Repo Rate: **5.25% (unchanged)**

✓ Policy Stance: **Neutral**

Reason:

- West Asia conflict creates uncertainty.
- Rising inflationary pressures.
- Growth outlook remains fragile.

2. Measures to Attract Foreign Capital

✓ Government abolished:

- Capital Gains Tax on FII investments in Government Bonds.
- Withholding Tax on interest income from these bonds.

✓ RBI Measures:

- Expanded Fully Accessible Route (FAR) for Government Securities.
- Concessional Forex Swap Facility for ECB borrowings.
- Hedging support for FCNR(B) deposits.

✓ Objective:

- Boost foreign inflows and support the rupee.

Economic Concerns

Inflation Risks

✓ Retail Inflation: 3.5% (April)

✓ RBI Inflation Forecast:

- April Projection → 4.6%
- June Projection → 5.1%

Drivers:

- Fuel price hikes
- Rising input costs
- Possible El Niño
- Subnormal monsoon risk

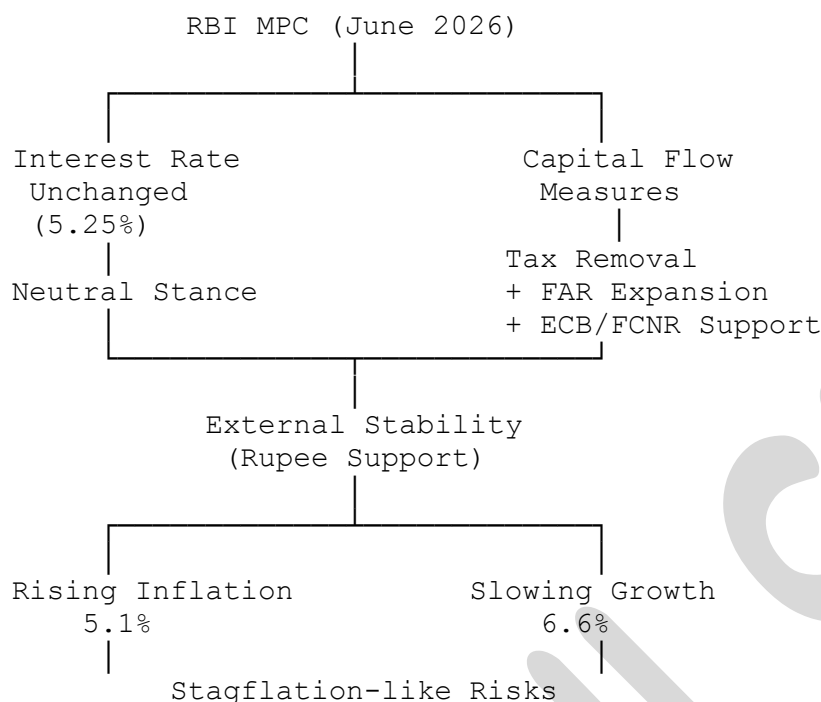
Growth Concerns

✓ GDP Growth Forecast:

- Earlier: 6.9%
- Revised: 6.6%

✓ Risks: Weak demand, global uncertainty, geopolitical tensions.

Conceptual Diagram



UPSC Takeaway

- **Policy Theme:** Balancing inflation control, currency stability, and growth support under geopolitical uncertainty.

Food inflation is also a concern with a subnormal monsoon forecast and El Niño.

India's 'partner-less' population shrinks, Tamil Nadu, Kerala buck national trend

Data reveals a persistent gender divide, with women more than three times as likely as men to be living without a partner.

National Trend

- ✓ Population classified as Widowed/Divorced/Separated (W/D/S) declined from:

Year	W/D/S Population (%)
2014	4.1%
2024	3.5%

✂ Indicates overall stability of family structures despite public debate on rising divorces.

Gender Dimension

✓ W/D/S remains predominantly a female phenomenon

Category	2014	2024
Females	6.5%	5.4%
Males	1.9%	1.6%

Reasons

- Men more likely to remarry.
- Women face greater social and economic constraints.
- Widowhood disproportionately affects women.

State-wise Trends

Highest W/D/S Rates (2024)

State	2014	2024
Tamil Nadu	5.7%	7.2%
Kerala	6.2%	6.3%
Telangana	4.6%	4.6%

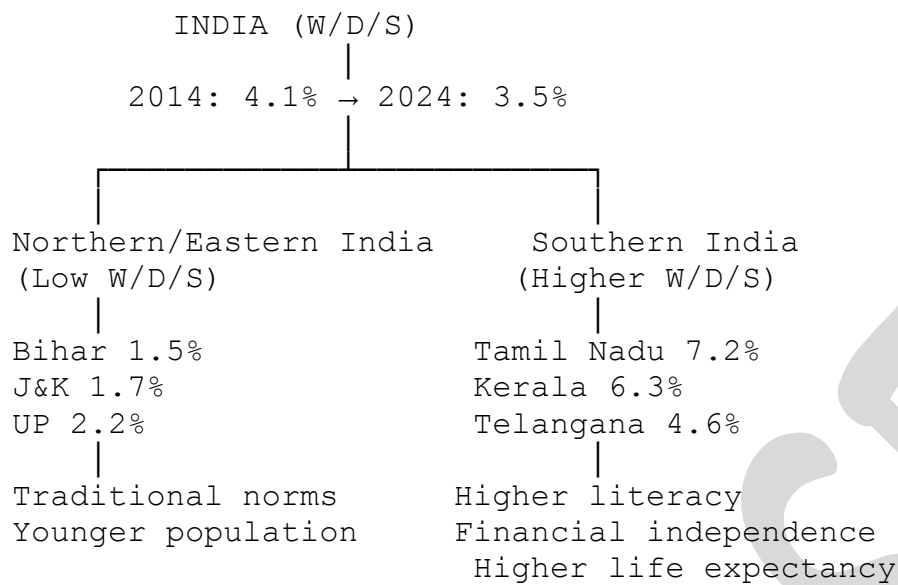
Lowest W/D/S Rates (2024)

State	2024
Bihar	1.5%
J&K	1.7%
Haryana	1.9%
Uttar Pradesh	2.2%

Sharpest Declines

State	2014	2024
Uttarakhand	6.2%	3.5%
Chhattisgarh	5.2%	3.6%

Conceptual Diagram



Regional Pattern

Southern States: Higher W/D/S

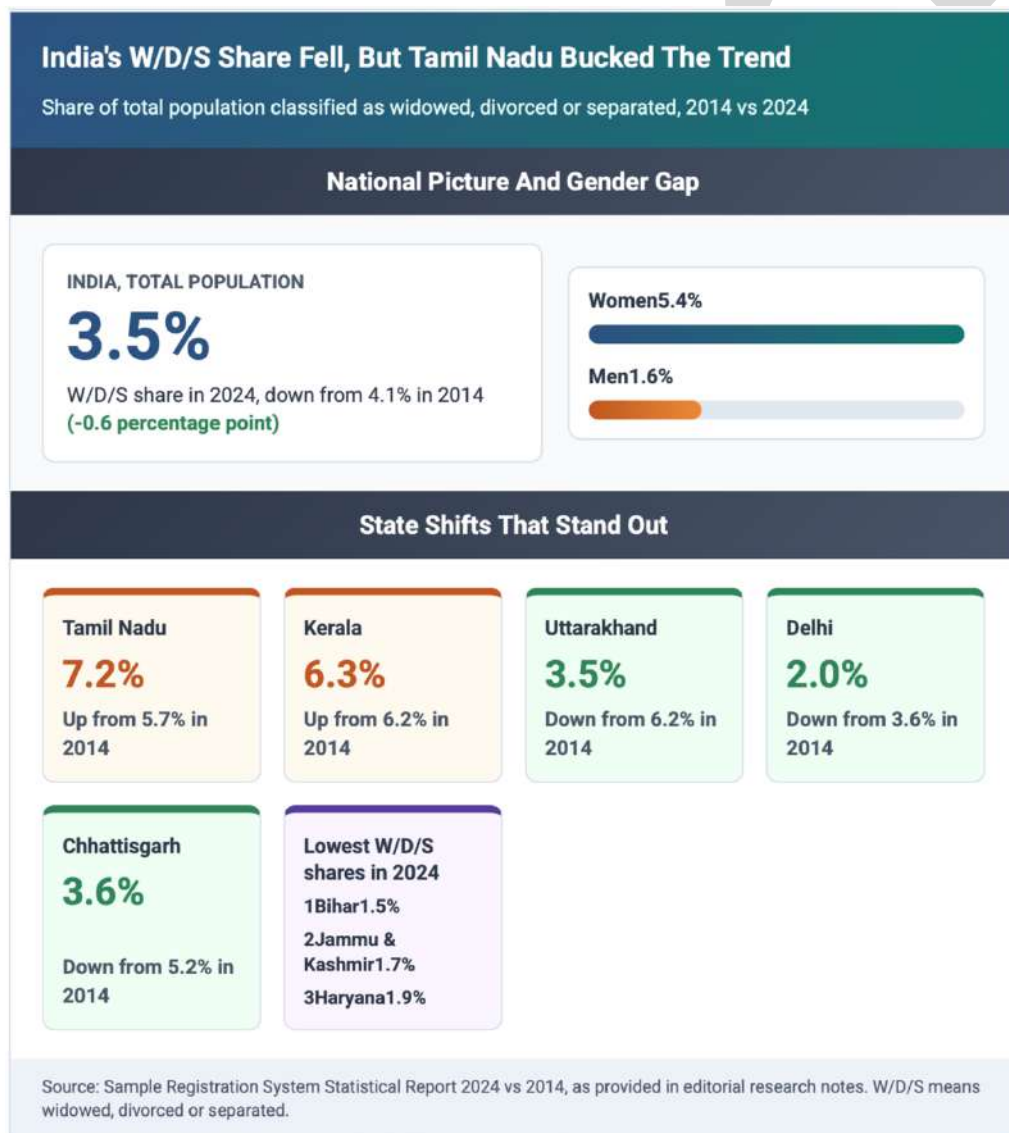
- ✓ Higher female literacy
- ✓ Greater economic independence
- ✓ Better social security systems
- ✓ Higher life expectancy → More widowhood

Northern/Eastern States: Lower W/D/S

- ✓ Traditional family structures
- ✓ Lower divorce acceptance
- ✓ Younger population profile
- ✓ Possible under-reporting/limited legal access

Quick Note:

- India's W/D/S population **declined from 4.1% to 3.5% (2014–2024)**.
- **Tamil Nadu (7.2%)** has the highest W/D/S proportion.
- **Bihar (1.5%)** has the lowest.
- Women remain disproportionately represented in W/D/S categories.
- Data does **not distinguish widowhood from divorce/separation**, limiting precise interpretation.
- Reflects the intersection of **demography, gender, ageing, and social change** in India.



• INDIA'S 'PARTNER-LESS' PARADOX

A demographic look at the Widowed/Divorced/Separated (W/D/S) population (2014 vs 2024)

THE BIG PICTURE:

A SHRINKING DEMOGRAPHIC

Contrary to urban narratives, the proportion of Indians living without a partner after marriage is actually falling nationally

% of the total population



THE GENDER CHASM

Living without a partner remains overwhelmingly a female reality in India. Men remarry; women overwhelmingly carry the W/D/S status for life

Total population W/D/S (2024)

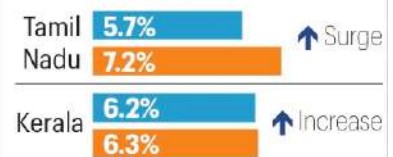


THE GEOGRAPHIC DIVIDE:

THE SOUTHERN SURGE

While almost all of India saw rates fall, two highly developed Southern states bucked national trend

● 2014 Rate ● 2024 Rate



Nilgiri Tahr Population Estimation 2026

Brief

- Nilgiri Tahr population in Tamil Nadu increased to 1,364 in 2026, registering a **4.68% rise** over 2025 (1,303).
- Previous estimates:
 - **2024:** 1,031
 - **2025:** 1,303
 - **2026:** 1,364
- Indicates a **positive recovery trend**.

Endemic and **endangered** mountain ungulate

found only in the **southern Western Ghats**, spanning **Tamil Nadu** and **Kerala**.

- Protected under **Schedule I (highest protection)** of the Wildlife Protection Act.



Ecological Importance

- Inhabits high-altitude shola-grassland ecosystems.
- Plays a crucial role in:
 - Nutrient cycling
 - Maintaining mountain ecosystem health
 - Grassland conservation

Population Distribution

Region/Division	Population
Pollachi Forest Division	438
Udhagai (Mudumalai TR)	313
Tiruppur Division	148

Landscape Share

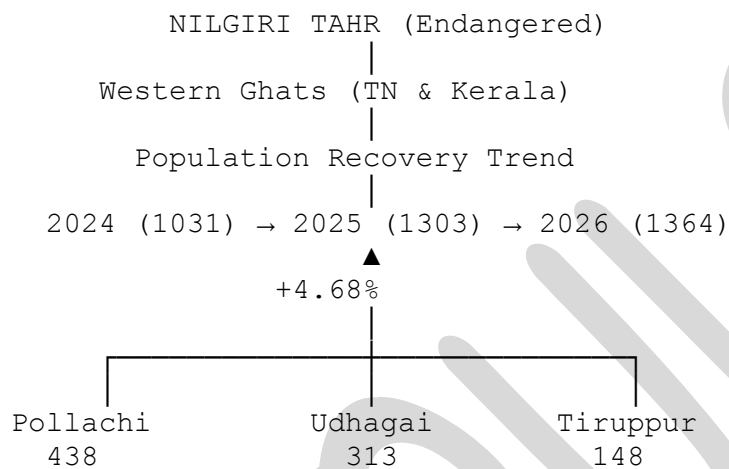
- Anamalai Hills: 44.87%
- Nilgiri Landscape: 29.25%

Demographic Structure

Category	Share
Adult Females	38.4%
Adult Males	34.6%
Yearlings	15.5%
Young Animals	11.5%

✓ Male : Female Ratio = 55 : 100

Quick Diagram



Quick Prlm:

- ❑ State Animal of Tamil Nadu.
- ❑ Endemic to the **Western Ghats Biodiversity Hotspot**.
- ❑ Population estimation conducted under **Project Nilgiri Tahr (2026)**.
- ❑ Distribution extends from **Kanyakumari to Nilgiri Hills**.
- ❑ **Major threat: Habitat fragmentation**, leading to scattered populations rather than a continuous range.

Impunity for exam leaks undermines trust

In a young country, competitive tests are among the most visible interfaces between citizens and the state. It's high time the government learned its lessons

- In the past two decades, India's examination ecosystem has been repeatedly hit by paper leaks, cheating rackets and administrative breakdowns.
 - School-leaving examinations, admission tests to engineering and medical institutions, and recruitment exams for teachers, police constables, railway staff and government officials have become embroiled in controversies.
 - Revelations of malpractice often lead to the cancellation or postponement of examinations, adversely affecting candidates' careers.
 - The first step towards restoring the sanctity of admission and recruitment procedures should be → → to identify the chinks in the system and nab the people who exploit them by running cheating operations.
 - However, a detailed data analysis shows that the government and the criminal justice system have been extremely tardy in fixing accountability. The figures reveal a shocking state of laxity:
 - Conviction rate too low @ 4.44%
 - Only 2 out of 45 paper-leak cases led to convictions.

Paper Leak Cases in India (2002-2025)

Indicator	Data	Percentage
Total Paper-Leak Cases	45	100%
Cases Resulting in Conviction	2	4.44%
Cases Without Conviction/Pending	43	95.56%
Total Persons Arrested	1,658	100%
Persons Charge-sheeted	925	55.8%
Arrested but Not Charge-sheeted	733	44.2%

- Such impunity raises troubling questions about → → the state's commitment to restoring the integrity of the examinations that shape the future of millions.
 - *For a rapidly growing aspirational class, competitive examinations are a gateway to higher education, employment, social mobility and financial security.*
 - **Competitive examinations** are crucial pathways to **higher education, employment, social mobility, and financial security** for India's growing aspirational population.
 - Over **3.86 crore candidates** were affected by examination cancellations in the last **23 years**.
 - Investigations into the recent **NEET paper leak** reveal vulnerabilities arising from outsourced logistics, private testing agencies, and sophisticated coaching networks.
 - Alleged involvement of individuals linked to **paper-setting and translation processes** highlights systemic weaknesses.
 - A thorough investigation is essential to **dismantle paper leak networks, strengthen deterrence mechanisms, and restore examination integrity.**
 - In a young country, competitive tests embody the promise that educational and career advancement are determined by merit rather than by privilege or corruption. Repeated exam fiascos and negligible conviction rates weaken trust in the country's institutions. It's high time the government learned its lessons.
-

09.06.2026

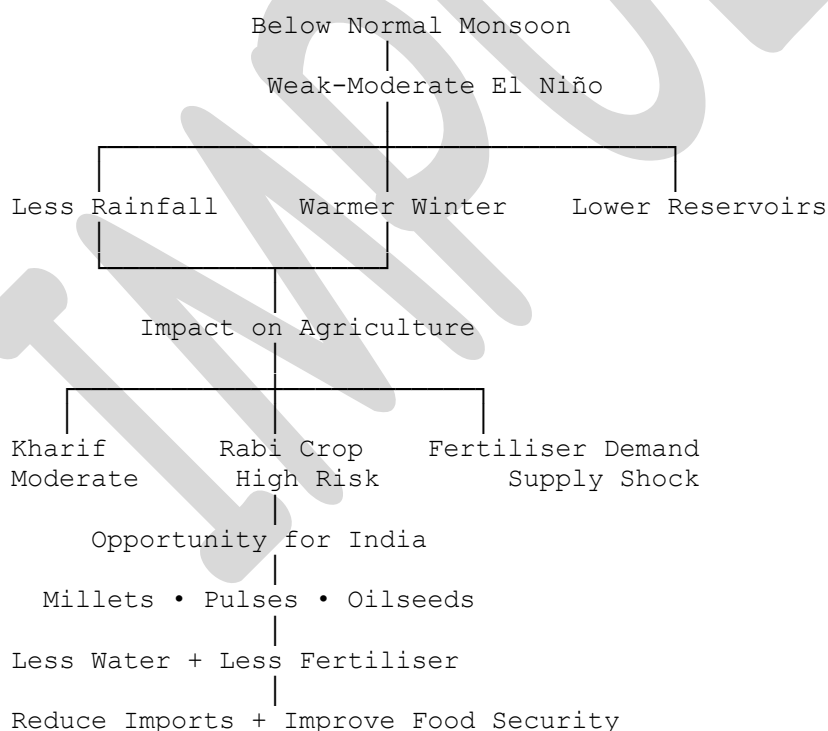
Topic: (GS-III: Agriculture | Economy | Environment)

Rain & Fertiliser Shortfall Can Be an Opportunity

Brief

- India is likely to experience a **below-normal southwest monsoon (around 90% of Long Period Average - LPA)** due to the possible return of **El Niño**.
- Simultaneously, **fertiliser supply uncertainties** arising from geopolitical tensions (West Asia conflict and Strait of Hormuz disruptions) may affect agriculture.
- The editorial argues that this challenge can become an opportunity by promoting **millets, pulses and oilseeds**.

Mind Map



Key Data

Indicator	Data
Agricultural Growth (2024–25)	4.2%
Agricultural Growth (2025–26)	3.2%
Rainfall in 2024	104% of LPA
Rainfall in 2025	110% of LPA
IMD Forecast (Current Year)	90% of LPA
Vegetable Oil Imports	16.9 million tonnes
Pulse Imports	7.3 million tonnes

What is El Niño?

- El Niño is the periodic warming of sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, which alters global atmospheric circulation.

Diagram

Normal Year

India ← Moist Winds ← Indian Ocean
 ↑
 Good Monsoon

El Niño Year

Pacific Ocean (Warmer)
 ↓
Weak Walker Circulation
 ↓
Less Moisture Transport
 ↓
Weak Indian Monsoon

Impact of El Niño on India

Sector	Impact
Monsoon	Deficient rainfall
Agriculture	Reduced crop productivity
Rabi crops	Higher impact due to warmer winters
Reservoirs	Lower storage
Inflation	Food inflation risk
Hydropower	Reduced generation
Rural Economy	Lower farm income

Why is Rabi More Vulnerable?

Kharif

- Sown during monsoon
- Initial rainfall may still support sowing.

Rabi

- Depends upon
 - Soil moisture
 - Reservoir water
 - Groundwater
 - Winter temperatures

Strong El Niño generally causes

- ☐ Warmer winters
- ☐ Lower soil moisture
- ☐ Lower irrigation availability

☆ Hence, Rabi crops suffer more.

Fertiliser Challenge

Supply-side Risks

West Asia Conflict

Strait of Hormuz Risk

Higher Shipping Cost

Reduced Fertiliser Availability

Higher Input Cost

Why Can This Become an Opportunity?

- Promoting crops that require:
 - Less water
 - Less fertiliser

Comparison

Crop	Water Requirement	Fertiliser Requirement
Rice	Very High	High
Sugarcane	Extremely High	Very High
Wheat	Moderate-High	High
Millets	Low	Low
Pulses	Low	Low
Oilseeds	Low-Moderate	Moderate

Economic Significance

India imports

- Vegetable oils
- Pulses

Promoting domestic cultivation can

- Reduce import bill
- Improve food security
- Increase farmers' income
- Improve nutritional security
- Improve climate resilience

Government Strategy Suggested

MSP Assurance

Farmers shift to
Millets + Pulses + Oilseeds

Lower Water Use

Lower Fertiliser Use

Reduced Imports

Climate-resilient Agriculture

Policy Recommendations

1. Promote Crop Diversification

Instead of

Rice + Sugarcane

↓

Millets + Pulses + Oilseeds

2. Rational Pricing

- Water pricing
- Fertiliser pricing

to discourage overuse and encourage efficiency.

3. Strengthen MSP

Support procurement for

- Millets
- Pulses
- Oilseeds

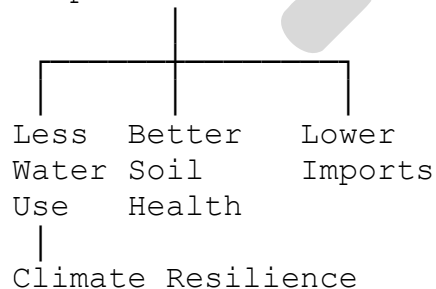
to provide farmers with income security.

4. Improve Irrigation Efficiency

- Micro-irrigation
- Drip irrigation
- Sprinkler irrigation
- Precision farming

Advantages of Crop Diversification

Crop Diversification



Challenges

Challenge

Farmer preference

MSP bias

Market infrastructure

Processing facilities

Consumer demand

Explanation

Rice and wheat have assured procurement.

Procurement is concentrated in cereals.

Weak value chains for pulses and oilseeds.

Limited processing and storage.

Dietary preferences favour rice and wheat.

Way Forward

- Encourage **climate-smart agriculture**.
- Expand **PMKSY** and **micro-irrigation**.
- Strengthen **National Food Security Mission (NFSM)** for pulses and oilseeds.
- Promote **International Year of Millets** momentum through sustained policy support.
- Ensure balanced nutrient use under the **Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS)** regime and improve fertiliser efficiency.

Quick Prelims pick

Long Period Average (LPA)

- Average rainfall over **50 years** used as the benchmark by the India Meteorological Department.

El Niño

- Warm phase of **ENSO (El Niño–Southern Oscillation)**.
- Usually associated with weaker Indian summer monsoon (though not every El Niño causes drought).

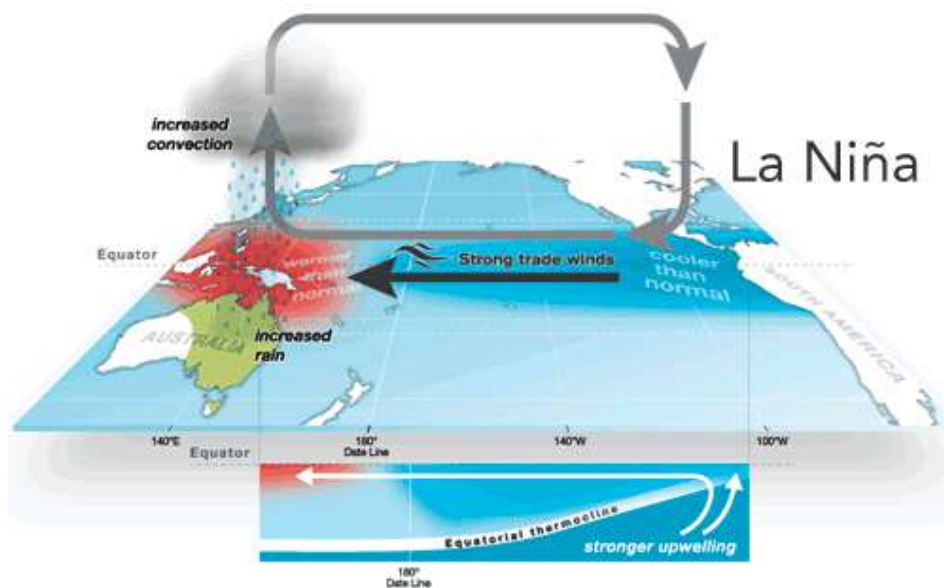
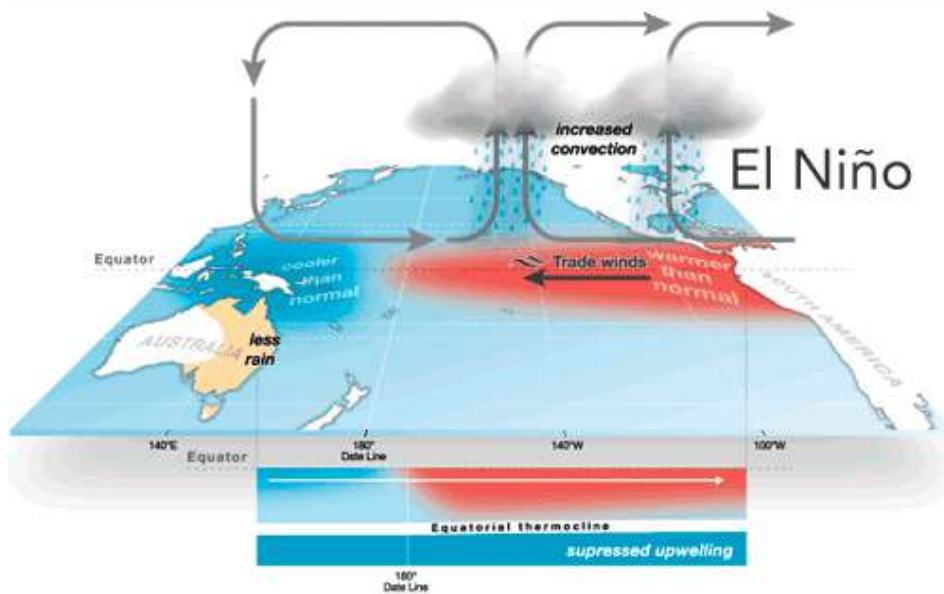
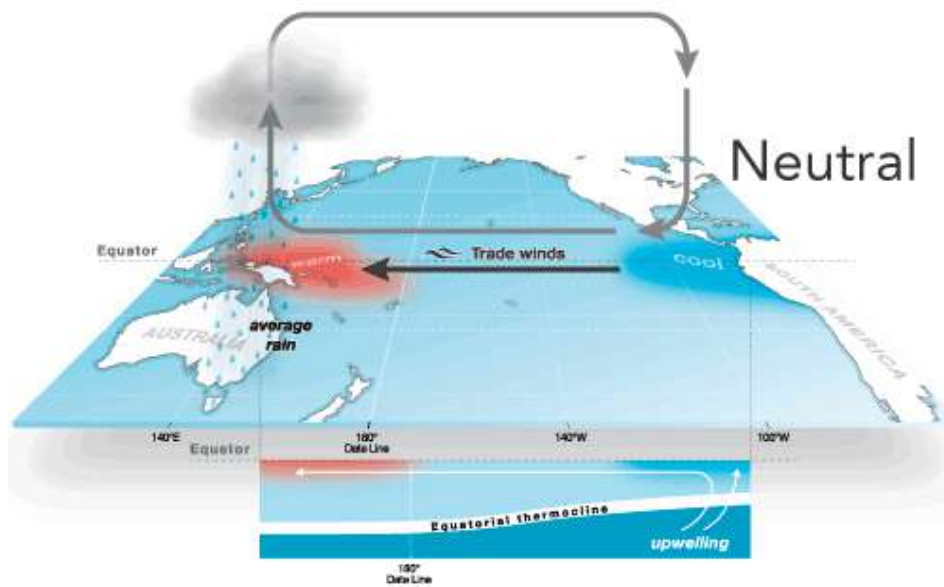
Strait of Hormuz

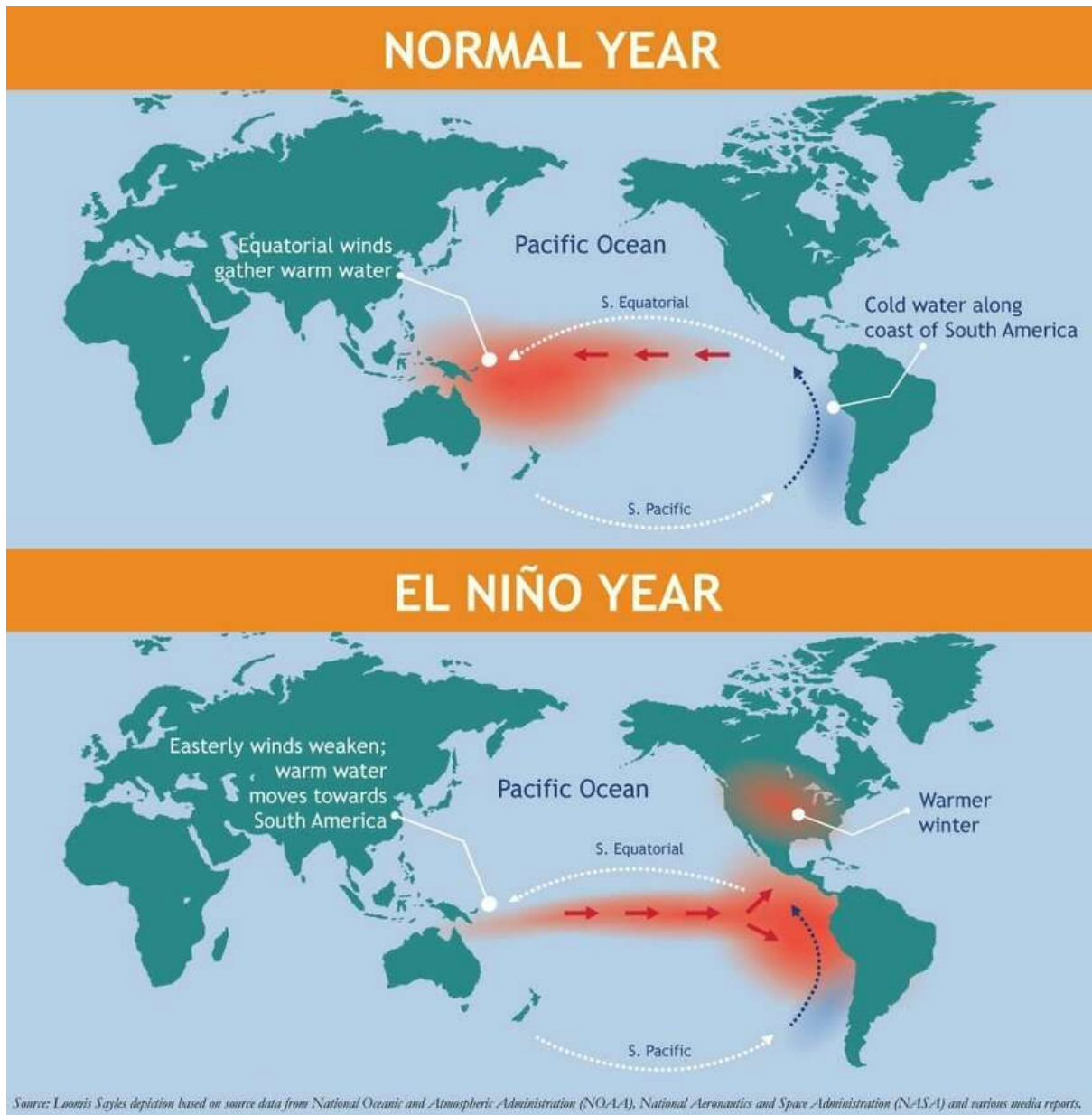
- One of the world's most important oil and energy shipping chokepoints.
 - Disruptions can increase the cost of energy, fertilisers, and global trade.
-

Mains notes

- The anticipated monsoon shortfall and fertiliser supply constraints should not be viewed merely as risks but as catalysts for structural reforms in Indian agriculture. Diversifying towards water-efficient and nutrient-efficient crops such as millets, pulses, and oilseeds can simultaneously strengthen food security, reduce import dependence, conserve scarce natural resources, and enhance climate resilience. Coupled with targeted MSP support, efficient water pricing, improved irrigation, and market reforms, such a strategy aligns with the objectives of sustainable agriculture and inclusive rural development, making Indian agriculture more resilient to future climatic and geopolitical shocks.







Topic: (GS-II: International Relations | Governance)

US Court Strikes Down \$100,000 H-1B Visa Fee

Brief

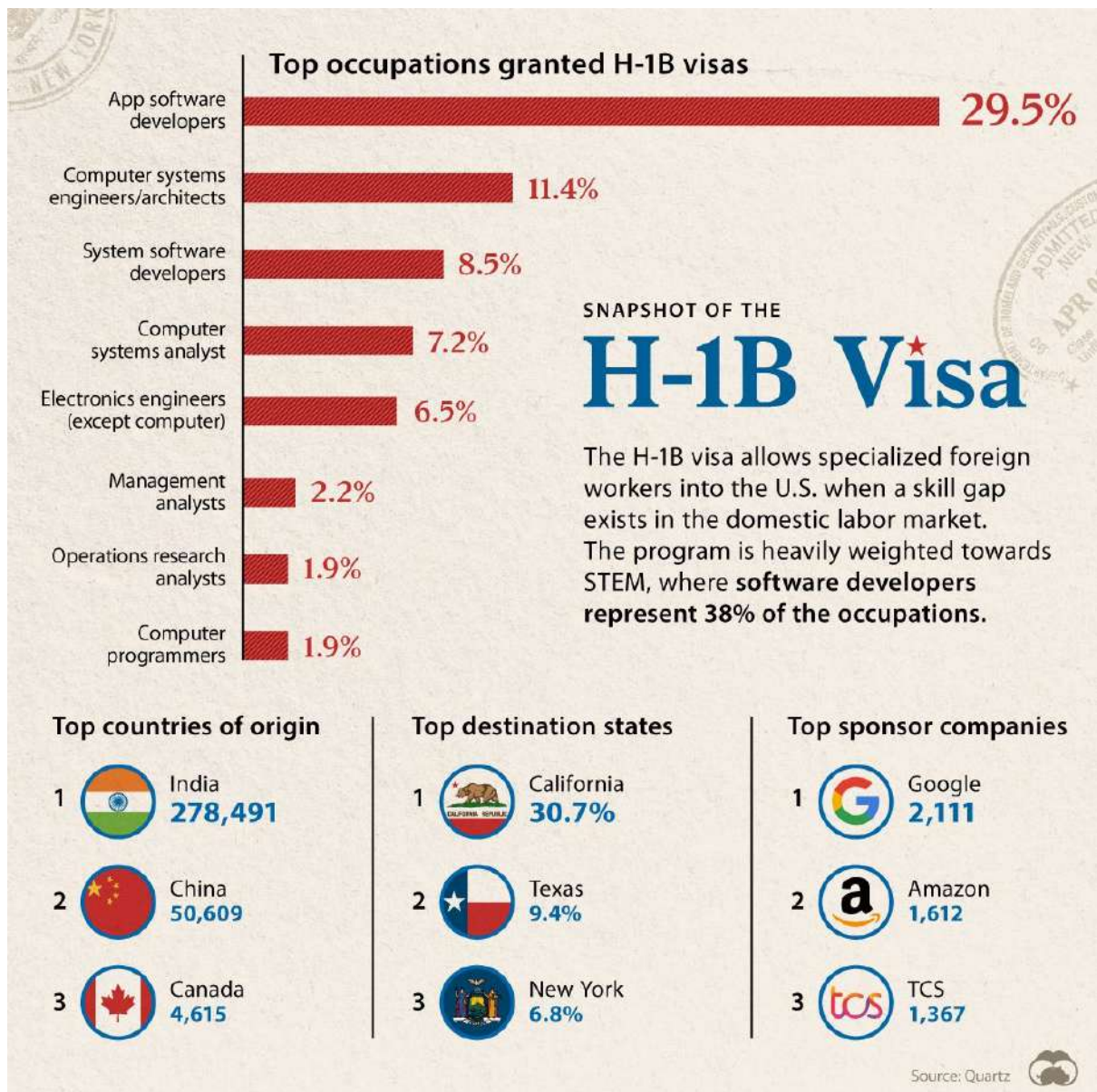
- A US federal judge ruled that the proposed **\$100,000 fee on new H-1B visas** was **unlawful**, holding that it amounted to a **tax not authorized by the US Congress**.

Key Points

- **H-1B Visa:** Non-immigrant visa for highly skilled foreign professionals in sectors like IT, engineering, healthcare and research.
- **Annual Cap:** 65,000 visas + 20,000 additional visas for applicants with advanced US degrees.
- Earlier fee: US\$2,000–5,000; proposed fee: US\$100,000.
- Court held that the President cannot impose such a tax without Congressional authorization, reaffirming the separation of powers.

Significance for India

- India is the largest beneficiary of H-1B visas.
- Reduces cost burden on US employers hiring Indian professionals.
- Supports India's IT exports, remittances and skilled mobility.
- Highlights the importance of rule of law and judicial review in democratic governance.



The boost Centre's solar power schemes need

Incentivising households and farmers is crucial to India's clean energy transition. But high upfront costs can be a challenge

Demand and supply

The rising electricity demand can only be met by further expansion of solar and other renewables.

Recent peak demands — in April and May this year during the day — were managed largely through solar power.

•STATUS OF FLAGSHIP PROGRAMMES



PM Suryaghar: Better performers

State/UT	Installations	Households connected	Power subsidy bill*
Gujarat	681,180	977,754	9,277
Maharashtra	604,522	942,378	23,149
UP	562,656	577,103	19,095
Kerala	252,803	258,959	382
Rajasthan	215,842	223,066	30,597

PM Suryaghar: Underperformers

State/UT	Installations	Households connected	Power subsidy bill*
West Bengal	1,695	1,758	1,868
Punjab	14,470	16,641	20,693
Karnataka	19,793	30,395	27,725
Bihar	20,272	20,905	15,405
Tamil Nadu	72,988	85,743	15,701

•PM Suryaghar Yojana

Target	Achieved
Connection to 1 crore households	40.52 lakh
30 GW of installed capacity	12 GW

(AS ON MAY 31, 2026). SCHEME RUNS TILL MARCH 2027 SOURCE: PM SURYAGHAR PORTAL

•PM-KUSUM

Target	Achieved
10 GW of decentralised solar capacity	1.2 GW
14 lakh standalone solar water pumps	10.9 lakh
Solarisation of 2.5 lakh grid pumps	15,000

SOURCE: PM-KUSUM PORTAL

*IN 2025-26 (IN CR)

Boosting India's Decentralised Solar Power Schemes

Brief

- India is rapidly expanding renewable energy, with **solar power contributing nearly 30% of installed electricity capacity**. To accelerate decentralised solar adoption, the Government has launched flagship schemes such as **PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana** and **PM-KUSUM**.
- However, high upfront costs, uneven state performance and distorted electricity subsidies continue to hinder progress.

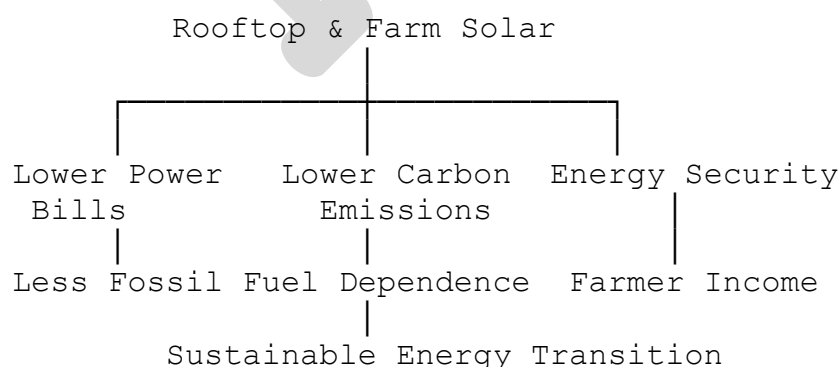
Scheme Overview

Scheme	Objective	Current Progress
PM Surya Ghar	Rooftop solar for 1 crore <u>households</u> with subsidy and up to 300 free electricity units/month	~40.5 lakh households connected; 12 GW installed against 30 GW target
PM-KUSUM	Solar pumps and decentralised solar plants for <u>farmers</u>	10.9 lakh solar pumps installed; 1.2 GW decentralised capacity achieved

Challenges

- High initial installation cost.
- Free/subsidised electricity reduces incentives to adopt rooftop solar.
- Uneven implementation across States.
- Limited access to affordable finance.
- Grid integration and DISCOM-related constraints.

Benefits of Decentralised Solar



Way Forward

- Expand low-interest financing and innovative credit models.
- Rationalise electricity subsidies while protecting vulnerable consumers.
- Promote net metering and strengthen DISCOM participation.
- Encourage rooftop solar in urban and rural households.
- Integrate decentralised solar with storage and smart grids.

Conclusion

- Decentralised solar generation is central to India's goal of achieving **500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030** and **Net Zero by 2070**. Strengthening flagship solar schemes through affordable financing, subsidy reforms, and improved grid infrastructure can reduce fossil fuel dependence, enhance energy security, lower electricity costs, and ensure an inclusive and sustainable clean energy transition.

Topic: (GS-II: Governance | Judiciary | Social Justice)

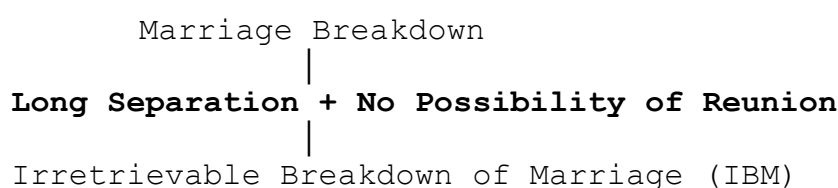
Art 142

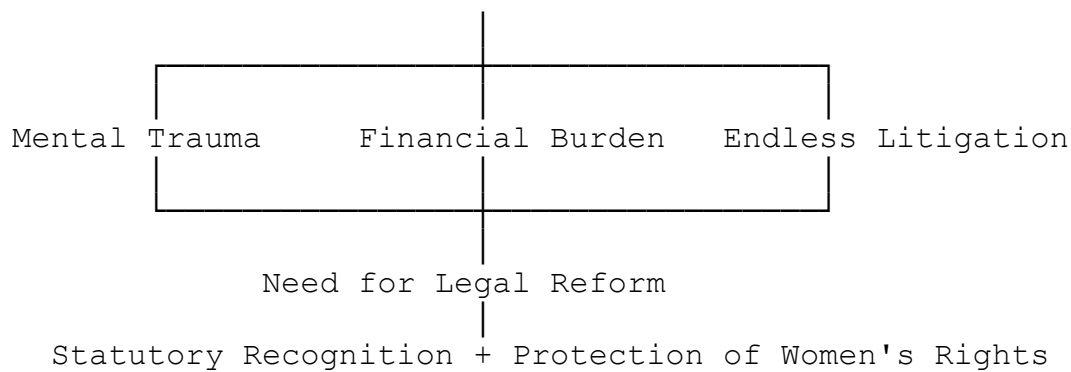
Irretrievable Breakdown of Marriage (IBM): Need for Legal Reform

Brief

- The **Supreme Court** observed that compelling couples to continue a marriage that has "**already decayed and is decomposing day by day**" serves neither the individuals nor society. Invoking **Article 142**, the Court dissolved a marriage where the spouses had lived separately for **15 years**, highlighting the need to recognize **Irretrievable Breakdown of Marriage (IBM)** as a statutory ground for divorce.

Concept Map





Present Legal Position

Mode of Divorce	Basis	Nature
Mutual Consent Divorce	Section 13B, Hindu Marriage Act, 1955	No-fault divorce with consent of both spouses
Contested Divorce	Section 13, Hindu Marriage Act, 1955	Fault-based (Cruelty, Adultery, Desertion, etc.)
Irretrievable Breakdown	Not a statutory ground	<u>Granted only by Supreme Court under Article 142</u>

What is Irretrievable Breakdown of Marriage (IBM)?

Definition:

▽ A marriage is considered irretrievably broken down when the relationship has **collapsed beyond repair**, making reconciliation impossible despite prolonged separation.

Indicators

- Long period of separation
- Complete emotional breakdown
- No possibility of reconciliation
- Marriage exists only in legal records ("marriage on paper")

Supreme Court's Observations

- Continuing a dead marriage amounts to **cruelty to both parties.**
- Courts should avoid **"perpetuity of marriage on paper."**
- Prolonged litigation causes:
 - Mental stress
 - Emotional suffering

- Financial hardship
- Loss of dignity

Constitutional Basis

Article 142
|
Supreme Court's Extraordinary Power
|
"Complete Justice" in Individual Cases
|
Divorce Granted Even Without Statutory IBM

✂ **Article 142** empowers the **Supreme Court** to pass any decree necessary for doing complete justice, including dissolving marriages on the ground of irretrievable breakdown in appropriate cases.

Judicial Evolution

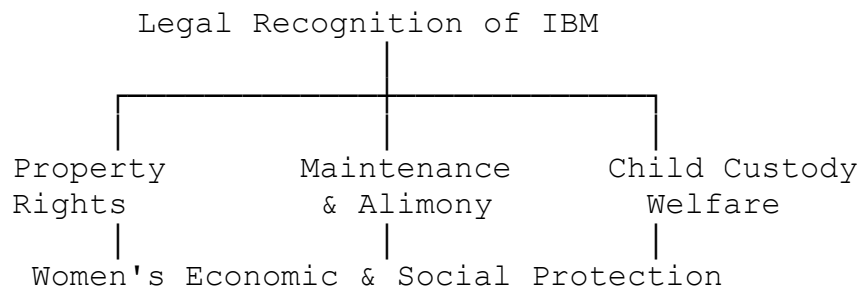
Year	Development
2006	Naveen Kohli v. Neelu Kohli - SC recommended adding IBM as a statutory ground for divorce.
2009	Law Commission (217th Report) recommended recognition of IBM.
2010 & 2013	Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bills proposed IBM but lapsed.
Recent Judgments	SC continues granting divorce under Article 142 <u>in exceptional cases</u> .

Need for Reform

Why Recognize IBM?

- ✧ Reduces prolonged litigation
- ✧ Protects mental health
- ✧ Ensures dignity of individuals
- ✧ Reduces judicial burden
- ✧ Aligns law with social realities
- ✧ Provides certainty in family law

Concerns



Key Issues

- Women often face economic dependence.
- Unequal bargaining power during divorce.
- Need to protect:
 - Property rights
 - Maintenance and alimony
 - Child custody
 - Residential rights

Advantages vs Challenges

Advantages

Faster dispute resolution
Reduces emotional distress
Decreases pendency of cases
Upholds dignity and autonomy

Challenges

Risk of misuse by economically stronger spouse
Inadequate property rights for women
Need for fair maintenance framework
Protection of children's interests

Way Forward

- Amend the **Hindu Marriage Act, 1955** to include IBM as a statutory ground.
- Ensure **gender-sensitive safeguards** in divorce proceedings.
- Strengthen laws on **maintenance, alimony, residence, and property rights**.
- Promote **mediation and counselling** before litigation.
- Frame clear statutory guidelines to prevent arbitrary application.

Quick Prlm

- **Article 142** – Supreme Court's power to do **complete justice**.
- **Section 13, Hindu Marriage Act, 1955** – Fault-based divorce.
- **Section 13B, Hindu Marriage Act, 1955** – Mutual consent divorce.
- **Irretrievable Breakdown of Marriage** is not yet a statutory ground under the Hindu Marriage Act.

Mains Notes

The Supreme Court's repeated invocation of **Article 142** to dissolve marriages suffering from **irretrievable breakdown** reflects the widening gap between social realities and existing matrimonial law. While preserving the institution of marriage remains important, compelling individuals to continue relationships that have irreversibly collapsed undermines their dignity, mental well-being, and right to live with autonomy. Legislative recognition of **Irretrievable Breakdown of Marriage** can reduce prolonged litigation, judicial backlog, and emotional suffering. However, such reform must be accompanied by robust safeguards to protect women from economic insecurity and unequal bargaining power through adequate provisions on maintenance, property rights, residence, and child custody. A balanced, gender-sensitive legal framework would harmonize **individual rights, constitutional values, and social justice**, ensuring that family law evolves in step with contemporary realities.

Alexander Zverev Wins Maiden **French Open** Title

Brief

- Germany's Alexander Zverev won his first Grand Slam title by claiming the **French Open (Roland Garros) Men's Singles Championship**, becoming the first German man in decades to achieve the feat.

Facts

- **Roland Garros (French Open)** is one of the four Grand Slam tournaments and is played on **clay courts** in Paris, France.

- Zverev became the **first German men's singles champion at the French Open since Henner Henkel (1937)** and Germany's first men's Grand Slam champion since Boris Becker.
- His title run was notable because he **did not face a Top-10 ranked player**, owing to withdrawals and early exits of leading players.
- The victory marks a major milestone in his career but also highlights the importance of **consistency, sportsmanship, and sustained excellence** in elite sports.

The Four Grand Slam Tournaments (Tennis)

Grand Slam	Surface	Venue	Usual Time
🟡 Australian Open	Hard Court	Melbourne, Australia	January
🟡 French Open (Roland Garros)	Clay Court	Paris, France	May–June
🟡 Wimbledon Championships	Grass Court	London, UK	June–July
🟡 US Open	Hard Court	New York, USA	August–September

- ⊗ Winning all **four Grand Slams in the same calendar year** is called a **Calendar Grand Slam.**
- ⊗ Winning all four Grand Slams over a career is known as a **Career Grand Slam.**
- ⊗ **Wimbledon** is known for its tradition of **all-white dress code.**

11.06.2026

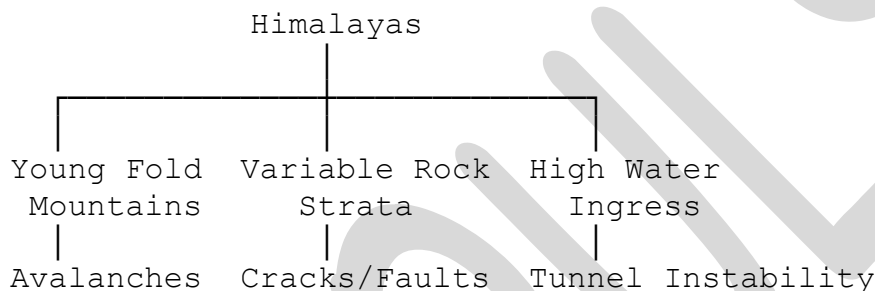
Topic: (GS-III: Infrastructure | Disaster Management | Geography)

Zojila Tunnel: Engineering Through the Himalayas

Brief

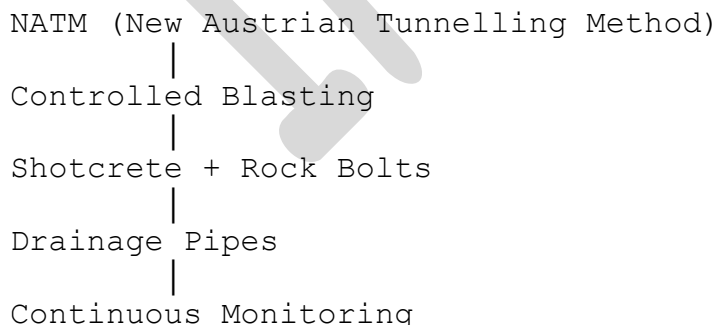
- The **13-km Zojila Tunnel** (11,578 ft) connecting **Srinagar-Kargil-Leh** is one of India's most challenging infrastructure projects, ensuring **all-weather connectivity** across the Himalayas.

Challenges of Himalayan Tunnelling



- Young, tectonically active mountains.
- Highly variable rock formations and fault zones.
- Extreme weather (-30°C), avalanches and landslides.
- Water seepage and unstable geology increase collapse risks.

Engineering & Safety Measures



- Excavation in two stages (top heading then benching).
- Three ventilation/rescue shafts.
- Flexible tunnel alignment to bypass weak rock zones.

Significance

- Ensures year-round Ladakh connectivity.
- Boosts border security, tourism and trade.
- Reduces travel time and improves disaster response.



12.06.2026

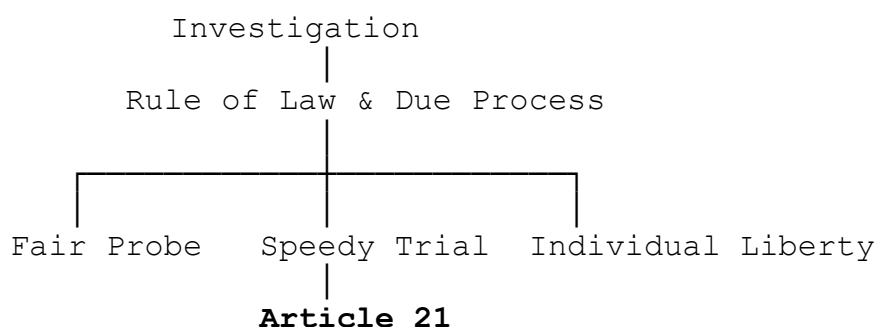
Topic: (GS-II: Polity | Governance | Judiciary)

Accountability of Investigative Agencies: **ED, Due Process & Rule of Law**

Brief

- The **Delhi High Court** quashed the **ED** and **Delhi Police EOW** proceedings against *NewsClick* founder **Prabir Purkayastha**, terming the continuation of the FIR an "**abuse of the process of law.**"
- The judgment has reignited debate on the accountability of investigative agencies.

Issues Involved

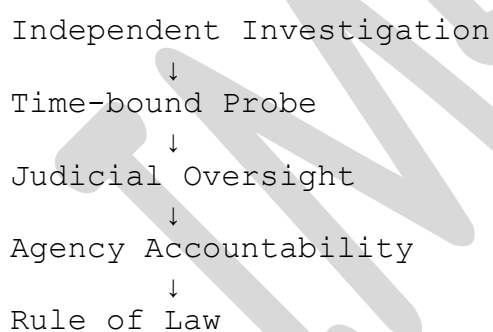


- Misuse of special laws such as PMLA and UAPA.
- Long investigations resulting in **prolonged incarceration**.
- Weak evidentiary basis and procedural lapses.
- Need to balance effective investigation with civil liberties.

Judicial Principles

- **Article 21:** Right to life includes **speedy investigation and speedy trial**.
- **Article 142 & Judicial Review:** Courts can intervene against abuse of legal process.
- Supreme Court has repeatedly held **"Bail is the rule, jail is the exception."**

Way Forward



- Strengthen institutional accountability of investigative agencies.
- Ensure time-bound investigations and adherence to due process.
- Prevent arbitrary use of special laws while preserving national security.

Bail under UAPA: Khurram Parvez Case

Brief

- The **Delhi High Court** granted bail to **Khurram Parvez**, a Kashmiri human rights activist, despite the stringent bail provisions of the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA)**, citing prolonged incarceration and delay in trial.

Legal Framework

UAPA (Section 43D(5))
|
Strict Bail Conditions
|
Prima Facie Case Test
|
Constitutional Balance
|
Article 21 (Right to Life & Personal Liberty)

High Court's Observations

- **4.5 years of incarceration** without substantial progress in trial.
- **Article 21** (Right to Life and Personal Liberty) may override statutory restrictions where prolonged detention becomes unjust.
- Bail cannot be denied indefinitely if trial is unlikely to conclude within a reasonable time.
- Evidence against the accused will be tested during trial; prolonged pre-trial detention should not become punishment.

Judicial Precedents

- **K.A. Najeeb v. Union of India (2021):**
 - ☆ Constitutional courts can grant bail under UAPA where prolonged incarceration violates **Article 21.**
- Reinforces the principle that constitutional rights prevail over procedural restrictions in exceptional circumstances too.

Significance

- Balances **national security** with **fundamental rights**.
- Upholds **speedy trial** as part of Article 21.

- Highlights **judicial oversight** over stringent anti-terror laws.

Your interest

K.A. Najeeb v. Union of India (2021) – Case Summary

- In **K.A. Najeeb v. Union of India (2021)**, the Supreme Court held that **constitutional courts can grant bail under the UAPA despite the restrictions of Section 43D(5)** when prolonged incarceration and undue delay in trial violate **Article 21**.
 - The Court ruled that if there is **no reasonable likelihood of the trial concluding within a reasonable time**, continued detention becomes unjust.
 - The judgment reaffirmed that **personal liberty and the right to a speedy trial** are fundamental constitutional guarantees.
-

• **WHY AIR PROBES TAKE TIME**

AIR CRASH probes are complex. They require analysis of flight data, cockpit recordings, maintenance records, aircraft systems, etc.

INVESTIGATORS ALSO have to coordinate with stakeholders such as planemakers, engine manufacturers and probe agencies.

GLOBAL NORMS call for a final report within 12 months of the incident.

IF THIS IS NOT possible, the International Civil Aviation Organization says interim statements should be released on each anniversary.



The tail of the Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner in June last year. SANKHADEEP BANERJEE/FILE

13.06.2026

Topic: (GS-III: Science & Technology | Economy | Space Technology)

SpaceX's Wall Street Debut **&** **the Commercial Space Economy**

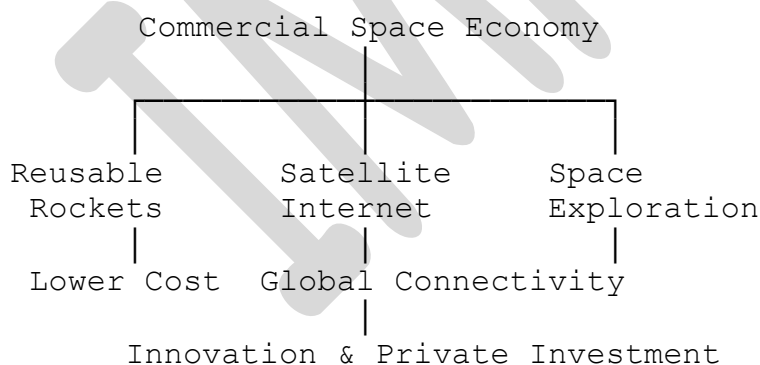
Brief

- **SpaceX**, founded by **Elon Musk**, surged **23%** on its Wall Street debut, taking its market valuation above **US\$2 trillion** and making Musk the world's first **trillionaire** on paper. The development highlights the growing importance of the **commercial space sector**.

What is SpaceX?

- Founded in **2002** by Elon Musk.
- Headquarters: Hawthorne, California, **USA**.
- Objective: Reduce space transportation costs and enable **interplanetary exploration**.
- Key products: **Falcon 9**, **Falcon Heavy**, **Starship**, **Dragon spacecraft**, **Starlink satellite constellation**.

Significance



Why is SpaceX Important?

- Pioneer of **reusable rocket technology**, reducing launch costs.
- Operates **Starlink**, providing satellite-based broadband connectivity.
- Supports **NASA** missions through public-private partnerships.
- Developing **Starship** for Moon and Mars missions.

Relevance for India

- Encourages growth of India's private space ecosystem under **IN-SPACe**.
- Creates opportunities for startups such as **Skyroot Aerospace, Agnikul Cosmos** and satellite service providers.
- Highlights
 - **the need for innovation,**
 - **private investment,** and
 - **regulatory reforms in India's space sector.**

Challenges

- High capital requirements.
- Space debris and orbital congestion.
- Regulatory and security concerns.
- Sustainability of satellite constellations.

Way Forward

- Strengthen public-private partnerships.
- Promote indigenous launch capabilities.
- Encourage private investment and space startups.
- Develop global norms for sustainable use of outer space.

Quick Prlm:

Fact

Founded

Founder

Headquarters

Flagship Rocket

Heavy-lift Rocket

Next-generation Rocket

Satellite Network

Partner Agency

Details

2002

Elon Musk

Hawthorne, California, USA

Falcon 9

Falcon Heavy

Starship

Starlink

NASA

Topic: (GS-I: Modern Indian History | Polity)

The Allahabad High Court Judgment (12 June 1975) **and** **the Emergency**

Brief

- The **12 June 1975 Allahabad High Court judgment**, which invalidated **Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's 1971 Lok Sabha election**, is regarded as the immediate political trigger for the **National Emergency (1975–77)** declared on **25 June 1975**.

Timeline

1971 General Election
|
Raj Narain challenges
Indira Gandhi's election
|
12 June 1975
Allahabad HC Verdict
|
24 June 1975
SC grants Conditional Stay
|
25 June 1975
Internal Emergency Proclaimed
|
1977
Emergency Withdrawn & Elections

The Election Case

- **Petitioner:** Raj Narain (Socialist leader).
- **Court:** Allahabad High Court.
- **Judge:** Justice Jagmohanlal Sinha.
- **Allegations:**
 - Misuse of government machinery.
 - Use of government officials for election work.
 - Violation of election laws under the **Representation of the People Act, 1951**.

High Court Verdict (12 June 1975)

- Declared Indira Gandhi's 1971 election void.
- Disqualified her from holding elected office for **six years**.
- Granted **20 days** to appeal before the Supreme Court.

Supreme Court's Conditional Stay

Supreme Court

Conditional Stay

PM could remain in office

But could not vote in Parliament
or draw salary until final decision

Emergency Proclamation

- On **25 June 1975**, President **Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed**, on the advice of PM Indira Gandhi, proclaimed **Internal Emergency under Article 352**, citing internal disturbance.
- Civil liberties were curtailed, press censorship imposed, and political opponents arrested.

Significance

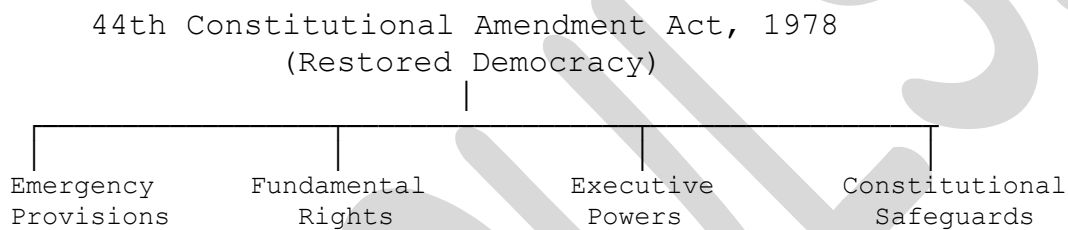
- Demonstrated the **independence of the judiciary**.
- Highlighted tensions between the **executive and judiciary**.
- Led to major constitutional developments,
including the

44th Constitutional Amendment (1978),
replacing "internal disturbance" with "armed rebellion"
as a ground for Emergency
and
strengthening safeguards against misuse.

Quick fact

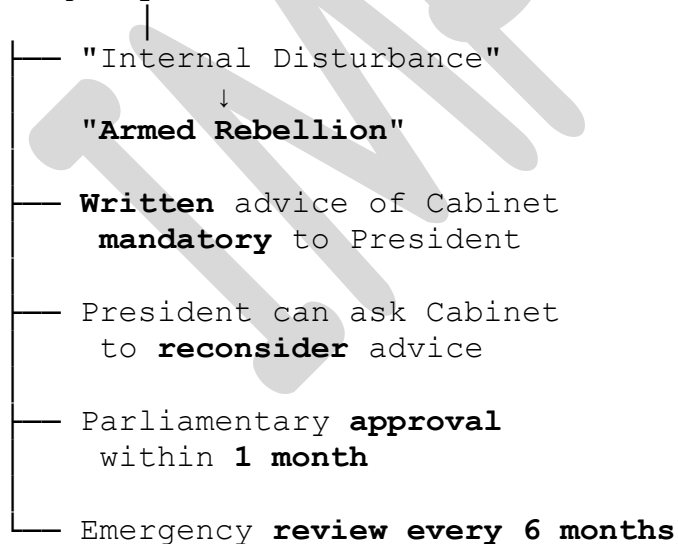
Fact	Details
Judgment Date	12 June 1975
Judge	Justice Jagmohanlal Sinha
Petitioner	Raj Narain
Emergency Declared	25 June 1975
President	Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed
Relevant Article	Article 352
Key Law	Representation of the People Act, 1951
Key Reform	44th Constitutional Amendment (1978)

Quick Prlm



Emergency Provisions (Most Important)

Emergency Reforms



Feature	42nd Amendment	44th Amendment
Ground for National Emergency	Internal Disturbance	Armed Rebellion
Article 20 & 21 during Emergency	Could be suspended	Cannot be suspended
Cabinet Advice	Not mandatory in writing	Written advice mandatory
Right to Property	Fundamental Right	Legal Right (Art. 300A)
Emergency Approval	Within 2 months	Within 1 month



14.06.2026

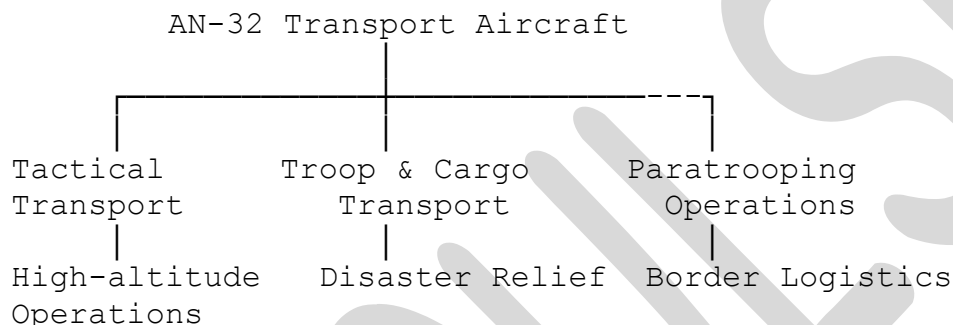
Topic: (GS-III: Defence & Internal Security | Science & Technology)

IAF AN-32 Crash at Jorhat, Assam

Brief

- An Indian Air Force (IAF) AN-32 transport aircraft crashed during landing at Jorhat Air Force Station, Assam, killing five personnel.
- A Court of Inquiry (Col) has been ordered to determine the cause.

AN-32: India's Tactical Workhorse



Key Features

- Origin: **Soviet Union** (inducted into IAF in **1984**).
- Type: **Twin-engine** turboprop **tactical transport** aircraft.
- Capacity: 6.7 tonnes of cargo or 50 passengers.
- Maximum Speed: 530 km/h.
- Designed for
 - high-altitude,
 - short-runway, and
 - remote-area operations.

Operational Importance

- Played a crucial role in the **Kargil War (1999)** and **Operation Parakram (2001–02)**.
- Supports
 - troop mobilisation,
 - logistics,
 - humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), and

- airborne operations.

Modernisation & Safety

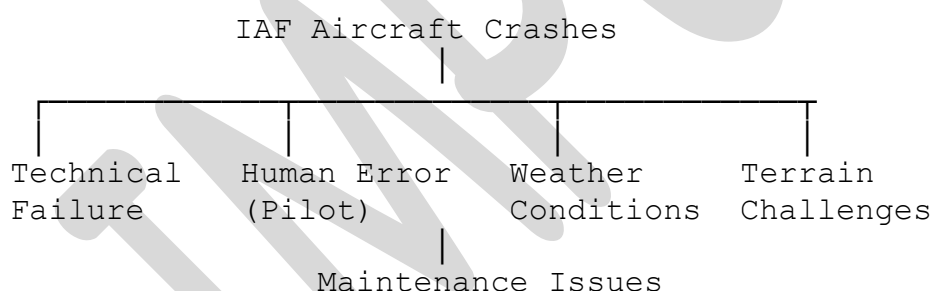
- Upgraded under a **US\$400 million** programme with advanced navigation and communication systems.
- Recent crash is the **third major AN-32 accident since 2016**, highlighting the need for fleet modernisation and enhanced aviation safety.

Mains pick

Why Are IAF Aircraft and Helicopter Crashes Frequent?

- There is **no single reason** behind Indian Air Force (IAF) aircraft or helicopter crashes. Most accidents result from a combination of **technical, operational, environmental, and human factors**.
- The IAF investigates every crash through a **Court of Inquiry (CoI)**.

Major Causes



1. Ageing Fleet

- Many aircraft such as **AN-32, MiG-21** (now retired), and some helicopters were inducted decades ago.
- Metal fatigue and obsolete components increase maintenance complexity.

2. Difficult Operating Environment

- Flying in the **Himalayas**, Northeast, and Ladakh involves:
 - High altitude
 - Narrow valleys
 - Strong winds

- Sudden weather changes
- Low visibility

These significantly increase accident risk.

3. Technical & Mechanical Failures

- Engine malfunction
- Hydraulic or electrical failures
- Avionics and navigation equipment faults
- Bird strikes
- Component fatigue

4. Human Factors

- Pilot fatigue
- High operational workload
- Split-second decision-making during emergencies
- Errors during take-off or landing

The IAF maintains rigorous pilot training, but human error remains a global aviation risk.

5. Maintenance Challenges

- Older aircraft require frequent overhauls.
- Delays in spare parts due to foreign dependence or geopolitical disruptions.
- Supply chain issues affecting legacy platforms.

6. Operational Demands

Combat Readiness

|
High Flying Hours

|
Frequent Exercises

|
Increased Wear & Tear

The IAF operates continuously for:

- Border surveillance
- Disaster relief (HADR)
- Military exercises
- High-altitude logistics
- Combat preparedness

7. Weather-Related Factors

- Dense fog
- Heavy rainfall
- Snowstorms
- Thunderstorms
- Wind shear
- White-out conditions in snowy regions

Measures Taken by the IAF

- ✓ Fleet modernisation (e.g., Rafale, LCA Tejas, C-295, Apache, Chinook)
- ✓ Upgrade of transport aircraft and helicopters
- ✓ Advanced flight simulators
- ✓ Predictive maintenance and digital diagnostics
- ✓ Enhanced pilot training and Crew Resource Management (CRM)
- ✓ Strict Court of Inquiry after every accident

Way Forward

Modern Aircraft
|
Better Maintenance
|
Advanced Avionics
|
AI-based Predictive Maintenance
|
Improved Flight Safety

Challenges

- Ageing legacy fleet
- Dependence on imported spare parts
- Difficult Himalayan terrain
- High operational tempo

Solutions

- Accelerate indigenisation under **Atmanirbhar Bharat**.
- Replace ageing aircraft with modern platforms.
- Expand AI-enabled predictive maintenance.

- Strengthen indigenous **MRO (Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul)** capabilities.
- Improve weather forecasting and terrain-awareness systems.

Topic: (GS-II: Health | GS-III: Environment & Science & Technology)

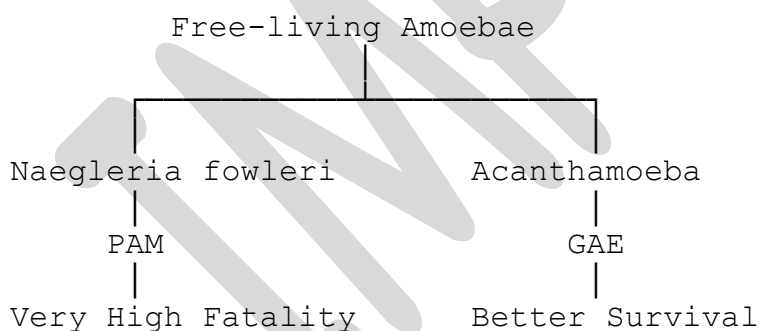
Brain-Eating Amoeba Cases in Kerala:

Rising Public Health Concern

Brief

- Kerala has reported **133 cases** and **33 deaths** due to **amoebic meningoencephalitis** in the first five months of **2026**, marking a sharp rise.
- Most recent cases are **Granulomatous Amoebic Encephalitis (GAE)** caused by **Acanthamoeba**, unlike earlier **Primary Amoebic Meningoencephalitis (PAM)** caused by **Naegleria fowleri**.

Types of Amoebic Encephalitis



Why is Kerala Reporting More Cases?

- **Rigorous testing** of all unexplained encephalitis cases.
- Better surveillance and diagnosis.
- Tropical climate favourable for amoeba growth.
- Poor water quality, contaminated wells, stagnant water and vegetation.
- High population density leading to groundwater contamination.
- Higher risk among **elderly and immunocompromised individuals**.

About the Diseases

Feature	PAM	GAE
Causative Organism	Naegleria fowleri	Acanthamoeba
Habitat	Warm freshwater	Water, soil, dust
Mode of Infection	Water enters nose	Skin, lungs, eyes → bloodstream
Risk Group	Healthy swimmers	Immunocompromised persons
Fatality	~97% globally	Lower than PAM

Kerala's Public Health Response

Early Diagnosis



Standard Treatment Protocol (2024)



Rapid Clinical Management



Reduced Mortality

- First Indian state to develop **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** for amoebic encephalitis.
- Achieved **India's first documented survivor of PAM (2024)** through early diagnosis and aggressive treatment.

Way Forward

- Improve **water quality monitoring** and sanitation.
- Strengthen surveillance for encephalitis.
- Regular chlorination and maintenance of wells and water bodies.
- Public awareness on avoiding contaminated water exposure.
- Conduct environmental studies on **free-living amoebae** distribution.
- Enhance laboratory capacity for rapid diagnosis.

Quick Prlm

- Naegleria fowleri is popularly called the "brain-eating amoeba."
 - It is a free-living amoeba, not a bacterium or virus.
 - Infection is **not** spread from person to person.
 - It usually occurs when contaminated freshwater enters the nose.
 - Acanthamoeba is widely found in soil, dust, freshwater and tap water.
-

Topic: (GS-III: Science & Technology | Defence Technology | Internal Security)

DRDO Successfully Demonstrates **Multi-layered Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) System**

Brief

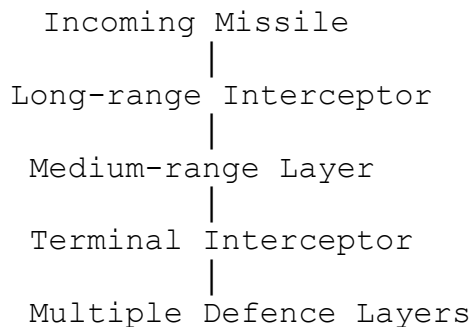
- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully conducted **three consecutive flight tests** of India's **Multi-layered Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system**, demonstrating its capability to intercept Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs).
- India has joined a select group of nations possessing advanced BMD capabilities.

What is Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD)?

Enemy Ballistic Missile
|
Early Warning Radar
|
Threat Detection & Tracking
|
Launch of Interceptor Missile
|
Mid-course / Terminal Interception
|
Target Destroyed

A **Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD)** system → → is an integrated network of radars, command-and-control systems, and interceptor missiles → → designed to detect, track, and destroy → → incoming ballistic missiles before they reach their targets.

Multi-layered BMD



- Provides multiple opportunities to intercept hostile missiles.
- Enhances the probability of successful interception.
- Protects strategic cities and critical military installations.

Key Highlights of the Test

- Successfully intercepted simulated **long-range ballistic missile threats**.
- Demonstrated capability against **Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs)**.
- **Naval Anti-Ship Missile–Medium Range (NASM-MR)** also underwent its maiden successful flight test.
- Uses advanced sensors, indigenous interceptor missiles, and command-and-control systems.

Strategic Significance

Aspect	Importance
National Security	Protects against strategic missile attacks.
Credible Deterrence	Strengthens India's defensive posture.
Technological Self-Reliance	Promotes indigenous defence technologies under <i>Atmanirbhar Bharat</i> .
Strategic Status	Places India among nations with advanced BMD capability.

Challenges

- Extremely high development and maintenance costs.
- Difficulty in intercepting **hypersonic and manoeuvrable missiles**.
- Need for continuous radar, AI-enabled tracking, and cybersecurity upgrades.

Way Forward

Indigenous R&D



Advanced Radars



AI-based Tracking



Integrated Air & Missile Defence



Enhanced National Security

- Strengthen indigenous missile and sensor technologies.
- Integrate BMD with the **Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS)**.
- Enhance surveillance through space-based and airborne early warning assets.
- Continue investments in hypersonic defence and next-generation interceptors.

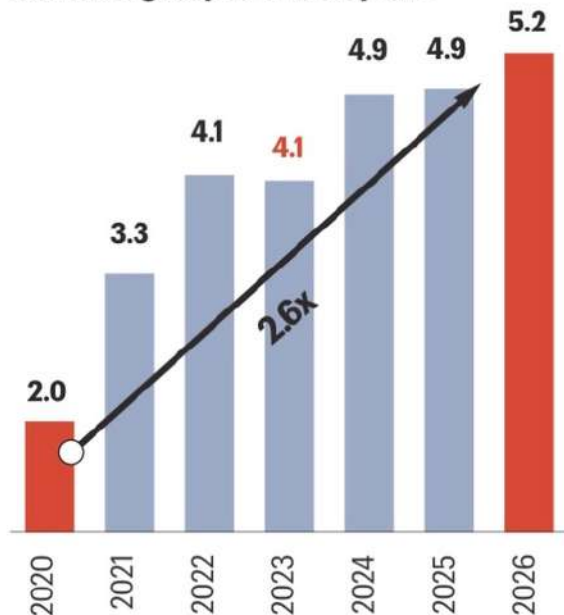
Quick Prlm

Term	Details
DRDO	Defence Research and Development Organisation (1958), under the Ministry of Defence.
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defence system designed to intercept ballistic missiles.
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile with a range exceeding 5,500 km .
NASM-MR	Naval Anti-Ship Missile – Medium Range for maritime strike capability.

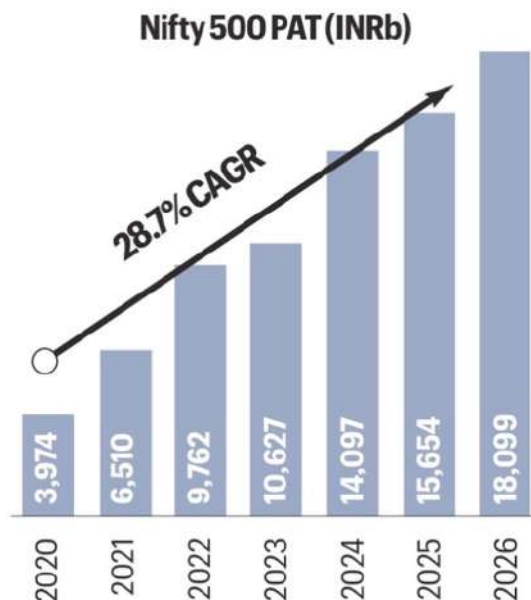
● India's corporate profit-to-GDP ratio soars to record 5.2% in FY26

The corporate profit-to-GDP ratio soared to an all-time high of 5.2% for the Nifty-500 firms in the financial year 2026 (FY26), despite geopolitical headwinds. Corporate profits rose at a faster rate of 15.6% on-year in FY26, outpacing nominal GDP growth of 8.9%.

Corporate profit-to-GDP ratio at an all-time high, up 2.6x in six years



Profits have grown at a faster pace in the last six years



(SOURCE: MOTILAL OSWAL, CAPITALINE, THE RBI, COMPANIES, AND MOFSL DATABASE BASED ON THE CURRENT NIFTY-500 CONSTITUENTS)

15.06.2026

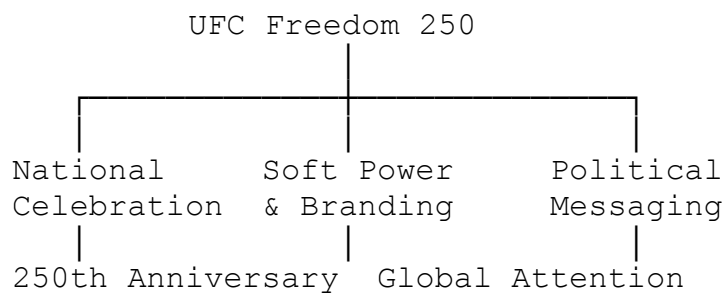
Topic: (GS-II: International Relations | GS-IV: Ethics in Public Life | Society)

Why Did Donald Trump Bring a UFC Event to the White House?

Brief

- U.S. President **Donald Trump** hosted "**UFC Freedom 250**" on the **South Lawn of the White House** as part of celebrations marking the **250th anniversary of the United States**.
- The event was unprecedented, combining sport, national symbolism, and politics.

Why the White House Hosted UFC



Objectives

- Celebrate the **250th anniversary** of the United States.
- Project **American patriotism** and national identity.
- Use a globally popular sporting event to enhance **soft power**.
- Appeal to younger audiences through sports and entertainment.
- Showcase the close partnership between government and private sporting organisations.

Concerns Raised

- Blurring the line between **state institutions** and **political spectacle**.
- Questions over the **appropriate use of public institutions for entertainment.**
- Security, ethics, and public expenditure concerns.
- Criticism that the event could politicise sport and the presidency.

Significance

- Illustrates the growing role of **sports diplomacy** in international image-building.
- Demonstrates how governments increasingly use **major sporting events as instruments of soft power.**
- Reflects the intersection of **politics, media, business, and popular culture** in contemporary governance.

N.B:

- **UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship):** World's leading **Mixed Martial Arts (MMA)** promotion.
- **Soft Power:** Ability of a country to influence others through **culture, values, diplomacy, and attraction**, rather than military or economic coercion.

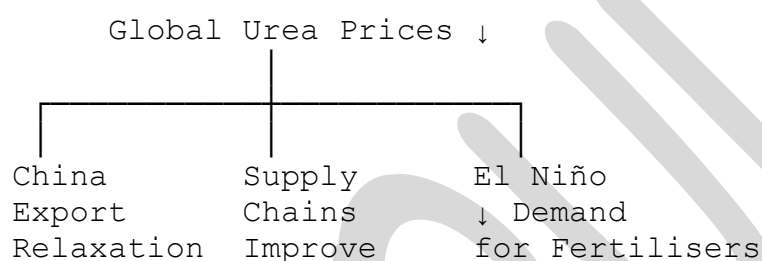
Urea Price Crash:

A Window for Fertiliser Subsidy Reforms

Brief

- Global **urea prices have fallen sharply** from around **US\$935–959/tonne** in April 2026 to **US\$445–449/tonne** in June 2026 due to easing geopolitical tensions and improved global supplies.
- The decline provides India with an opportunity to reform its **fertiliser subsidy regime.**

Reasons for Price Decline

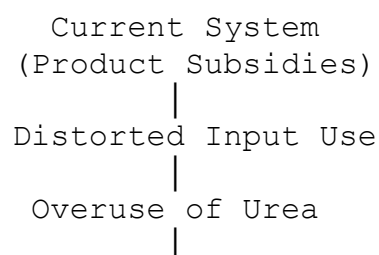


- Partial lifting of **China's export restrictions.**
- Improved prospects of reopening trade through the **Strait of Hormuz.**
- Expected **El Niño** reducing global fertiliser demand.

Why is it Important for India?

- India imports a large share of **urea, phosphatic and potassic fertilisers** and raw materials.
- Fertiliser imports exceeded **US\$27 billion** in 2025–26.
- Lower prices can reduce the **fertiliser subsidy burden** on the Union Budget.

Need for Reforms



Soil Degradation
↓
Suggested Reform
|
Direct Income Support
|
Efficient Resource Use

Way Forward

- Shift from **product-specific subsidies** (fertilisers, electricity, irrigation) to **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)/farm income support**.
- Rationalise fertiliser prices to promote **balanced nutrient use**.
- Encourage **crop diversification** based on market demand.
- Improve nutrient-use efficiency through **Nano Urea**, precision farming and soil health management.

Quick Mains

Lower global fertiliser prices offer a **policy window** to undertake long-pending subsidy reforms. Replacing distortionary input subsidies with **targeted income support**, while ensuring balanced fertiliser use and efficient resource pricing, can improve farm productivity, fiscal sustainability, environmental conservation, and agricultural competitiveness.

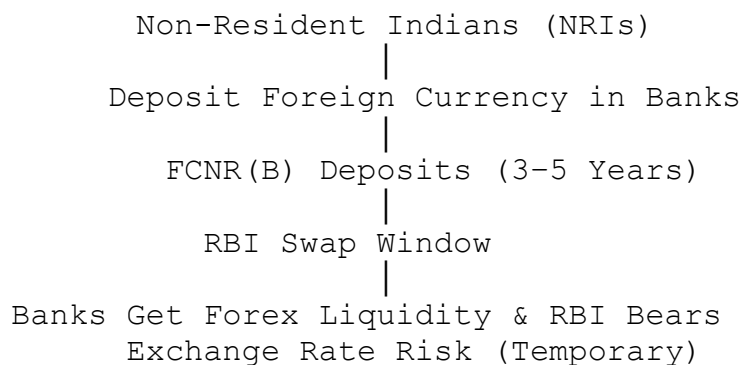
Topic: (GS-III: Economy | Banking | External Sector)

RBI Revives **FCNR (B) Swap Scheme to Boost Foreign Capital Inflows**

Brief

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has reintroduced the **Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) [FCNR(B)] Swap Scheme** to attract foreign currency deposits and strengthen India's **Balance of Payments (BoP)** amid global economic uncertainty.

What is FCNR(B) Swap Scheme?



- **FCNR(B) accounts allow NRIs to maintain fixed deposits in designated foreign currencies.**
- Under the swap scheme, **RBI absorbs the exchange rate risk, enabling banks to offer attractive interest rates and mobilise foreign currency.**

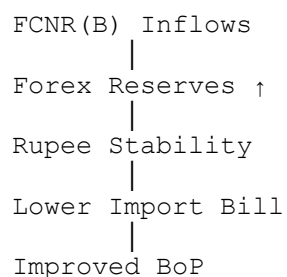
Why Has RBI Revived the Scheme?

- Strengthen foreign exchange reserves.
- Stabilise the Indian Rupee.
- Improve the Balance of Payments (BoP).
- Offset global uncertainties and capital outflows.

2013 vs 2026 Scheme

Feature	2013	2026
Trigger	US Fed "Taper Tantrum"	Global geopolitical & external sector uncertainties
RBI Support	3.5% swap subsidy	RBI bears exchange rate risk <u>on eligible deposits</u>
Outcome	US\$26 billion inflows	Expected US\$50 billion via FCNR(B); ~US\$100 billion from overall measures

Benefits



- Strengthens external sector resilience.
- Boosts investor confidence.
- Reduces pressure on the rupee and imported inflation.
- Supports macroeconomic stability.

Concerns

- Creates contingent **liabilities for RBI** if the rupee depreciates sharply.
- Suitable only as a **temporary crisis-management tool**, not a long-term solution.
- Excessive dependence on short-term capital inflows may increase external vulnerability.

Way Forward

- Complement FCNR(B) inflows with **higher FDI and export growth**.
- Maintain prudent fiscal and monetary policies.
- Diversify sources of external financing.
- Continue structural reforms to improve investment climate.

Quick info

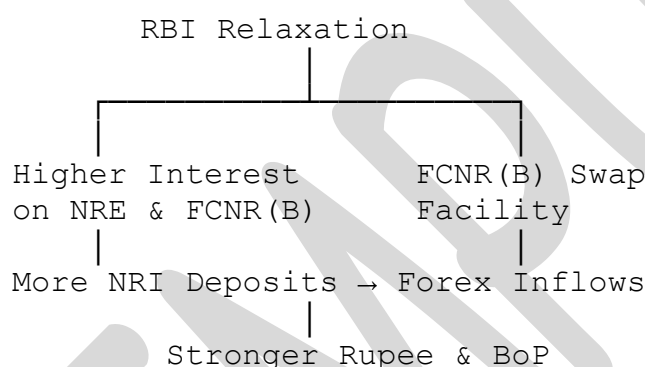
- ⊗ **FCNR(B)**: Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) Deposit Account for NRIs.
 - ⊗ Deposits are maintained in **designated foreign currencies**, insulating depositors from exchange-rate fluctuations.
 - ⊗ **Balance of Payments (BoP)**: A record of all economic transactions between residents of a country and the rest of the world.
 - ⊗ **Taper Tantrum (2013)**: Market turmoil triggered by the US Federal Reserve's indication that it would reduce quantitative easing, leading to capital outflows from emerging economies like India.
-

RBI Removes Interest Rate Ceiling on NRE & FCNR(B) Deposits

Brief

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has temporarily removed the interest rate ceiling on	
Non-Resident External (NRE) deposits (3 years and above) and	Foreign Currency Non-Resident [FCNR(B)] deposits (3–5 years)
until 30 September 2026 to attract foreign capital inflows and support the rupee.	

Policy Measures



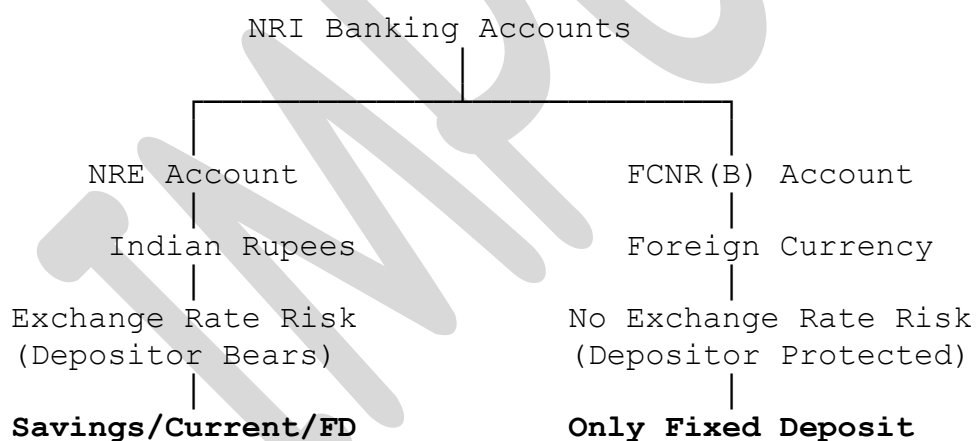
Key Highlights

- Banks can offer **higher interest rates** on eligible NRE and FCNR(B) deposits.
- Expected to mobilise **US\$30–50 billion** in foreign inflows.
- Reduces external funding costs and strengthens **foreign exchange reserves**.
- Complements RBI's **FCNR(B) swap facility** to improve liquidity.

Difference Between NRE Account and FCNR(B) Account

Feature	NRE Account	FCNR(B) Account
Full Form	Non-Resident External Account	Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) Account
Maintained In	Indian Rupees (₹)	Foreign Currency (USD, GBP, EUR, JPY, AUD, etc.)
Type of Account	Savings, Current, Recurring, Fixed Deposit	Only Fixed Deposit (Term Deposit)
Who Can Open?	Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs)	NRIs and PIOs
Source of Funds	Foreign income/remittances	Foreign currency remittances
Exchange Rate Risk	Depositor bears the risk (currency converted into ₹)	No exchange rate risk for depositor (deposit remains in foreign currency)
Repatriation	Principal and interest are fully repatriable	Principal and interest are fully repatriable
Taxation in India	Interest is tax-free (subject to conditions)	Interest is tax-free (subject to conditions)
Purpose	<u>Day-to-day banking and savings in India</u>	<u>Long-term savings in foreign currency without exchange risk</u>

Quick Diagram



Key Difference

NRE Account

Money is converted into **Indian Rupees** immediately.
Value changes with rupee appreciation/depreciation.

FCNR(B) Account

Money remains in the **original foreign currency**.
Value remains unaffected by exchange rate movements.

Example

Suppose an NRI deposits **US\$10,000**.

NRE Account

- US\$10,000 is converted into ₹ at the prevailing exchange rate.
- If the rupee depreciates, the amount converted back into dollars may decrease or increase depending on exchange rates.

FCNR(B) Account

- Deposit remains **US\$10,000** throughout the tenure.
- At maturity, the depositor receives **US\$10,000 + interest**, irrespective of rupee fluctuations.

Quick Prlm

- **NRE Account:** Rupee-denominated account for NRIs; principal and interest are fully repatriable.
- **FCNR(B) Account:** Foreign currency fixed deposit account; **exchange rate risk** is borne by the bank, not the depositor.
- Both accounts offer **tax-free interest in India** (subject to applicable provisions) and are designed for **Non-Resident Indians (NRIs)**.

16.06.2026

Topic: (GS-II: International Relations | GS-III: Economy & Energy Security)

INDIAN LNG TANKER CROSSES HORMUZ; OIL PRICES FALL, STOCKS ADVANCE

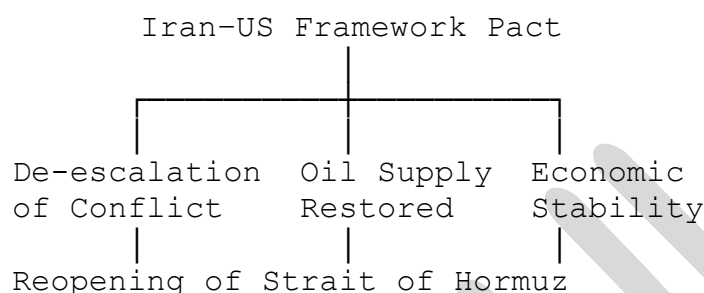
US and Iran reach deal to end war, reopen Hormuz

Iran-US Framework Agreement: Relief for Global Stability

Brief

- Iran and the **United States** have reached a **framework agreement** to negotiate a broader deal after weeks of conflict in West Asia.
- The announcement has eased fears of prolonged disruption in the **Strait of Hormuz**, leading to a decline in global oil prices and recovery in stock markets.

Significance



Key Issues Ahead

- Final agreement on **Iran's nuclear programme**.
- **Sanctions relief** and release of frozen Iranian assets.
- Ensuring long-term security of the **Strait of Hormuz**.
- Opposition from **hardliners** in Iran, Israel, and the U.S.
- Fragile regional security situation (Lebanon-Israel tensions).

Importance for India

- Nearly **20% of global oil and LNG trade** passes through the **Strait of Hormuz**.
- Ensures **energy security**, stable crude oil prices, and lower inflation.
- Protects the interests of **millions of Indian expatriates** in the Gulf and Indian seafarers.
- Supports India's trade and economic growth.

Way Forward

- Sustain diplomatic engagement for a comprehensive peace agreement.
- Strengthen maritime security and freedom of navigation.

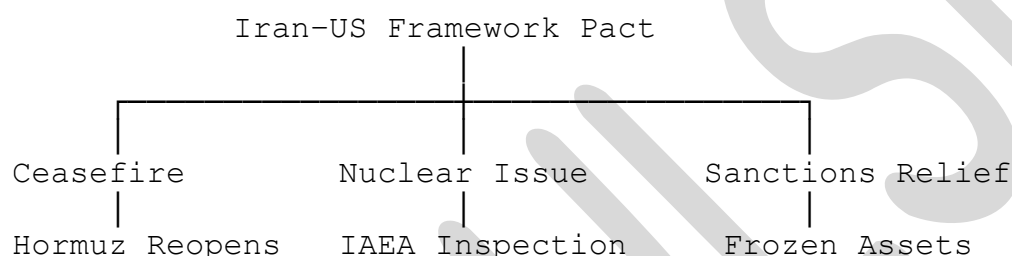
- India should support peaceful dialogue while diversifying its energy import sources.

Iran-US Framework Agreement:

Key Features & Strategic Implications

- Iran and the **United States** have reached a **framework agreement (MoU)** to negotiate a comprehensive peace deal aimed at ending hostilities, restoring maritime trade, addressing Iran's nuclear programme, and easing sanctions.

Framework Agreement at a Glance



Key Provisions

1. Ceasefire

- Immediate cessation of military operations.
- Formal **MoU to be signed in Switzerland**.
- Further negotiations to continue over the next **60 days**.

2. Strait of Hormuz

- Reopening of the **Strait of Hormuz** to commercial shipping.
- Gradual lifting of restrictions on Iranian ports.
- Maritime traffic to be coordinated by **Iran and Oman**.

3. Iran's Nuclear Programme

- Iran reiterates its commitment **not to develop nuclear weapons**.
- Freeze on further uranium enrichment and expansion of nuclear facilities.
- Proposal for **strict international inspections (IAEA)** under a final agreement.

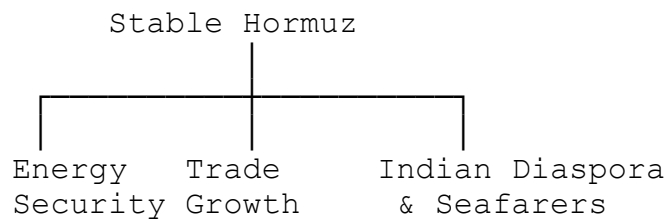
4. Sanctions & Economic Measures

- No new U.S. sanctions during negotiations.
- Gradual lifting of U.S. and UN sanctions after a final deal.
- Possible release of **US\$25 billion** in frozen Iranian assets.
- International support for Iran's reconstruction and economic recovery.

5. Regional Security

- Discussions include **Lebanon, Gaza, and Israel's security concerns**.
- Long-term stability remains dependent on resolving regional conflicts.

Importance for India



- Secures India's **crude oil and LNG imports**.
- Reduces global oil price volatility and inflation.
- Protects Indian expatriates and maritime trade.
- Supports economic stability and energy security.

Challenges

- Opposition from hardliners in **Iran, Israel, and the U.S.**
- Congressional approval in the U.S. may be required.
- Ensuring compliance with **nuclear commitments**.
- Fragile ceasefire and unresolved regional disputes.

Way Forward

- Finalise a legally binding comprehensive agreement.
- Strengthen IAEA verification and compliance mechanisms.
- Ensure freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz.
- India should continue pursuing **strategic autonomy**, support diplomatic dialogue, and diversify energy sources.

Quick Prlm

- **Strait of Hormuz**: Narrowest point is about **21 miles (≈34 km)**; nearly **20%** of global oil and LNG trade passes through it.
 - **IAEA**: International Atomic Energy Agency, headquartered in **Vienna, Austria**.
 - Iran's **nuclear programme** is governed under the **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)**, of which Iran is a signatory.
-

India-Slovakia Comprehensive Partnership (2026)

Brief

- India and Slovakia elevated bilateral ties to a **Comprehensive Partnership** during PM Narendra Modi's visit to Bratislava (June 2026), the **first visit by an Indian PM to Slovakia since 1993.**

Key Outcomes

1. Political & Strategic

- Bilateral ties elevated to **Comprehensive Partnership**.
- Joint Working Group on **Counter-Terrorism**.
- Support for peaceful resolution of international disputes.

2. Defence

- Letter of Intent (LoI) on defence cooperation.
- Focus on:
 - Joint production
 - Defence technology
 - Military-industrial collaboration

3. Trade & Economy

- Support for early implementation of the **India-EU FTA**.
- Cooperation in:
 - Automobiles
 - Electronics
 - Advanced manufacturing
 - Green technologies
 - Innovation ecosystem

4. Technology & Education

- MoUs on:
 - Digital technologies
 - Quantum communication
 - Critical infrastructure protection
 - Higher education & research
- **IIT Delhi-Slovak Technical University collaboration.**

5. Labour Mobility

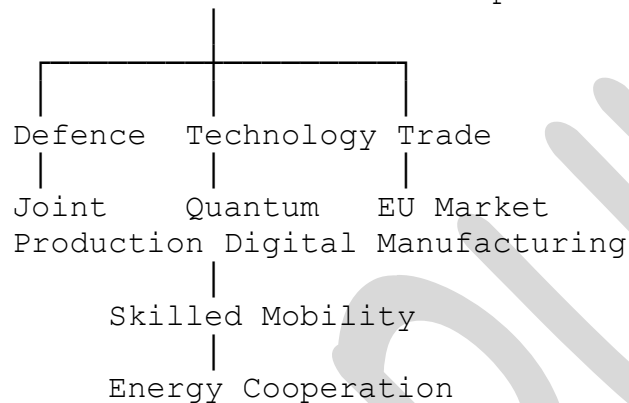
- MoU on labour migration.
- Safe and legal mobility of skilled professionals.
- Early conclusion of **Social Security Agreement**.

6. Energy

- Cooperation in:
 - Nuclear energy
 - Geothermal energy
 - Energy security and resilience

Significance for India

India-Slovakia Partnership



Challenges

- Low bilateral trade.
- Geographical distance.
- Slow progress in India–EU FTA.
- Regional security uncertainties in Europe.

Way Forward

- Fast-track India–EU FTA.
- Expand defence co-production.
- Increase investments in semiconductor, AI and clean energy sectors.
- Strengthen academic exchanges, innovation partnerships and skilled workforce mobility.

Slovakia has been a **member of the European Union** since May 1, 2004



Topic: (GS Paper I: Indian Heritage & Culture | GS Paper II: Education, Social Justice)

Dancing Girl of Mohenjo-daro & NCERT Revision

Brief:

- NCERT covered the torso of the **Dancing Girl of Mohenjo-daro** in a Class IX textbook illustration, sparking debate on heritage representation, pedagogy and gender sensitivity.

About the Dancing Girl

- Bronze sculpture (c. 2500 BCE) of the **Indus Valley Civilization**.
- Discovered at **Mohenjo-daro** (Sindh, Pakistan).
- Demonstrates advanced **lost-wax metal casting** and Harappan artistic excellence.

Issues Involved

Arguments Supporting NCERT

- Age-appropriate educational content.
- Respect for diverse social and cultural sensitivities.
- Curriculum rationalisation.

Concerns

- Dilutes authentic representation of India's cultural heritage.
- Reduces scope for critical thinking and contextual learning.
- May reinforce conservative stereotypes regarding women's bodies.
- Contradicts the spirit of **NEP 2020**, which encourages inquiry-based learning.

Critical Evaluation

Positive

- Curriculum should remain socially sensitive.
- Schools should ensure age-appropriate pedagogy.

Negative

- Heritage should be presented in its original historical context rather than altered.
- Students should learn to appreciate archaeology, art and history through evidence.
- Cultural artefacts should not be judged using contemporary moral standards.

Way Forward

Authenticity
|
Contextual Learning
|
Critical Thinking
|
Age-appropriate Explanation
|
Inclusive & Scientific Education

Topic: GS Paper III: Economy, Science & Technology

Elon Musk becomes the **World's First Trillionaire:** Implications of Extreme Wealth

Brief:

- Following the successful **SpaceX IPO**, Elon Musk became the world's first trillionaire, highlighting the growing concentration of wealth in technology-driven sectors.

Key Drivers

- Space economy and satellite services.
- Artificial Intelligence investments.
- Electric vehicles (Tesla).
- Private capital markets and innovation ecosystem.

Economic Significance

- Encourages entrepreneurship and technological innovation.
- Generates employment and attracts global investment.
- Expands commercial space exploration.

Concerns

- Rising wealth inequality.
- Excessive market concentration.
- Regulatory influence of large corporations.
- Valuation driven by speculation rather than fundamentals.

Critical Evaluation

Benefits

- Innovation requires risk capital.
- Wealth creation boosts technological advancement.
- Private sector complements public investment.

Challenges

- Extreme concentration of wealth can distort competition and democracy.
- Raises questions on taxation, corporate governance and market regulation.
- Public policy must balance innovation with social equity.

Way Forward

Innovation
|
Competition Policy
|
Responsible Corporate Governance
|
Fair Taxation
|
Inclusive Growth

17.06.2026

Topic: GS Paper II: Health & Governance | GS Paper III: Pharmaceuticals & Public Health

Prescription Mandatory for Cough Syrups: Strengthening Drug Regulation in India

Brief

- The Central Government has **removed cough syrups from Schedule K of the Drugs Rules, 1945**, making **prescription mandatory** for their sale.
- The move follows multiple deaths linked to contaminated cough syrups in India and abroad.

Background

- Earlier, certain cough syrups could be sold without prescription in villages with a population below 1,000.
- Triggered by:
 - Child deaths in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Jammu.
 - Over **140 deaths** abroad linked to India-made contaminated syrups (since 2022).
- Contaminants included Diethylene Glycol (DEG) and Ethylene Glycol (EG) due to poor-quality solvents.

Significance

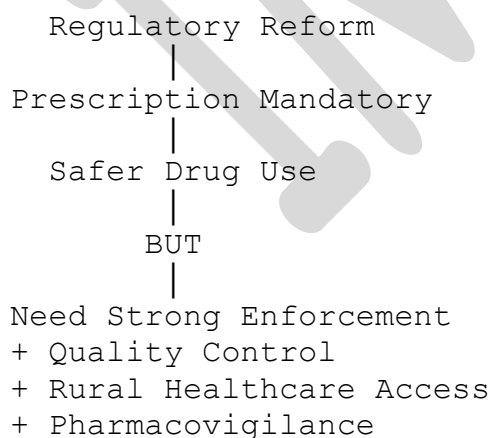
Benefits

- ✓ Prevents self-medication and irrational drug use.
- ✓ Strengthens drug quality regulation and patient safety.
- ✓ Improves prescription discipline and pharmacovigilance.
- ✓ Enhances accountability across the pharmaceutical supply chain.

Challenges

- ✓ Limited access to doctors and pharmacies in rural areas.
- ✓ Weak Centre–State coordination in drug regulation.
- ✓ Inadequate quality testing, inspections and enforcement.
- ✓ Risk of illegal or unlicensed sale.

Critical Evaluation



Way Forward

- Strengthen CDSCO–State Drug Controller coordination.
 - Ensure GMP compliance and supply-chain traceability.
 - Increase random quality audits and testing.
 - Improve rural healthcare access and public awareness.
 - Establish a robust adverse drug event reporting system.
-

Topic: GS Paper II: Governance & Urban Development | GS Paper III: Environment, Water Resources & Disaster Management

Indian Cities Need to Rethink Their Water Future

Brief

- Recurring heatwaves and severe water shortages in cities such as **Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Mumbai** highlight India's growing **urban water crisis**, driven by groundwater depletion, poor governance, and climate change.

Key Challenges

- Over-extraction of **groundwater** and falling reservoir levels.
- Aging distribution networks causing high water losses (Non-Revenue Water).
- Poor wastewater treatment and reuse.
- Inadequate rainwater harvesting.
- Weak urban planning and fragmented water governance.
- Climate change intensifying droughts and heatwaves.

Government Initiatives

- Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban)
- Atal Bhujal Yojana
- AMRUT 2.0
- Dynamic Groundwater Resources Assessment
- National Water Policy (Demand-side management)

Critical Evaluation

Positives

- Growing focus on groundwater conservation (Atal Bhujal Yojna).
- Lake rejuvenation projects in Bengaluru and Mumbai.
- Promotion of rainwater harvesting and water reuse (AMRUT 2.0).

Concerns

- Supply-side solutions dominate over demand management.
- Weak implementation and poor municipal capacity.
- Limited adoption of nature-based urban water management.

Way Forward

Urban Water Security
|
Reduce Leakages
|
Rainwater Harvesting
|
Wastewater Recycling
|
Aquifer Recharge
|
Nature-Based Solutions
(Sponge City Model)
|
Integrated Urban Water Governance

Best Practices

- China's Sponge City Programme – permeable pavements, wetlands, urban green spaces.
- Singapore's NEWater – large-scale wastewater recycling.
- India's Integrated Urban Water Management (IUWM) approach.....and scale up lake restoration.

Quick concept

Mihir Shah Committee (2016)

Expert Committee on the Draft National Water Framework Bill & National Water Policy, chaired by **Dr. Mihir Shah**.

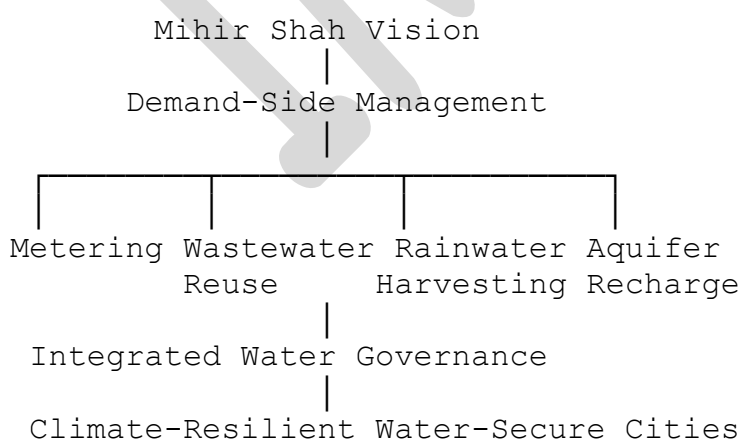
Major Observations

- India follows a **supply-side approach** (dams, reservoirs, inter-basin transfers) rather than **demand-side water management**.
- Water should be treated as a **common pool resource**, not merely an economic commodity.
- Fragmented institutional structure leads to poor water governance.

Key Recommendations

Recommendation	Significance
Shift to Demand-Side Management (DSM)	Promote efficient water use rather than merely increasing supply
Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)	River basin-based planning and coordination
Universal water metering	Reduce wastage and improve accountability
Wastewater treatment & reuse	Enhance urban water security
Aquifer mapping & groundwater regulation	Prevent over-extraction
Rainwater harvesting & aquifer recharge	Improve groundwater sustainability
Community participation	Decentralised water governance
Rational water pricing	Encourage conservation while protecting vulnerable groups

Way Forward



Punjab can ill afford a Religious Flashpoint

Brief

- The Akal Takht declared Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann a "Guru Dokhi" and "Khalsa Panth Virodhi" over an alleged sacrilege video, intensifying the intersection of religion and politics in Punjab.

Key Issues

- **Akal Takht:** Supreme temporal authority of Sikhism, historically influential in Sikh religious and socio-political matters.
- Allegations relate to an alleged sacrilege incident; CM denies authenticity.
- Comes after Punjab enacted the Jagat Jot Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar (Amendment) Act, 2026, expanding the definition of sacrilege and prescribing stricter punishments.
- Political backdrop:
 - AAP projects Bhagwant Mann as CM face for the next Assembly elections.
 - Shiromani Akali Dal seeks to revive its political base.
 - Sacrilege has remained a politically sensitive issue since the 2015 sacrilege incidents.

Concerns

- Politicisation of religion may deepen social divisions.
- Distracts governance from pressing issues:
 - Drug abuse
 - Gangsterism
 - Border security
 - Economic distress
- Risks communal polarisation and erosion of institutional trust.

Way Forward

- Respect constitutional values of secular governance.
- Ensure impartial investigation of sacrilege cases.
- Promote dialogue between government and religious institutions.
- Keep electoral politics separate from religious institutions.

- Prioritise governance, development and social harmony over identity-based politics.

Topic: (GS Paper 2: Governance | GS Paper 3: Science & Technology | GS Paper 1: Society)

‘Like real life, kids need rules for social media use’

Social media companies need to come up with design changes that can make their use safer for everyone, including children

• PATCHWORK OF STATE PROPOSALS, CENTRE WEIGHS ACTION

CENTRE

- The Indian Express reported this March that the government was not in favour of an outright ban, and was instead considering a more nuanced and graded approach in specifying restrictions for children under 18 years.
- Government sources said that there will be distinct sets of restrictions for those in the 8-12 years age bracket, for 12 to 16-year-olds, and for those aged 16-18 years.

ANDHRA PRADESH

- Chief Minister N Chandrababu said in March 2026 that his government would roll out a programme to prevent children under 13 from accessing social media within 90 days.
- The state, Naidu said, was also considering regulating access to social media for those in the 13-16 age group.

KARNATAKA

- In March 2026, Karnataka announced a proposal to ban social media use for children under 16 in its 2026-27 Budget, becoming the first Indian state to do so.



AP

- A separate draft policy for 'Responsible Digital Use Among Students' includes suggestions such as capping screen time to one hour, cutting off internet access after 7 pm and implementing Aadhaar-enabled sign-ups.

GOA

- Goa is also weighing a social media ban for children under the age of 16, according to reports in January 2026.

How they keep you hooked

Ephemeral content that says 'if you don't see this now, it will go away'.



AI-powered systems that predict the notification that will get you to come back.



Infinite scroll and autoplay that reduce your ability to exercise your willpower.

Brief

- Countries such as **Australia and the UK** are introducing age-based restrictions on social media use by children.
- India is considering a graded regulatory framework instead of a blanket ban.

Key Developments

- **Australia:** Under-16s cannot create social media accounts (content access still allowed).
- **UK:** Plans to restrict social media use for under-16s by 2027.
- **India:** Proposed age-based regulation:
 - **8–12 years:** Strongest restrictions
 - **12–16 years:** Limited access
 - **16–18 years:** Moderate regulation
- **Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Goa are exploring similar measures.**

Concerns

- Addiction due to **AI-driven algorithms**, infinite scroll, autoplay and targeted notifications.
- Sleep disruption, poor concentration and reduced academic performance.
- Cyberbullying, online predators, privacy breaches and mental health concerns.
- Peer pressure created through network effects.

Suggested Reforms

- Age verification and parental consent.
- Privacy by default for minors.
- Restrict addictive design features (autoplay, infinite scroll, push notifications).
- Stronger data protection and algorithm transparency.
- Digital literacy in schools and parental awareness.

Critical Evaluation

- Blanket bans alone may not work; children may bypass restrictions.
- A balanced approach combining **age limits, safer platform design, parental supervision and digital literacy** is more sustainable.

UPSC add on

Constitutional Link

- **Article 21:** Right to life, privacy and mental well-being.
- **Article 39(e) & (f):** Protection of children from exploitation.
- **Article 15(3):** Special provisions for children.

Relevant Laws

- **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023**
 - **Information Technology Act, 2000**
 - **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines & Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021**
-

18.06.2026

At 39, Messi is wiser and more lethal

LIONEL MESSI is no longer supposed to be doing this. Football celebrates youth and worships speed. Messi will turn 39 on June 24. Yet, the goals keep coming, as he showed during his 11th international hat-trick against Algeria — his first at the World Cup. He began the night chasing Kylian Mbappé's World Cup goal-scoring record. The French superstar's brace against Senegal took his tally to 14. Messi hunted down that mark and levelled German great Miroslav Klose's all-time record of 16 World Cup goals.

Reducing Messi's longevity to goals and assists, however, misses the larger point. What separates him now from the other greats is not the explosive acceleration that once left defenders stumbling, but an almost supernatural understanding of the game. He sees spaces before they appear, recognises patterns before they develop and dictates matches without needing to dominate every moment.

In this World Cup, Mbappé and Erling Haaland have lit up the tournament with two goals each. But it's Messi who seems to be stealing the show. Tougher challenges await Messi and Argentina. But this performance adds heft to their title defence. The years may have inevitably taken something away from Messi. But they have also revealed another version of the legend: Calmer, wiser and perhaps even more influential.

• **WORDLY WISE**

The course of history shows that as a government grows, liberty decreases.

— Thomas Jefferson

Bullet Train Tunnel Hoods:

A New Engineering Innovation in India's High-Speed Rail

Brief

- For the first time, **India's Bullet Train Project (Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor)** is incorporating **Tunnel Hood Technology** to reduce the **Tunnel Boom Effect**, a standard feature in high-speed rail systems worldwide.

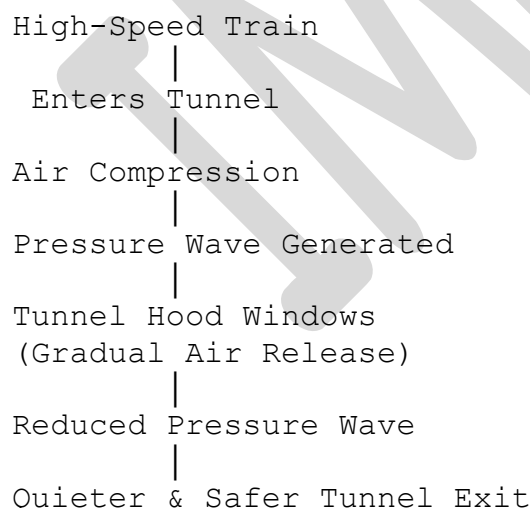
What are Tunnel Hoods?

- Tunnel hoods are cylindrical perforated structures built at the entrance and exit of railway tunnels.

Functions

- Gradually release compressed air.
- Reduce pressure waves generated by trains moving above 300 km/h.
- Minimise **Tunnel Boom** (loud explosive noise).
- Improve passenger comfort and structural safety.

How Tunnel Hoods Work



What is the Tunnel Boom Effect?

- High-speed trains push a large volume of air into a tunnel.
- Sudden air compression creates a **pressure wave**.

- When the wave exits the tunnel, it produces a **sonic boom-like noise**, known as the **Tunnel Boom Effect**.
- Tunnel hoods act as a **transition zone**, dissipating pressure gradually.

Key Features of India's Tunnel Hood Technology

Feature	Details
Project	Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR)
Implementing Agency	National High Speed Rail Corporation Ltd. (NHSRCL)
Speed	Above 300 km/h
Tunnels	8 mountain tunnels (7 in Maharashtra, 1 in Gujarat)
Hood Length	31–45 m
Hood Windows	20–26 perforated openings
First in India	Yes

Engineering Challenges

- Construction through the **Sahyadri Mountains (Palghar District)**.
- Low rock overburden requiring careful excavation.
- Slow excavation rate (0.5–1 m/day).
- Precision needed during **tunnel breakthrough** (meeting of excavations from both ends).

Significance

Advantages

- ✓ Reduces noise pollution near tunnel exits.
- ✓ Improves aerodynamic efficiency.
- ✓ Enhances passenger comfort.
- ✓ Protects tunnel structures from repeated pressure loads.
- ✓ Brings Indian rail infrastructure to **global high-speed rail standards**.

Critical Evaluation

Strengths

- Adoption of globally proven Japanese Shinkansen technology.
- Demonstrates India's progress in advanced railway engineering.

- Improves operational safety and environmental sustainability.

Challenges

- Higher construction costs.
- Complex tunnel engineering in mountainous terrain.
- Requires specialised design, maintenance and technical expertise.

Way Forward

High-Speed Rail
 |
 Advanced Tunnel Design
 |
 Tunnel Hood Technology
 |
 Reduced Noise + Pressure
 |
 Safer & Sustainable Operations
 |
 World-Class Railway Infrastructure

UPSC Value Addition

Important Terms

- Tunnel Hood
- Tunnel Boom Effect
- Pressure Wave
- Aerodynamics
- Tunnel Breakthrough
- Overburden
- Viaduct
- High-Speed Rail (HSR)

UPSC Prlm

- Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor: 508 km.
- Technology Partner: Japan (Shinkansen System).
- Implementing Agency: National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL).
- India's first railway project to use Tunnel Hood Technology.

UPSC Mains Link

"Advanced engineering technologies are essential for developing resilient and sustainable transport infrastructure in India." Discuss with reference to the Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Project. **(GS III)**

Topic: GS Paper III: Economy (Shipping & Logistics), Infrastructure
GS Paper II: International Relations (Indian Diaspora & Maritime Security)

India's Growing Seafaring Workforce: **Opportunities and Challenges**

Why in News?

- The deaths of Indian seafarers near the **Strait of Hormuz** have highlighted India's growing role as a **global supplier of maritime manpower** and the vulnerabilities faced by Indian seafarers in conflict zones.

Key Highlights

- India's active seafaring workforce increased from 62,267 (2010) to 3.23 lakh (2024)—over **5-fold growth**.
- India contributes ~ **17% of the global seafaring workforce**, ranking among the **top three suppliers** alongside the **Philippines and China**.
- 90% of Indian seafarers work on **foreign-flagged vessels**, increasing exposure to geopolitical risks.

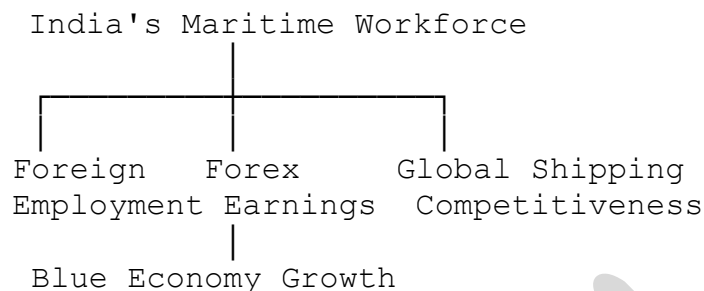
Changing Workforce Composition

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2024</i>
Officer : Rating Ratio	60 : 40	35 : 65
Global Ratio	45 : 55	—
Nautical Crew	36,423	2,07,109
Engineering Crew	25,844	1,00,792

Trend: Growth is concentrated in ratings (non-officers) such as

- deck crew,
- motormen,
- oilers,
- cooks,
- hospitality staff and technicians.

Significance for India



- Employment generation and remittances.
- Supports India's **Blue Economy**.
- Enhances India's role in global shipping and logistics.
- Supplies skilled manpower to international merchant fleets.

Challenges

- Geopolitical conflicts (e.g., **Strait of Hormuz, Red Sea**).
- Safety risks from piracy, wars and maritime terrorism.
- Majority employed on foreign vessels, limiting India's direct protection.
- Limited insurance, legal assistance and welfare mechanisms.
- Rising demand for skilled officers despite increasing non-officer workforce.

Government Initiatives

- **Directorate General of Shipping (DG Shipping).**
- **Maritime India Vision 2030.**
- **Sagarmala Programme.**
- **Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047.**
- Compliance with the **Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006.**

Critical Evaluation

Strengths

- India has become a leading global supplier of seafarers.
- Growing employment opportunities in global shipping.
- Strong maritime training ecosystem.

Concerns

- Overdependence on foreign-flagged ships exposes Indians to external conflicts.
- Increasing share of lower-skilled ratings may affect career progression and wage growth.
- Need for better welfare, insurance and crisis response mechanisms.

Way Forward

Skilled Training
|
Officer Development
|
Maritime Safety
|
Insurance & Welfare
|
Diplomatic Protection
|
Resilient Blue Economy

- Upgrade maritime education to produce more officers.
- Strengthen evacuation and crisis-response systems in conflict zones.
- Enhance bilateral agreements for protection of Indian seafarers.
- Promote Indian-flagged shipping and improve welfare standards.

Add on

Key Terms

- **Seafarer:** Any person employed on a seagoing vessel.
- **Officer:** Licensed personnel responsible for navigation, engineering and ship management.
- **Rating:** Non-officer crew performing operational and technical duties.
- **Flag State:** Country where a ship is legally registered.

Quick Prlm

- India accounts for **~17% of the world's seafarers.**

- About **90%** of Indian seafarers serve on **foreign-flagged vessels**.
- The **Strait of Hormuz** handles nearly **20% of global crude oil and LNG trade**, making it a critical maritime chokepoint.

UPSC Mains Link

"India's emergence as a leading supplier of global maritime manpower presents both economic opportunities and strategic challenges." Discuss in the context of the Blue Economy and maritime security. **(GS II and III)**

19.06.2026

US Relations after Modi-Trump Meeting at G7

Brief

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** and US President **Donald Trump** held bilateral talks on the sidelines of the **G7 Summit at Evian, France**, amid recent strains in India-US relations.

Background: Reasons for Strained Ties

1. Operation Sindoor Controversy

- Trump claimed credit for brokering a ceasefire between India and Pakistan.
- India rejected any third-party mediation, reiterating its long-standing position on bilateral resolution of issues.

2. Trade and Tariff Disputes

- US imposed high tariffs on Indian goods.
- Concerns over India's imports of Russian oil and strategic autonomy.

3. Visa Restrictions

- Increase in H-1B visa-related costs affected Indian IT professionals and companies.

4. Geopolitical Differences

- Divergence on Iran, Russia-Ukraine conflict, and sanctions-related issues.

Key Outcomes of the Modi–Trump Meeting

Positive Signals

- Both leaders expressed willingness to repair bilateral ties.
- **Focus on:**
 - Trade negotiations
 - Strategic cooperation
 - Technology partnerships
 - Defence collaboration

India's Diplomatic Approach

- Continued engagement despite disagreements.
- Maintained strategic autonomy while preserving relations with the US.

Key Takeaways for India

1. Unpredictability of US Foreign Policy

- US policies can rapidly change with domestic political shifts.
- India must diversify economic and strategic partnerships.

2. Strategic Autonomy Remains Crucial

- India avoided aligning completely with any bloc.
- Continued balancing relations with:
 - US
 - Russia
 - Iran
 - Europe
 - Indo-Pacific partners

3. China Factor

- US increasingly seeks engagement with China on select issues.
- India must strengthen its own capabilities and partnerships rather than rely solely on US support.

4. Multi-Alignment Strategy

India continues engagement with:

- EU
- Australia
- Japan

- ASEAN
- Gulf countries

to reduce overdependence on any single partner.

Significance for India

Economic

- Trade deal could reduce tariff barriers.
- Greater access for Indian exports and services.

Strategic

- Cooperation in:
 - Defence
 - Critical technologies
 - Semiconductor supply chains
 - Indo-Pacific security

Diaspora

- Better visa policies can benefit Indian professionals and students.

Challenges Ahead

- Trade disputes
- Visa restrictions
- US sanctions policies
- Geopolitical differences on Russia and Iran
- Trump's transactional and unpredictable approach

Critical Evaluation

Positives

- ✓ Strong strategic convergence against emerging global challenges.
- ✓ Growing cooperation in defence, technology and investment.
- ✓ Mature diplomatic engagement despite disagreements.

Concerns

- ✗ Dependence on US markets and technology remains a vulnerability.
- ✗ Frequent policy reversals in US administrations create uncertainty.
- ✗ India must avoid being drawn into major power rivalries.

Way Forward

- Conclude a balanced India-US trade agreement.
- Deepen defence and technology cooperation.
- Protect interests of Indian professionals abroad.

- Strengthen strategic autonomy and multi-alignment.
- Expand partnerships with Europe, Japan, ASEAN and Gulf countries.

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Q. India–US relations are increasingly driven by strategic convergence, yet remain vulnerable to geopolitical and economic divergences. Critically examine in the context of recent Modi–Trump engagement at the G7 Summit. (*GS-II / 250 words*)

Topic: GS Paper III: Energy Security | GS Paper II: International Relations

US-Iran Islamabad Framework Agreement & Implications for India

Brief

- The **Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** between the United States and Iran signals a potential diplomatic breakthrough after months of conflict and decades of hostility.

Key Features of the Framework Agreement

US Perspective

- Shift from military escalation to diplomacy.
- Recognition that prolonged confrontation with Iran is costly.
- Aim to restore stability in global energy markets.

Iran's Perspective

- Opportunity for sanctions relief.
- Greater integration with the global economy.
- Possibility of focusing on economic development rather than regional confrontation.

Regional Implications

- Reduction in tensions between:
 - Iran and the US
 - Iran and Gulf Arab states
- Potential reopening and stabilization of the **Strait of Hormuz**.

Significance of Strait of Hormuz

Strategic Importance

- Connects Persian Gulf to Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea.
- Around **20% of global oil and LNG trade** passes through it.

For India

- Major source of crude oil imports.
- Presence of large Indian diaspora in Gulf countries.
- Critical maritime trade route.

Implications for India

Positive Outcomes

- ✓ Improved energy security.
- ✓ Stable oil and gas prices.
- ✓ Enhanced trade and investment opportunities in the Gulf.
- ✓ Better regional connectivity initiatives.
- ✓ Safer environment for Indian workers and seafarers.

Challenges

- ✓ Agreement remains a framework, not a final settlement.
- ✓ Nuclear issue and sanctions remain unresolved.
- ✓ Possibility of renewed hostilities cannot be ruled out.

Critical Evaluation

Why the "Winner vs Loser" Narrative is Misleading

- Iran's leverage over Hormuz does not imply US strategic defeat.
- US diplomacy does not necessarily mean Iranian victory.
- The agreement represents **pragmatic conflict management** rather than geopolitical triumph.

Broader Significance

- May pave the way for a **new regional security architecture** in West Asia.
- Could reduce polarization between Iran and Arab Gulf states.
- Demonstrates the importance of diplomacy over military confrontation.

India's Position

India should:

- Support peaceful resolution of disputes.
- Maintain balanced ties with:
 - US
 - Iran
 - Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.
- Promote maritime security and energy diversification.

Way Forward

- Institutionalize dialogue between regional stakeholders.
- Ensure freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.
- Pursue phased sanctions relief linked to compliance.
- Expand regional economic cooperation and connectivity.

UPSC Mains Practice Questions

Q1. The emerging US–Iran rapprochement has the potential to reshape the geopolitical landscape of West Asia. Discuss its implications for regional stability and India's strategic interests. (**GS-II, 250 words**)

Q2. Why is the Strait of Hormuz critical to global energy security? Examine its significance for India. (**GS-II, 150 words**)

Q3. Energy security is increasingly linked to geopolitical stability in West Asia. Analyze in the context of recent US–Iran negotiations. (**GS-III, 250 words**)

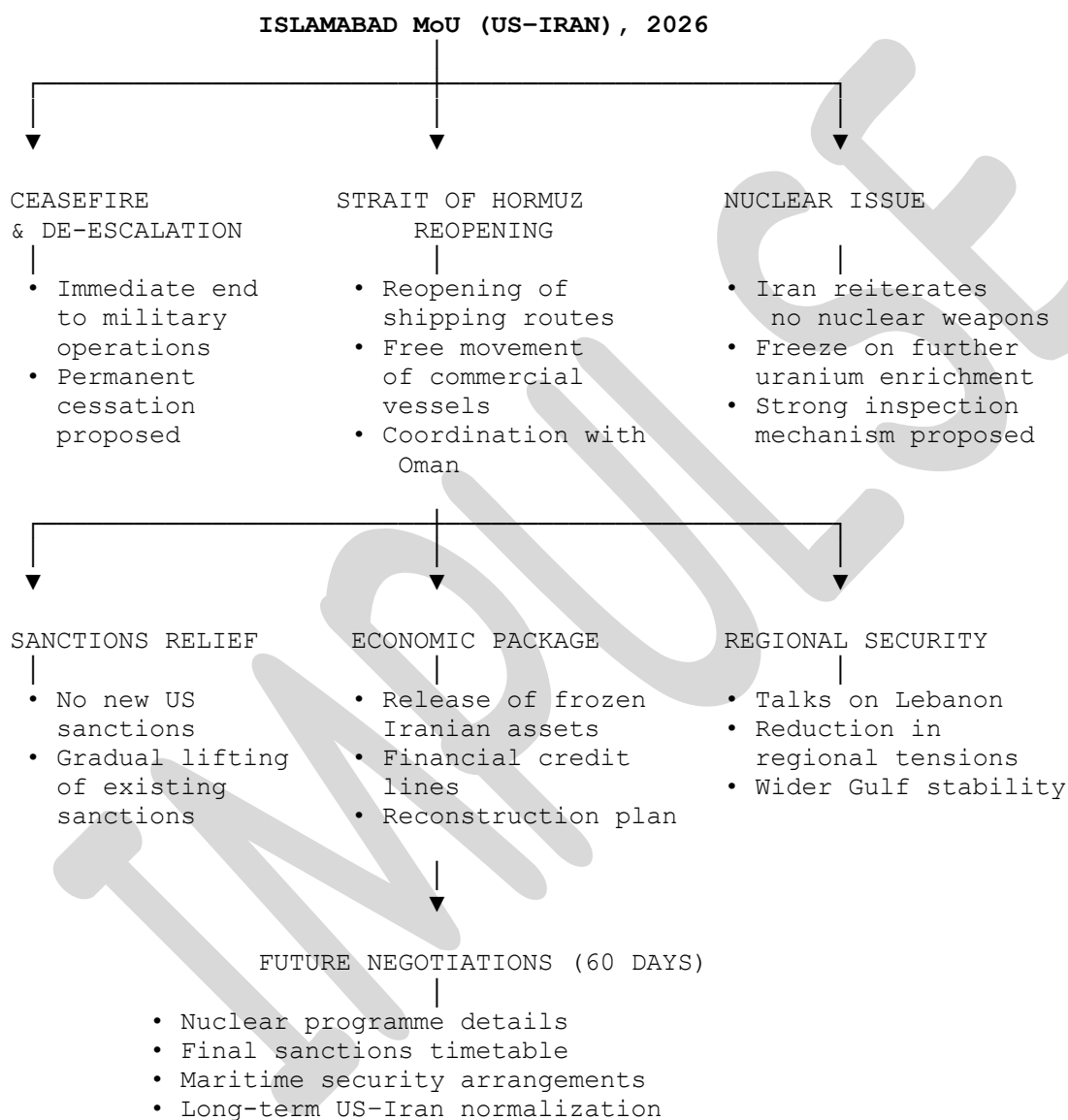
Keywords for UPSC Answers

- Strategic Autonomy
- Energy Security
- Freedom of Navigation
- West Asian Geopolitics
- Regional Stability
- Maritime Security
- Sanctions Relief
- Economic Diplomacy
- Gulf Connectivity
- Rules-Based International Order

Quick Prlm

- ⊗ **Strait of Hormuz** lies between **Iran (north)** and **Oman/UAE (south)** and serves as the world's most important oil transit chokepoint.

Quick Mains



One-Line UPSC Summary

- ✧ The Islamabad MoU marks **a shift from confrontation to conditional diplomacy** between the US and Iran, with implications for energy security, regional stability, and India's strategic interests in West Asia.

West Bengal: Vendetta Politics Must End

Brief

- Following the BJP's electoral victory in West Bengal, several arrested TMC leaders have reportedly been publicly paraded by police and paramilitary forces in their constituencies.
- The government describes these actions as part of crime reconstruction and restoration of the rule of law, while critics view them as political vendetta and public humiliation.

Key Issues

1. Rule of Law vs Retributive Justice

- Rule of law requires:
 - Due process
 - Fair investigation
 - Presumption of innocence
 - Judicial determination of guilt
- Public humiliation before conviction risks undermining constitutional principles.

2. Political Violence in West Bengal

- Bengal has a long history of:
 - Political clashes
 - Cadre-based politics
 - Allegations of intimidation and violence across regimes.
- Change in government should not perpetuate cycles of revenge.

3. Constitutional Concerns

- **Article 14:** Equality before law.
- **Article 21:** Protection of life and personal liberty, including dignity.
- Public shaming may violate the principle of human dignity and fair treatment.

4. Role of Judiciary

- The Calcutta High Court has sought explanations regarding such actions.
- Reinforces judicial oversight over executive conduct.

Critical Evaluation

Arguments in Favour

- Demonstrates government resolve against criminality.
- May help reconstruct crime scenes and gather evidence.
- Sends a deterrent message against political impunity.

Concerns

- Blurs distinction between justice and vengeance.
- Can politicise law-enforcement agencies.
- Allows accused persons to claim victimhood.
- Erodes public confidence in impartial institutions.

Way Forward

- Ensure investigations are evidence-based and transparent.
- Strengthen police professionalism and independence.
- Avoid public spectacles of punishment before conviction.
- Focus on institutional accountability rather than political retribution.
- Promote reconciliation, governance, and development-oriented politics.

Conclusion

A democratic government derives legitimacy from constitutional methods, not public humiliation of opponents. Sustainable governance in West Bengal requires strengthening institutions, ensuring due process, and ending the cycle of political vendetta.

UPSC Mains Practice Question

"The rule of law is not merely about punishing the guilty but ensuring that justice is delivered through due process." Discuss in the context of political violence and democratic governance in India. **(GS II, 250 words)**

● Domestic airlines' bottomline to take a hit in FY27

Domestic airlines' operating profit is estimated to decline this fiscal in the backdrop of elevated aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices, airspace restrictions and rupee depreciation amid the West Asia conflict, according to a report by CRISIL.

10-15%

Decline estimated in operating profit of domestic airlines in FY27

OPERATING PROFIT OUTLOOK

- Combined impact of higher costs, constrained pricing power and capacity rationalisation is expected to reduce aggregate operating profit to ₹16,000-17,000 cr in FY27 from around ₹19,000 cr in preceding year

- Any respite from lower ATF prices, driven by a potential resolution of the conflict, could contain further escalation in fuel costs for airlines

LEASE AND COST PRESSURES

- Ongoing fleet expansion is expected to push up lease rentals, which, along with moderating operating profits, could weaken lease serviceability through internal accruals

- The report estimates around a 15% increase in rental costs to ₹27,000-28,000 cr this fiscal



FUEL COST STRUCTURE

- Jet fuel accounts for nearly 40% of an airline's operating costs under normal conditions
- It can rise up to 60% in periods

of extreme fuel price volatility

- The crisis led to a sharp average increase of over 50% in global ATF prices vs the pre-conflict levels

“The surge in global fuel prices following the onset of the conflict has increased the operating cost of airlines significantly. Even with the expected moderation in fuel prices, they will remain above the levels of last fiscal”

MANISH GUPTA, DEPUTY CHIEF RATINGS OFFICER AT CRISIL RATINGS

SOURCE: CRISIL/PTI

Topic: GS Paper 2: International Relations – India and the World, West Asia Developments | GS Paper 3: Security Challenges, Regional Stability | Essay: Diplomacy vs Military Solutions in International Conflicts

Israel-Iran-US MoU:

Implications for Israel and Netanyahu

Brief

- The **Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** between the US and Iran aims to negotiate a final agreement within 60 days, reduce regional tensions, reopen the Strait of Hormuz, and address Iran's nuclear programme.
- The development has generated concern in Israel, where many view it as overly favorable to Iran.

Why Israel is Concerned

Strategic Concerns

- Iran retains significant bargaining leverage.
- No immediate dismantling of:
 - Uranium enrichment facilities.
 - Nuclear centrifuges.
 - Existing enriched uranium stockpiles.
- Fear that Iran may emerge politically and economically stronger after sanctions relief.

Political Concerns

- Perception that the US and Iran are shaping the regional order without Israel's full influence.
- Questions over the reliability of US support under President Trump.

Israel's Immediate Options

1. Influence Final Negotiations

- Use the 60-day negotiation period to:
 - Seek stricter nuclear restrictions.
 - Push for stronger inspection mechanisms.

- Demand limits on Iranian enrichment activities.

2. Continue Lebanon Strategy

- Maintain pressure on Hezbollah.
- Prevent Hezbollah's military presence near the Israel–Lebanon border.
- Seek US-backed security guarantees.

3. Shift from Military to Diplomatic Approach

- Strengthen Lebanese state institutions.
- Promote border security arrangements.
- Establish enforceable red lines and monitoring mechanisms.

Impact on Benjamin Netanyahu

Challenges

- Weakens his image as a leader who is:
 - Tough on security.
 - Closely aligned with Trump.
- Military campaigns in Gaza and Lebanon have not fully achieved stated objectives.
- Elections approaching within months.

Political Implications

- Opposition portrays the MoU as a diplomatic setback.
- Growing debate over balancing military action with diplomacy.

Critical Evaluation

Potential Benefits of MoU

- ✓ Reduces risk of regional war.
- ✓ Reopens Strait of Hormuz.
- ✓ Enhances energy market stability.
- ✓ Creates scope for US–Iran rapprochement.

Risks

- ✗ Agreement may remain non-binding.
- ✗ Hezbollah and regional proxy conflicts may persist.
- ✗ Hardliners in Israel, Iran, and the US could derail implementation.

Significance for India

- Improved energy security due to stable oil supplies.
- Safer maritime routes in the Persian Gulf.
- Protection of Indian diaspora and seafarers in West Asia.
- Greater prospects for trade and connectivity with Gulf countries.

Conclusion

- The MoU represents a **shift from confrontation to diplomacy in West Asia**. While Israel sees it as a **strategic setback**, the agreement could contribute to **long-term regional stability** if successfully implemented. The real challenge lies in converting military gains into sustainable diplomatic outcomes.

UPSC Mains Practice Question

"Military victories often require diplomatic settlements to achieve lasting peace." Examine this statement in the context of the recent US–Iran understanding and Israel's security concerns in West Asia. **(GS II, 250 words)**

Keywords for UPSC

- West Asia Crisis
 - Israel–Iran Relations
 - Hezbollah
 - Strait of Hormuz
 - Nuclear Diplomacy
 - Regional Security Architecture
 - Energy Security
 - Preventive Diplomacy
 - Conflict Resolution
 - Balance of Power Theory
-

20.06.2026

Topic: GS Paper 2: India and its Bilateral Relations (India-Russia, India-US)
GS Paper 3: Energy Security, Economic Development, International Trade

India's Record Russian Oil Imports:

Strategic Energy Shift

Brief

- India's crude oil imports from Russia are expected to reach a **record high** of over 2.35 million barrels per day (bpd) in **June 2026**, ***accounting for more than half of India's crude imports.***
- The surge is driven by disruptions in West Asian supplies due to the Strait of **Hormuz crisis** and the continued **price advantage** of Russian crude.

Why Are Russian Oil Imports Rising?

1. Strait of Hormuz Disruptions

- Around **40% of India's crude imports** traditionally pass through the Strait of Hormuz.
- Conflict in West Asia disrupted supplies from Iraq and other Gulf producers.

2. Discounted Russian Crude

- Russian oil remains cheaper than many global benchmarks.
- Provides cost-effective energy security for Indian refiners.

3. Supply Security

- Russia has emerged as a reliable "**base-load supplier**".
- Long-term contracts ensure uninterrupted supplies.

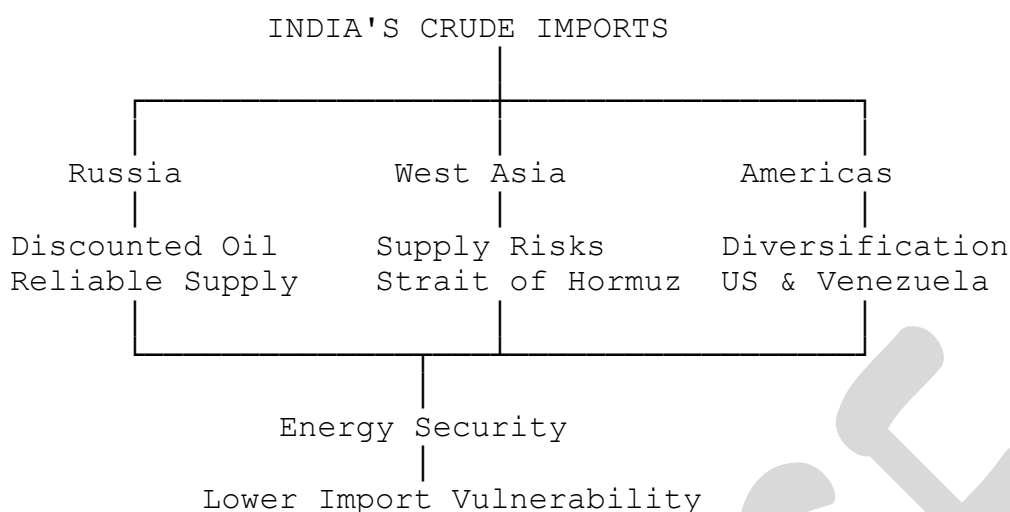
4. Diversification Strategy

India has increased imports from:

- **Russia**
- **North America**
- **Venezuela**

to reduce dependence on Gulf supplies.

Diagram: India's Emerging Crude Import Strategy



Strategic Significance

Economic

- Helps moderate import costs.
- Reduces inflationary pressure from high oil prices.

Geopolitical

- Strengthens India–Russia energy ties.
- Demonstrates India's strategic autonomy in energy procurement.

Energy Security

- Diversifies supply sources.
- Reduces dependence on a single region.

Challenges

- Possible US sanctions pressure.
- Dependence on Russian crude may create geopolitical vulnerabilities.
- Volatility in global oil markets.
- Uncertainty regarding the US-Iran agreement and Gulf stability.

Way Forward

- Continue diversification of crude sources.
- Expand **Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR)**.
- Increase renewable energy and green hydrogen capacity.
- Strengthen long-term energy partnerships with multiple suppliers.

Conclusion

The rise in Russian oil imports reflects India's pragmatic approach to energy security. While geopolitical uncertainties persist, diversification, affordability, and supply reliability have made Russian crude a crucial component of India's energy basket.

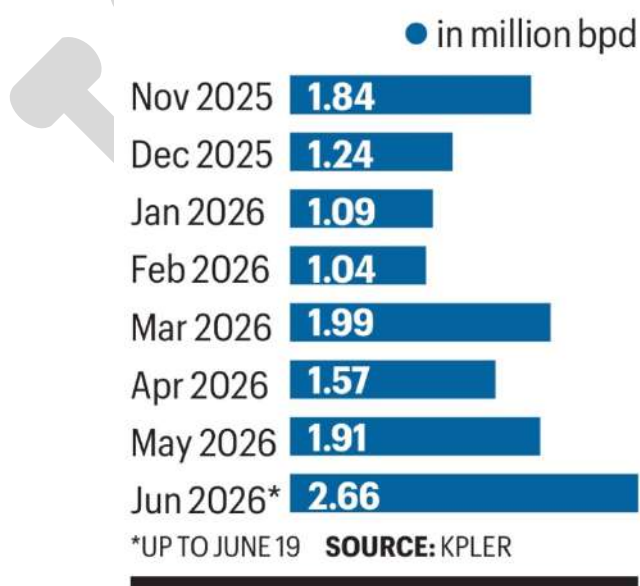
UPSC Mains Question

"Energy security increasingly shapes India's foreign policy choices." Examine in the context of India's growing dependence on Russian crude oil amid disruptions in West Asia. **(GS II, 250 words)**

Prelims Pointers

- **Strait of Hormuz:** Connects Persian Gulf with Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea.
- **Iraq:** Traditionally India's second-largest crude supplier.
- **Russia:** India's largest crude oil supplier since the Ukraine conflict.
- **Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR):** India's emergency crude storage mechanism.

• Import of Russian oil over eight months



Topic: GS II – Governance, Constitution and Judiciary | GS III – Infrastructure and Urbanisation

Topic: Fundamental Rights, Judicial Activism, Urban Governance

Right to Walk on Safe Footpaths **as a Fundamental Right**

Brief

- Originated from the death of a **5-year-old child** hit by a tanker while walking to school.
- The road lacked:
 - Footpath
 - Pedestrian crossing
 - Safety infrastructure

The SC enhanced compensation and expanded the issue into a larger constitutional question concerning pedestrian rights.

Judgment: Crux

- The Supreme Court of India (2026) held that the **Right to Walk on Demarcated and Safe Footpaths is a Fundamental Right under Part III of the Constitution.**
- The right flows primarily from:
 - **Article 21** – Right to Life and Personal Liberty.
 - **Article 14** – Equality before Law.
 - **Article 19(1)(d)** – Freedom of movement throughout India.
- The Court emphasized that **pedestrian rights take precedence over motorised vehicles wherever roads exist.**
- Municipal authorities, urban local bodies and panchayats have a corresponding duty to provide pedestrian infrastructure.

Constitutional Basis

RIGHT TO WALK

↓

Article 21 → Right to Life with Dignity

↓

Safe Mobility and Accessibility

↓

Right to Demarcated Footpaths

↓
State's Duty to Provide Infrastructure

SC's Key Observations

1. Walking is integral to life

- Walking is the oldest and most basic mode of transport.
- Road design cannot exclusively favour automobiles.

2. Footpaths are a constitutional entitlement

- Citizens possess the right to:
 - Safe sidewalks
 - Pedestrian crossings
 - Barrier-free mobility

3. Corresponding duties of the State

Authorities responsible include:

- Municipal Corporations
- Urban Development Authorities
- Municipalities
- Panchayats
- Highway authorities

Duty Bearers Framework

Road Exists

↓

Duty to Provide

↓

Footpaths

Pedestrian Crossings

Street Lighting

Universal Accessibility

Maintenance & Safety

Pedestrian Crisis in India

India's Deadly Roads

• **INDIA'S DEADLY ROADS**

	Year	Total road deaths	Pedestrian deaths	Share (%)
	2015	1,46,133	13,894	9.5
	2016	15,0,785	15,746	10.5
	2017	1,47,913	20,457	13.8
	2018	1,51,417	22,656	15
	2019	1,51,113	25,858	17.1
	2020	1,31,714	23,483	17.8
	2021	1,53,972	29,124	18.9
	2022	1,68,491	32,825	19.48
	2023	1,72,890	35,221	20.37
	2024	1,77,175	36,526	20.61

SOURCE: ROAD ACCIDENT IN INDIA, MORTH NOTE: 2020 AND 2021 ARE COVID-19 YEARS

(note the trend i.e, consecutive increasing in the last decade.....then note the percentage jump between 2015 and 2024)

Key Trend:

- Total **road deaths** increased by about **21% (2015-24)**.
- **Pedestrian deaths** increased by **163%** during the same period.

Implication:

- Pedestrians are now the **second most vulnerable road users after two-wheeler riders**.

Diagram: Causes of Rising Pedestrian Deaths

Encroached Footpaths
+
Vehicle-Centric Planning
+
Poor Enforcement
+

Lack of Crossings
+
High-Speed Urban Traffic
↓
Rising Pedestrian Fatalities

Criticism of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988

The Court observed that:

- The Act is fundamentally **vehicle-centric**.
- It regulates:
 - Vehicles
 - Drivers
 - Traffic movement

But inadequately addresses:

- Pedestrian rights
- Walking infrastructure
- Safe mobility standards

The Court remarked that:

- Human interests are treated as incidental while the vehicle remains the centre of legislation.

Urban Planning Dimension

India's cities have evolved according to an **automobile-first model**:

Road Width ↑
Vehicle Speed ↑
Pedestrian Space ↓
Safety ↓
Fatalities ↑

Examples:

- Encroached footpaths
- Illegal parking on sidewalks
- Absence of zebra crossings
- Lack of universal accessibility for elderly and disabled persons

International Best Practices

<i>Country</i>	<i>Initiative</i>
Netherlands	Complete Streets
Denmark	Pedestrian-first urban design
Singapore	Barrier-free accessibility programme
Japan	Safe school walking corridors

Way Forward

1. Enact a Pedestrian Rights Law

- Clearly define pedestrian rights.
- Establish accountability of authorities.

2. Adopt Complete Streets Policy

Prioritise:

1. Pedestrians
2. Cyclists
3. Public Transport
4. Private Vehicles

3. Universal Design Standards

Include:

- Tactile paving
- Wheelchair accessibility
- Raised crossings
- Audible signals

4. Mandatory Footpath Norms

Every urban road should include:

Road Construction



Footpath
Cycle Track
Crossing
Lighting
Drainage

5. Strengthen Enforcement

- Penalise encroachments.
- Conduct pedestrian safety audits.
- Link municipal grants to walkability indicators.

Critical Evaluation

Positives

- ✓ Recognises mobility as a human right.
- ✓ Shifts urban planning from vehicle-centric to people-centric.
- ✓ Strengthens accountability of local bodies.
- ✓ Supports sustainable and inclusive cities.

Concerns

- ✗ Large financial burden on ULBs.
- ✗ Existing cities face land constraints.
- ✗ Requires coordination among multiple agencies.

Conclusion

The Supreme Court judgment marks a paradigm shift from **"roads for vehicles" to "roads for people."** In a country where over **36,000 pedestrians die annually**, recognising the **Right to Walk** as a fundamental right strengthens constitutional morality, urban inclusiveness and sustainable mobility.

UPSC Mains Question

Q.1. "The Supreme Court's recognition of the right to walk on safe and demarcated footpaths as a fundamental right marks a transition towards citizen-centric urban governance." Discuss the constitutional basis of this judgment and its implications for urban planning in India. (**GS II, 250 words**)

Q.2. India's urban transport systems remain overwhelmingly vehicle-centric. Examine the challenges faced by pedestrians and suggest measures to make Indian cities walkable and inclusive. (**GS III, 250 words**)

Topic: GS I – Indian heritage and culture | GS II – Governance, Social Justice, Internal Security

Topic: Regionalism, Racism, Inclusive Governance, Police Reforms

Delhi's Unfinished Fight Against

Prejudice Against Northeast Indians

Brief

- Despite the establishment of a **special cell by the Delhi Police in 2014** to address crimes against people from Northeast India, conviction rates remain extremely low.
 - **FIRs registered (2014–2026): 2,656**
 - **Convictions secured: 33**
 - **More than half of accused remain untraced**
- Recent incidents involving racial abuse against people from **Assam** and **Arunachal Pradesh** highlight the persistence of discrimination.

Nature of Discrimination Faced by Northeast Indians

Stereotyping

↓

Racial Slurs and Abuse

↓

Housing Discrimination

↓

Employment Bias

↓

Physical Violence

↓

Alienation and Distrust

Why does prejudice persist?

1. Lack of Awareness about Northeast India

- Poor understanding of the region's cultural and ethnic diversity.
- Persistence of stereotypes regarding physical appearance and lifestyle.

2. Weak Law Enforcement

- Low conviction rates create a sense of impunity.

- Delayed investigation and inadequate follow-up.

3. Urban Anonymity and Social Exclusion

- Students and workers migrating to metropolitan cities often lack support systems.

4. Insufficient Sensitisation of Police and Public Officials

- Inadequate training in handling hate crimes and racial discrimination.

Institutional Mechanisms

1. Delhi Police Special Cell (2014)

- Created to investigate crimes against Northeast residents.

2. Nodal Officers

- Delhi has a **Joint Commissioner-level nodal officer** coordinating with police districts.
- NCR cities were advised by the Union Home Ministry to appoint similar officers.

3. Helplines

- Cities such as **Gurugram** have dedicated helplines for Northeast residents.

Bezbaruah Committee (2014) – Special Focus

The committee was constituted after the death of **Nido Taniam**, a student from Arunachal Pradesh in Delhi.

Major Recommendations

Bezbaruah Committee



Anti-racial legal framework



Fast-track investigation of racial crimes



Sensitisation of police personnel



Awareness campaigns in educational institutions



Greater representation of Northeast communities

Key Observation:

- The committee warned that failure to address racism could intensify the **sense of alienation among Northeast youth.**

Constitutional and Legal Provisions

<i>Provision</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Article 14	Equality before law
Article 15	Prohibition of discrimination
Article 19	Freedom of movement and residence
Article 21	Right to life with dignity
Article 51A(e)	Promote harmony and common brotherhood

Challenges

- Absence of a specific anti-racial discrimination law.
- Under-reporting due to fear and mistrust.
- Weak prosecution and delayed trials.
- Limited public awareness regarding hate crimes.

Way Forward

Legal Measures

- Enact a dedicated **Anti-Racial Discrimination Law.**
- Introduce stronger hate-crime provisions.

Police Reforms

- Mandatory diversity and sensitivity training.
- Time-bound investigation and prosecution.

Educational Measures

- Greater inclusion of Northeast history and culture in curricula.
- Awareness campaigns in schools and universities.

Community Outreach

- Establish community liaison officers.
- Strengthen student support systems and helplines.

Diagram: Strategy for Inclusive India

Legal Protection
+
Police Sensitisation
+
Public Awareness
+
Community Outreach
+
Fast-track Justice
↓
Inclusive and United India

Critical Evaluation

Positives

- ✓ Dedicated institutional mechanisms already exist.
- ✓ Increased public awareness compared to earlier years.
- ✓ Growing migration has strengthened cultural exchange.

Concerns

- ✗ Extremely low conviction rates undermine deterrence.
- ✗ Persistent prejudice threatens national integration.
- ✗ Alienation may weaken trust in institutions.

Conclusion

The issue of racism against Northeast Indians is not merely a law-and-order challenge but a test of India's constitutional promise of **equality, dignity and fraternity**. Combating prejudice requires moving beyond reactive outrage towards sustained institutional reforms, sensitisation and social inclusion.

UPSC Mains Questions

Q.1. Discuss the challenges faced by people from Northeast India in metropolitan cities. Examine the role of institutions and legal reforms in addressing racial discrimination in India. (**GS II, 250 words**)

Q.2. Regional identities enrich India's diversity, yet prejudice against certain communities persists. Discuss with reference to the experiences of people from Northeast India. (*GS I, 150 words*)

Topic: GS II – Governance, Judiciary and Internal Security | GS IV (Ethics)

Topic: Criminal Justice System, Police Reforms, Juvenile Safety, Rule of Law

The Billa-Ranga Case and Criminal Justice Reforms in India

Brief

- The **Billa-Ranga case (1978)** remains one of India's most infamous criminal cases involving the kidnapping and murder of **Geeta Chopra (16)** and **Sanjay Chopra (14)** in Delhi.
- The incident shocked the nation and exposed major weaknesses in policing, inter-state coordination and public safety mechanisms.

Timeline of Events

26 August 1978

↓
Geeta and Sanjay Chopra abducted in Delhi
↓
Bodies recovered near Buddha Jayanti Park
↓
Nationwide manhunt launched
↓
Billa and Ranga flee to Mumbai
↓
Recognised through newspaper photographs
↓
Arrested and brought to Delhi
↓
Trial and conviction
↓
Executed in 1982

Who were Billa and Ranga?

- Jasbir Singh alias Billa
- Kuljeet Singh alias Ranga

They were involved in:

- Vehicle theft
- Robbery
- Violent crimes
- Kidnapping and murder

Importance of the Case

1. Highlighted Urban Crime Challenges

The case exposed:

- Weak urban policing.
- Lack of surveillance systems.
- Limited coordination between states.

2. Importance of Inter-State Police Coordination

Delhi Police

↓

National Alert

↓

Mumbai Police

↓

Public Information

↓

Arrest of Accused

The arrest demonstrated the importance of:

- Sharing intelligence,
- Public participation,
- Coordination among police agencies.

3. Role of Media in Criminal Investigation

Newspaper publication of photographs helped citizens identify the accused.

Significance:

- Early example of media-assisted policing.
- Demonstrated the role of public awareness in investigations.

4. Victim Safety and Child Protection

The case led to increased attention on:

- Child safety in cities,
- Missing children protocols,

- Public awareness regarding crimes against minors.

Criminal Justice Lessons

Strengths Demonstrated

- ✓ Successful inter-state coordination.
- ✓ Effective use of media for investigation.
- ✓ Eventual conviction through judicial process.

Weaknesses Exposed

- ✗ Delayed identification of suspects.
- ✗ Poor technological capability.
- ✗ Lack of CCTV and surveillance infrastructure.
- ✗ Weak systems for tracking missing persons.

Evolution of Policing Since 1978

1978

Manual records
Newspaper alerts
Limited inter-state coordination
No CCTV surveillance

Present Day

Digital databases
Real-time alerts and social media
Integrated crime networks
Smart policing and AI surveillance

Modern Reforms in Criminal Justice

1. Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS)

- National database linking police stations.

2. Interoperable Criminal Justice System (ICJS)

- Integrates police, courts, prisons and forensics.

3. Missing Children Portal

- Facilitates tracing and rescue of missing children.

4. Emergency Response Support System (112)

- Integrated emergency response mechanism.

Diagram: Modern Criminal Justice Ecosystem

Police
↓
Forensics
↓
Courts
↓
Prisons
↓
Digital Databases
↓
Speedy Justice

Ethical and Governance Dimensions

The case raises important ethical questions:

- Balancing media reporting with fair trial rights.
- Victim dignity and privacy.
- Avoiding sensationalism in criminal reporting.
- Ensuring due process even in high-profile crimes.

Critical Evaluation

Positive Outcomes

- Triggered discussions on police modernization.
- Improved missing persons protocols.
- Strengthened public awareness regarding child safety.

Continuing Challenges

- Delays in investigation and trial remain common.
- Police modernization remains uneven across states.
- Low police-to-population ratio affects efficiency.

Way Forward

Police Modernisation
+
Forensic Capacity
+
Technology Integration
+
Community Policing
+
Victim-Centric Justice

↓
Efficient Criminal Justice System

Conclusion

The Billa-Ranga case is remembered not only for its brutality but also for the lessons it offered on policing, media responsibility and criminal justice reforms. The incident continues to underline the importance of a **technology-driven, accountable and citizen-centric justice system**.

UPSC Mains Questions

Q.1 : Discuss the role of police modernization and inter-state coordination in improving criminal justice delivery in India. (*GS II, 250 words*)

Q.2 : High-profile criminal cases often generate public outrage and media pressure. Discuss the ethical challenges involved in balancing speedy justice with due process. (*GS IV, 150 words*)

Q.3 : "Justice must not only be done, but must also be seen to be done." (*Essay*)

22.06.2026

Topic: GS Paper II – Governance & Social Justice

Topic: Health Sector Reforms, Cooperative Federalism, Ease of Doing Business, Professional Mobility

Andhra Pradesh's Reform on

Doctor Mobility and National Medical Registration

Context

- The Government of **Andhra Pradesh** has allowed doctors registered with **any State Medical Council or UT Medical Council** in India to practice in the state **without obtaining separate registration or a No Objection Certificate (NOC)** from their parent state council.

- This is India's **first major reform aimed at enhancing interstate mobility of medical professionals.**

What Changed?

Earlier System

Doctor shifts to another State
↓
Obtain NOC from Home State Council
↓
Apply for Fresh Registration
↓
Pay Fees and Wait for Approval
↓
Eligible to Practice

New Andhra Pradesh Model

Valid Medical Qualification
+
Registration in Any State/UT
↓
Direct Eligibility to Practice in Andhra Pradesh

Significance of the Reform

1. Improves Healthcare Availability

- Andhra Pradesh has around **1.05 lakh registered doctors** for nearly **5 crore population.**
- Can attract:
 - Specialists
 - Super-specialists
 - Young doctors
 - Medical faculty

2. Enhances Professional Mobility

- Removes bureaucratic barriers such as:
 - NOC requirements
 - Multiple registrations
 - Administrative delays

3. Supports Constitutional Principles

The reform strengthens:

<i>Constitutional Provision</i>	<i>Relevance</i>
Article 19(1)(d)	Freedom of movement
Article 19(1)(g)	Freedom to practice any profession
Article 14	Equality before law
Article 301	Freedom of trade and commerce

4. Strengthens Cooperative Federalism

- Encourages interstate movement of skilled professionals.
- Reduces protectionist tendencies among states.

National Medical Commission's Reform

One Nation, One Registration (ONOR)

- Launched in **August 2024** by the National Medical Commission.

Objectives:

- Single national registration database.
- Seamless movement of doctors across states.
- Reduce duplication and paperwork.

ONOR Framework

Medical Graduate
↓
National Medical Register
↓
Single Digital Registration
↓
Practice Anywhere in India

Implementation Challenges

- More than **30,000 applications pending verification**.
- Only about **1,800 certificates issued** so far.
- State Medical Councils continue to be major bottlenecks.

Issues with Existing State-Level Restrictions

Administrative Barriers

- Re-registration fees: **₹5,000–₹10,000**
- NOC processing may take weeks or months.

Protectionist Policies

Example:

- Bihar requires government doctors to complete **three years of service** before obtaining NOCs.

Benefits for Healthcare Delivery

Higher Doctor Mobility



Better Distribution of Specialists



Reduced Regional Imbalances



Improved Healthcare Access



Better Health Outcomes

Critical Evaluation

Advantages

- ✓ Addresses shortage of specialists.
- ✓ Promotes ease of doing business in healthcare.
- ✓ Supports national labour mobility.
- ✓ Reduces administrative burden.

Concerns

- ✗ Poorer states may experience brain drain.
- ✗ Need for effective disciplinary oversight across states.
- ✗ State councils may lose regulatory control.

Way Forward

1. Full Operationalisation of National Medical Register

- Digitised and interoperable system.

2. Mutual Recognition Framework

- Automatic acceptance of registrations across states.

3. National Disciplinary Database

- To monitor professional misconduct irrespective of state boundaries.

4. Incentivise Service in Underserved Areas

- Financial incentives rather than restrictive NOC policies.

Conclusion

Andhra Pradesh's decision marks a significant step towards a **national healthcare labour market**. By removing artificial barriers to professional mobility, the reform strengthens healthcare delivery, advances the constitutional principle of occupational freedom and aligns with the vision of "**One Nation, One Registration**" in the medical profession.

UPSC Mains Questions

Q.1: "Professional mobility is essential for improving healthcare access in India." Discuss in the context of recent reforms aimed at creating a seamless national registration framework for doctors. (**GS II, 250 words**)

Q.2: Examine the role of cooperative federalism in strengthening India's healthcare system through greater mobility of medical professionals. (**GS II, 150 words**)

One-Line understanding

"Healthcare human resources should flow to where patients need them most, not where administrative boundaries permit them to go."

23.06.2026

Topic: GS Paper II – International Relations

Topic: India and the World, Developments in UK Politics and their Global Impact

Starmmer resigns, paving way for orderly transfer of power

• SIX PRIME MINISTERS IN 10 YEARS

Starmer's resignation paves way for UK's seventh leader since the 2016 Brexit vote



JULY 2024 – 2026, KEIR STARMER:

Resigned amid sinking poll ratings, Labour infighting, and public anger on slow progress on growth, living costs.



2016, DAVID CAMERON:

Resigned after losing the EU referendum he called.



2016 – 2019, THERESA MAY:

Stepped down after Parliament rejected her Brexit deal 3 times.



2019 – JULY 2022, BORIS JOHNSON:

Forced to quit after a wave of resignations over his handling of allegations against a deputy chief whip.



SEPTEMBER 2022 – OCT 2022: LIZ TRUSS:

Resigned after just 50 days, following her “mini-budget” of unfunded tax cuts that caused market turmoil.



OCTOBER 2022 – JULY 2024, RISHI SUNAK:

Lost the 2024 general election to Keir Starmer after failing to revive growth or ease the cost-of-living crisis.

Brief

- The resignation announcement of UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer will make him Britain's seventh Prime Minister in a decade, reflecting deep political volatility and institutional challenges in the UK.

Reasons Behind Starmer's Exit

1. Economic Challenges

- Weak economic growth post-Brexit.
- High inflation and cost-of-living crisis.
- Fiscal constraints limiting welfare expenditure.

2. Unpopular Domestic Policies

- Reduction in welfare support and subsidies.
- Cuts in public spending affecting healthcare and social security.
- **Controversial "two-child benefit cap" policy.**

3. NHS Crisis

- Failure to reduce waiting times in the National Health Service.
- Shortage of healthcare professionals and rising public dissatisfaction.

4. Internal Party Divisions

- Opposition from Labour MPs over policy shifts.
- Allegations of ethical impropriety involving senior leaders.

5. Rise of Right-Wing Politics

- Growth of support for **Nigel Farage and Reform UK.**
- Increasing influence of **anti-immigration politics.**

Major Challenges Before the Next UK PM

1. Political Fragmentation

- Shift from a **two-party system** to a **multi-party (five-party) system.**
- Rise of regional and identity-based politics.
- Coalition politics and unstable mandates becoming common.

2. Declining Public Trust

- Growing distrust in political institutions and leadership.
- Increased public scrutiny due to scandals and policy reversals.

3. Economic Challenges

- Long-term effects of the:
 - **2008 Global Financial Crisis**

- Brexit
- Weak productivity growth and fiscal pressures post-Brexit.

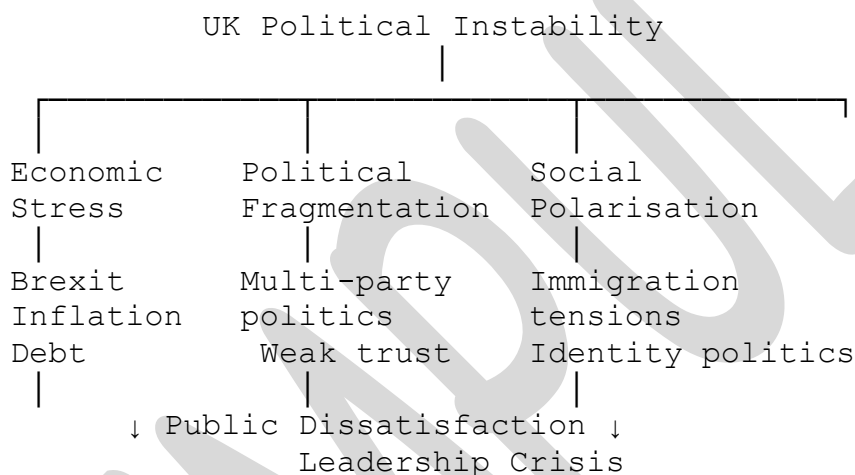
4. Social Polarisation

- Immigration debates leading to social tensions and race-related unrest.
- Welfare reforms and cost-of-living concerns dividing society.

5. Foreign Policy Challenges

- Managing relations with:
 - United States under unpredictable leadership.
 - European Union after Brexit.
- Maintaining defence commitments amid budgetary constraints.

Diagram: UK's Political Challenges



Implications for India

- Stability in UK politics affects:
 - India-UK trade negotiations (ongoing FTA).
 - Mobility of Indian students and professionals.
 - Defence and technology cooperation.
 - Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

Way Forward for the UK

TRUST Framework

- T – Transparent governance
- R – Rebuild institutions
- U – Unite divided communities
- S – Strengthen economic resilience
- T – Transform Britain's global role post-Brexit

UPSC Mains Question

Q.1: "Political instability in advanced democracies increasingly stems from institutional and societal transformations rather than electoral outcomes alone." Discuss with reference to recent developments in the United Kingdom. **(GS II, 250 words)**

Q.2: "The political instability witnessed in the United Kingdom is a consequence of both structural economic changes and evolving societal expectations." Examine critically. **(GS II, 250 words)**

24.06.2026

Topic: **GS Paper II – Governance | GS Paper III – Disaster Management**

Topics: Urban Governance, Disaster Management, Local Bodies, Public Safety

Topics: Urban Disasters, Institutional Preparedness, Risk Reduction

A Recurring, Preventable Urban Fire Tragedy – Lessons from Lucknow Fire

Context

- A major fire in a multi-storey building in Lucknow resulted in **at least 15 deaths**, exposing recurring failures in urban fire safety compliance, emergency preparedness, and regulatory enforcement.

Major Causes of Urban Fire Tragedies

1. Building Design Failures

- Single staircase serving as the only exit.
- Absence of emergency exits.
- Poor ventilation and smoke evacuation systems.
- Encroachments obstructing evacuation routes.

2. Regulatory Failures

- Weak enforcement of fire safety norms.
- Irregular inspections and compliance audits.
- Illegal alterations in building usage.

3. Fragmented Institutional Responsibility

- Multiple agencies with overlapping jurisdictions:
 - Development Authorities
 - Fire Services
 - Municipal Bodies
 - Electricity Departments
- Lack of accountability and coordination.

4. Commercialisation at the Cost of Safety

- Conversion of residential structures into commercial establishments.
- Cost-cutting on fire safety infrastructure.

Existing Legal and Institutional Framework

Framework	Purpose
Bureau of Indian Standards National Building Code (2016)	Fire safety standards for buildings
State Building Bye-laws	Incorporation of NBC provisions
Fire Services Acts of States	Fire prevention and emergency response
Municipal Building Regulations	Construction approvals and compliance

Recurring Pattern of Urban Fire Disasters

Rapid Urbanisation
↓
Commercial Pressure
↓
Building Violations
↓
Weak Inspections
↓
Fire Safety Non-Compliance
↓
Fire Incident
↓
Difficult Rescue Operations
↓
Loss of Lives and Property

Key Challenges

- Poor urban planning.
- Shortage of trained fire personnel.
- Inadequate emergency exits in old buildings.
- Weak culture of compliance among owners.

Way Forward

SAFE Cities Framework

S – Strict enforcement of building codes
A – Annual third-party fire safety audits
F – Fire exits and evacuation infrastructure mandatory
E – Emergency response modernisation and drills

Additional Measures

- GIS-based mapping of high-risk buildings.
- Personal accountability of approving authorities.
- Mandatory occupancy certificates linked to fire clearance.
- Adoption of smart fire detection systems.

Constitutional and Institutional Linkages

- **Article 21:** Right to life includes the right to safe living spaces.
- **74th Constitutional Amendment:** Empowers Urban Local Bodies for public health and safety.

UPSC Mains Question

"Urban fire disasters in India are less a consequence of inadequate laws and more a result of governance failures and weak enforcement." Discuss with suitable examples. *(GS II / III, 250 words)*

Value Addition for Mains

"Disasters are natural; tragedies are often man-made through failures of planning, enforcement and accountability."

This example can be used in answers related to **urban governance, disaster management, municipal reforms, and public administration.**

Topic: GS Paper II – Governance & Social Justice | GS Paper I – Society

Topics: Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Vulnerable Sections, Healthcare Ethics, Reproductive Rights

Topics: Issues relating to women, disability and social justice

Intellectual Disabilities and the Question of Reproductive Choice

Brief

- The Karnataka High Court permitted the parents of a 23-year-old woman with severe intellectual and developmental disabilities to undergo a **hysterectomy**, reigniting debates over **reproductive autonomy, informed consent, and rights of persons with disabilities.**

Core Issue

How should society balance:

- **Reproductive autonomy and bodily integrity**, and
- **Medical necessity and caregiver concerns**
when an individual lacks the capacity for informed consent?

Legal Framework in India

<i>Law/Provision</i>	<i>Key Provision</i>
Article 21	Right to life includes dignity, privacy and reproductive choice
Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016	Section 10 prohibits infertility-causing procedures without free and informed consent
Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971	Guardian consent allowed for women with mental illness but not for intellectual disability
National Health Ministry Guidelines on Unnecessary Hysterectomies, 2022	Prevents medically unnecessary hysterectomies

Doctrine Applied by Courts

Parens Patriae Doctrine

- Courts act as the guardian of persons unable to protect their own interests.
- Decisions are based on the "Best Interest Principle".

Severe Intellectual Disability
↓
Unable to provide informed consent
↓
Court Intervention
(Parens Patriae Doctrine)
↓
Best Interest Assessment
↓
Decision balancing:
Health + Dignity + Bodily Integrity

Important Judicial Pronouncements

1. Suchita Srivastava v. Chandigarh Administration

- Recognised **reproductive choice as part of personal liberty under Article 21.**
- Held that abortion cannot be forced merely because a woman has intellectual disability.

2. Dr Narendra Gupta v. Union of India

- Addressed unnecessary hysterectomies among vulnerable women.

- Directed strict implementation of 2022 guidelines and creation of monitoring committees.

Ethical Dilemmas

Arguments Supporting Judicial Approval

- Protection from repeated abuse or unwanted pregnancies.
- Medical complications may necessitate intervention.
- Reduces burden of invasive menstrual management.

Concerns

- Risk of coercive sterilisation.
- Violation of bodily autonomy and dignity.
- Possibility of misuse against vulnerable women.

International Perspective

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities emphasises:
 - Equality before law.
 - Respect for bodily autonomy.
 - Supported decision-making rather than substituted decision-making.

Way Forward

CARE Framework

C – Capacity assessment by experts

A – Assisted decision-making mechanisms

R – Rights-based approach over convenience-based approach

E – Ethical and judicial oversight in irreversible procedures

UPSC Mains Question

"The reproductive rights of women with intellectual disabilities lie at the intersection of autonomy, medical ethics and state responsibility." Discuss in the context of Indian legal and constitutional safeguards. **(GS I / II, 250 words)**

Value Addition for Ethics (GS Paper IV)

Ethical Principles Involved:

- Autonomy
- Beneficence
- Non-maleficence
- Justice
- Human dignity

"The true test of a rights-based society lies in how it protects the autonomy of those who are least able to defend it themselves."

Topic: GS Paper III: Indian Economy, International Trade, Globalisation | GS Paper II: India-US Relations, Bilateral Agreements and Trade Diplomacy | Essay: Globalisation, Economic Nationalism, Protectionism vs Free Trade

India-US Trade Negotiations and Tariff Reset

Brief

- The proposed **India-US trade agreement** is nearing completion ahead of the expiry of the US reciprocal tariff framework.
- Negotiations are taking place amid America's evolving tariff policy under President Donald Trump and concerns over market access, agriculture, and technology trade.

Background

- The US imposed **reciprocal tariffs** under the **International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA)**.
- These tariffs are expected to be replaced by a new tariff structure under **Section 301 of the US Trade Act, 1974**.
- India seeks to avoid high tariffs and secure stable access to the US market through a bilateral trade deal.

India-US Trade Negotiation Timeline

Feb 2025

↓

PM Modi visits US

↓

Trade negotiations intensify

↓

US imposes retaliatory tariffs on India
(10% baseline + proposed 12.5%)

↓

June 2026

USTR chief Jamieson Greer visits India

↓

Expected Trade Agreement before July 24

India-US Trade Snapshot

Goods Trade (May 2026)

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Value</i>
India's exports to US	\$8.81 billion
India's imports from US	\$5.87 billion
Trade surplus	\$2.94 billion
Total trade	\$14.68 billion

Trend: India's Trade Surplus is Shrinking

Trade Surplus with US

Mar 2025 → \$6.38 bn

Jun 2025 → \$3.36 bn

Nov 2025 → \$1.67 bn

Feb 2026 → \$3.72 bn

May 2026 → \$2.94 bn

Why is the Shrinking Surplus a Concern?

India runs trade deficits with most major partners:

China → Large Deficit

Russia → Large Deficit

UAE → Deficit

Saudi Arabia → Deficit

Australia → Deficit

Japan → Deficit

USA → Only major economy where India has surplus

Thus, the US surplus helps partially offset India's overall merchandise trade deficit.

Major Issues in Negotiations

1. Agricultural Market Access

US demands:

- Greater access for:
 - Dairy products
 - Poultry
 - Meat products
 - GM crops

India's concerns:

- Farmer livelihoods
- Subsidy asymmetry
- Food security concerns

2. Non-Tariff Barriers

US allegations include:

- Quality standards
- Certification delays
- Local content requirements
- Regulatory approvals

3. Industrial Protection

India seeks protection for:

- Electronics manufacturing
- MSMEs
- Automobile sector
- Renewable energy manufacturing

4. Digital and Technology Trade

Issues include:

- Data localisation
- Digital taxation
- E-commerce regulations
- Semiconductor supply chains

5. Tariffs on Indian Exports

Sectors affected:

- Textiles
- Pharmaceuticals
- Gems and jewellery
- Engineering goods

US Trade Policy: Carrot and Stick Strategy

Market Access Offers

+

Trade Agreements

↓

"CARROT"

Higher Tariffs

Section 301 Investigations

Sanctions Threat

↓

"STICK"

Section 301 of US Trade Act, 1974

Allows the US President to:

- Investigate foreign trade practices.
- Impose retaliatory tariffs.
- Restrict imports from countries considered unfair traders.

Previously used against:

- China
- Vietnam
- European Union
- India (proposed)

Opportunities for India

1. Increased Market Access

- Textiles
- Pharmaceuticals
- Engineering goods
- Services exports

2. Supply Chain Diversification

- China+1 strategy benefits India.

3. FDI Inflows

- Greater investor confidence through trade certainty.

4. Technology Partnerships

- Semiconductors
- AI
- Defence manufacturing

Challenges for India

US Pressure on Agriculture

↓

Domestic Political Sensitivity

↓

Need to Protect Farmers

↓

Negotiation Complexity

Other challenges:

- Tariff pressures
- Protection of MSMEs
- Trade deficit concerns
- Compliance with US standards

Way Forward

India should pursue:

- Sector-specific tariff reductions.
- Safeguards for agriculture.
- Greater services market access.
- Mutual recognition agreements for standards.
- Supply chain partnerships in strategic sectors.

The US should:

- Recognise India's developmental concerns.
- Avoid unilateral tariff actions.
- Promote predictable trade rules.

Conclusion

India and the US are approaching a crucial moment in their economic relationship. A balanced agreement can strengthen supply chains, boost investment, and deepen strategic ties, but success depends on reconciling India's developmental priorities with America's market access demands.

UPSC Mains Question

Q1. "India-US trade relations are increasingly shaped by strategic considerations as much as by economic interests." *Examine in the context of ongoing tariff negotiations between the two countries. (GS II / III, 250 words)*

Q2. Discuss the major challenges and opportunities for India in negotiating a comprehensive trade agreement with the United States. **(GS II / III, 150 words)**

Quick Prlm

International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA)

- US law enacted in 1977.
- Allows the US President to regulate international commerce during a **national emergency**.

Section 301 of the Trade Act, 1974

- Enables unilateral trade action against unfair trade practices.

USTR

- **United States Trade Representative**
- Chief trade negotiator of the US government.

Current USTR Chief

- Jamieson Greer

India's Commerce Minister

- Piyush Goyal
-

25.06.2026

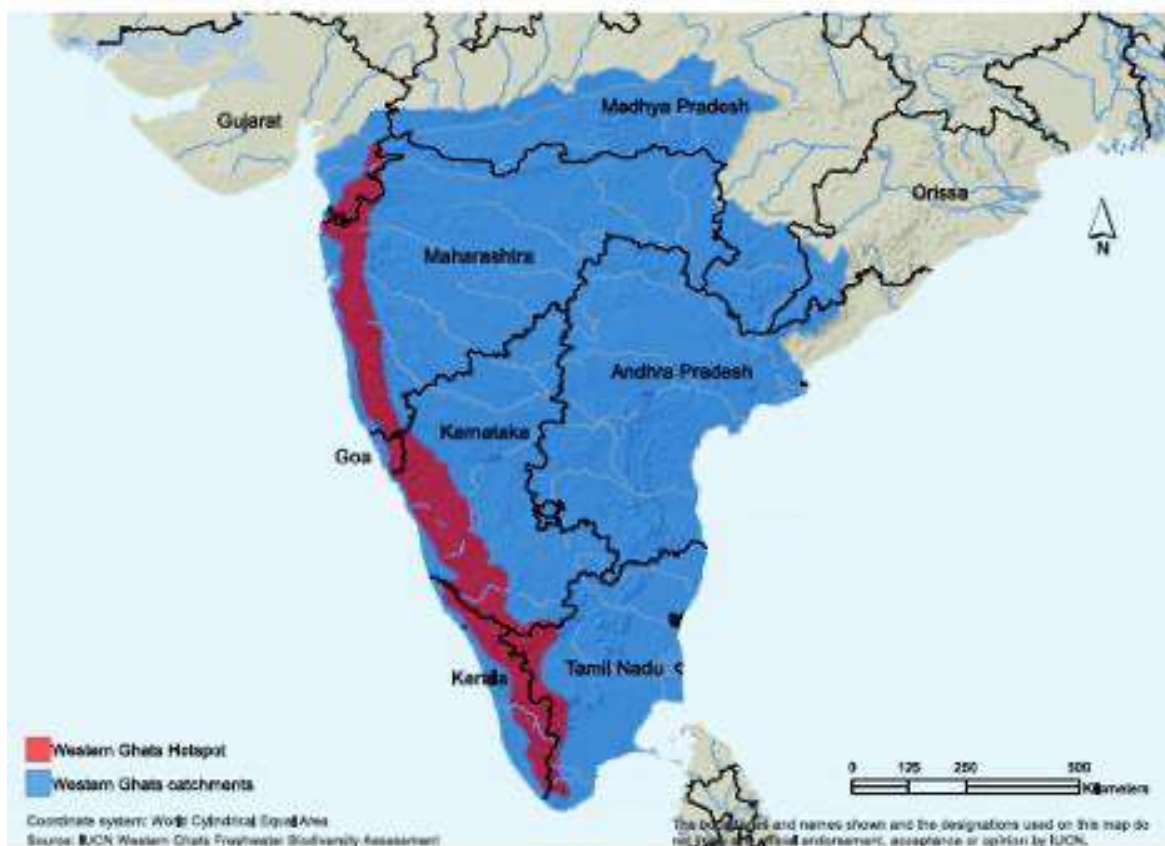
Topic: GS Paper III: Environment and Ecology, Biodiversity Conservation, Disaster Management | GS Paper II: Centre-State Relations, Environmental Governance |
Essay: Development vs Environment Debate

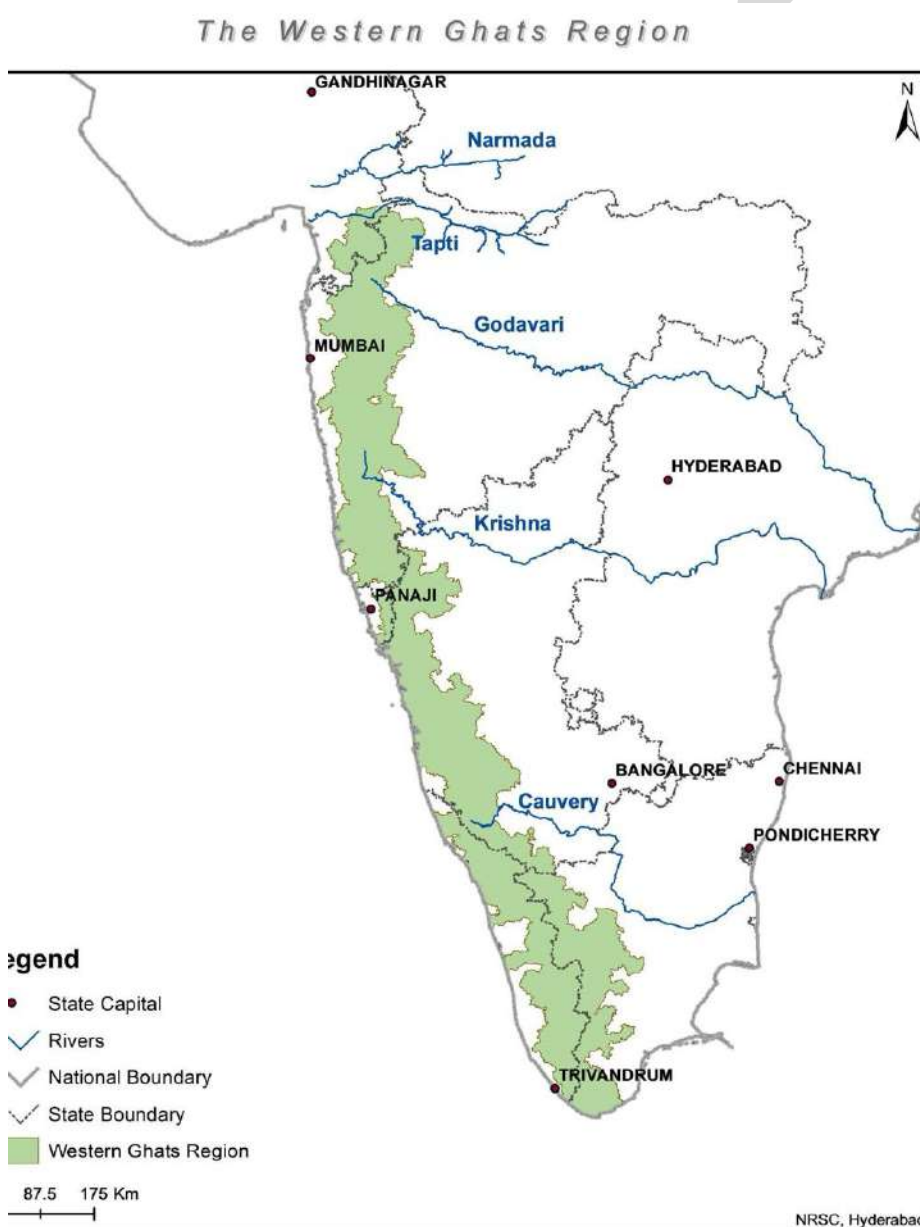
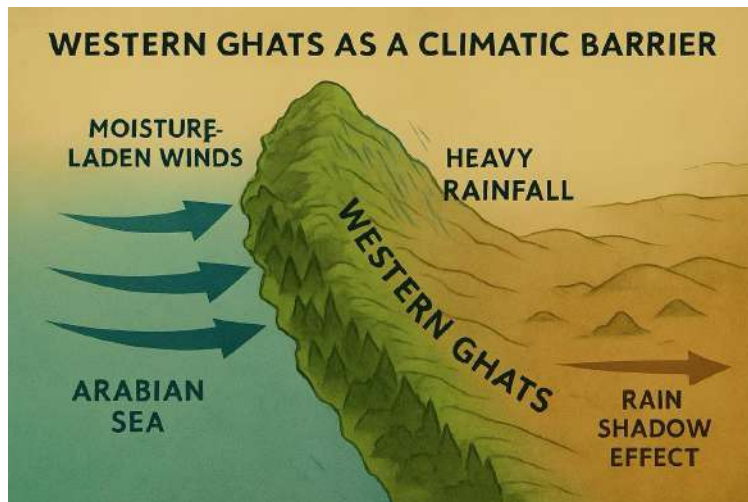
Western Ghats Conservation and the Kasturirangan Committee Impasse

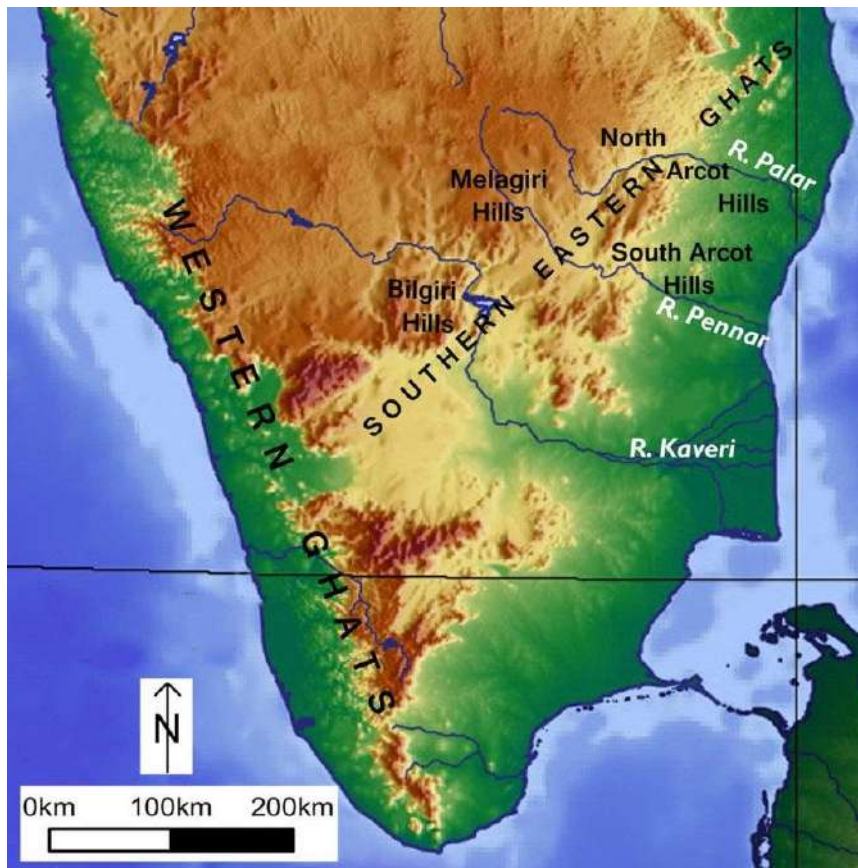
Brief

- The implementation of the recommendations of the **Kasturirangan Committee** regarding protection of the **Western Ghats** has remained stalled for over a decade due to opposition from several states.
- Recently, **Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa** have shown willingness to accept **Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA) notification**, reviving hopes for conservation efforts.

Western Ghats at a Glance







Feature

Length

States Covered

UNESCO Status

Biodiversity Status

Important Gap

Details

About 1,600 km

Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu

World Heritage Site

One of the world's eight "hottest hotspots"

Palakkad Gap between Kerala and Tamil Nadu

Kasturirangan Committee (2013)

Objective:

- To balance **environmental conservation** with **sustainable development** in the Western Ghats.

Key Recommendation:

- Declare approximately **60,000 sq km** (**37% of Western Ghats**) as **Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA)**.

Activities Proposed to be Prohibited in ESA

Ecologically Sensitive Area

- Mining and Quarrying
- Thermal Power Plants
- Red Category Polluting Industries
- Large Construction Projects

Activities Allowed

Sustainable Activities

- Agriculture
- Plantation Crops
- Eco-tourism
- Organic Farming
- Local Livelihood Activities

Importance of the Western Ghats

1. Biodiversity Hotspot

- Home to thousands of endemic species.
- Supports unique flora and fauna.

Examples:

- Lion-tailed macaque
- Nilgiri tahr
- Malabar civet

2. Water Security

Western Ghats

↓

Origin of Major Rivers

↓

Godavari

Krishna

Cauvery

Periyar

Tungabhadra

Supports agriculture, drinking water and hydropower across peninsular India.

3. Monsoon Regulation

Arabian Sea Moisture

↓

Western Ghats act as barrier

↓

Heavy rainfall on western slopes

↓

Southwest Monsoon distribution

4. Climate Regulation

- Carbon sequestration.
- Temperature moderation.
- Reduction of climate extremes.

5. Disaster Prevention

Healthy forests reduce:

- Landslides
- Soil erosion
- Flood intensity

Why States Opposed ESA Notification?

<i>Concern</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
Development Restrictions	Fear of reduced industrial growth
Mining Impact	Loss of mining revenue
Construction Limits	Restrictions on infrastructure projects
Local Opposition	Concerns among settlers and plantation owners
Federal Concerns	States perceive excessive central intervention

Lessons from Recent Disasters

Kerala Floods (2018)

- Extreme rainfall combined with ecological degradation increased vulnerability.

Wayanad Landslides (2024)

- Highlighted the dangers of unregulated construction and deforestation.

Deforestation

+

Quarrying

+

Slope Destabilisation



Floods and Landslides

Ecological Services Provided by Western Ghats

Western Ghats Ecosystem Services

- Water Security
- Carbon Sequestration
- Biodiversity Conservation
- Climate Regulation
- Livelihood Support

These benefits extend well beyond the six states into much of peninsular India.

Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES): A Possible Solution

Concept:

- Communities protecting forests and ecosystems receive financial compensation for ecological services provided.

Examples:

- Carbon credits
- Watershed payments
- Conservation incentives

Forest Protection



Ecological Services



Compensation to Local Communities



Sustainable Development

Way Forward

1. Cooperative Federalism

- Build consensus between Centre and states.

2. Scientific Zonation

- Differentiate between highly sensitive and moderately sensitive regions.

3. Payment for Ecosystem Services

- Incentivise conservation by local communities.

4. Sustainable Livelihoods

- Promote eco-tourism, agroforestry and organic farming.

5. Strengthen Environmental Governance

- Improve monitoring of mining and construction activities.

Conclusion

- The Western Ghats are not merely a regional ecological asset but a national natural infrastructure supporting water security, climate stability and biodiversity. Reconciling developmental aspirations with ecological sustainability through cooperative federalism and incentive-based conservation is essential to break the long-standing impasse over the Kasturirangan recommendations.

UPSC Mains Questions

Q1. "The debate over the Western Ghats reflects the larger challenge of balancing ecological sustainability with developmental aspirations." Discuss in the context of the Kasturirangan Committee recommendations. **(GS II / III, 250 words)**

Q2. Discuss the ecological significance of the Western Ghats and examine the reasons behind the resistance to Ecologically Sensitive Area notifications by states. **(GS III, 150 words)**

Quick Prlm

Kasturirangan Committee

- Constituted in 2012.
- Officially known as the **High Level Working Group (HLWG)** on Western Ghats.

Earlier Committee

- **Madhav Gadgil** headed the earlier Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP).

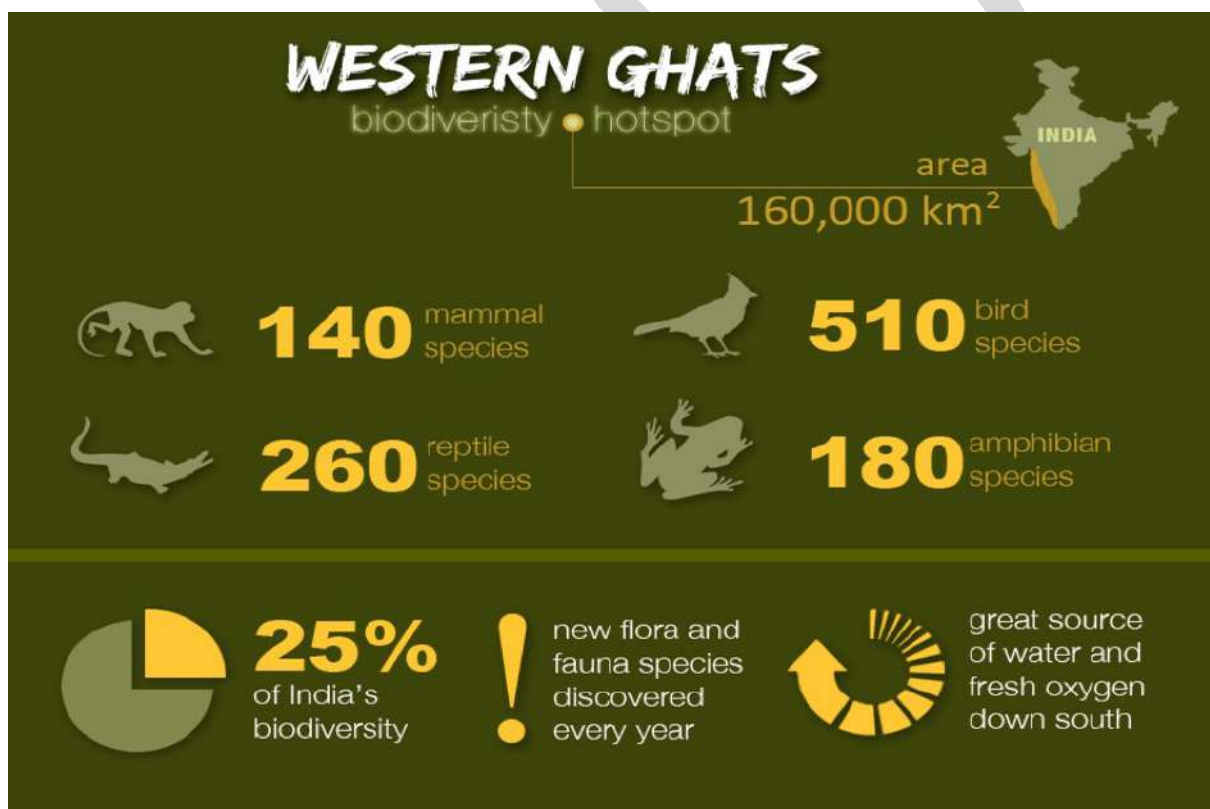
Western Ghats

- Recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2012.
- Extends across **six Indian states**.

Palakkad Gap

- A natural mountain pass between:
 - Kerala
 - Tamil Nadu

It plays an important role in climate, transport and species movement across the Western Ghats.



WESTERN GHATS MATTER?

The Western Ghats are vital for life, livelihoods and the environment.



1. RICH BIODIVERSITY

- Thousands of plant species
- Endemic flora and fauna



2. WILDLIFE HABITAT

- Tigers
- Elephants
- Lion-tailed macaque
- Nilgiri tahr



3. WATER SECURITY

Source of major rivers:

- Godavari River
- Krishna River
- Kaveri River



4. CLIMATE REGULATION

- Controls rainfall patterns
- Prevents soil erosion



Formation of the Western Ghats



Major Rock Types in the Western Ghats



Topic: GS Paper II: India and its Neighbourhood & International Relations

GS Paper III: Internal Security (terrorism and cross-border linkages)

Essay: Strategic Autonomy in Foreign Policy

India–Turkey Relations

after Operation Sindoor

Brief

- After relations deteriorated sharply following **Operation Sindoor (2025)** and **Turkey's support for Pakistan**, India and Turkey are showing signs of diplomatic normalization with the resumption of bilateral consultations and enhanced law-enforcement cooperation.

India–Turkey Relations: Timeline

2002–2018

↓

Improvement in ties under Erdogan

↑ Trade and cultural exchanges

2019

↓

Turkey criticises abrogation of Article 370

Relations begin deteriorating

2020–2024

↓

Growing Turkish support for Pakistan

Defence cooperation with Islamabad

2025

↓

Operation Sindoor

Turkey condemns India's military action

Relations reach lowest point

2026

↓

Foreign Office Consultations resume

Security cooperation revives

Beginning of diplomatic thaw

Major Reasons for Strategic Mistrust

1. Kashmir Issue

- Turkey repeatedly raised Kashmir at **international forums**.
- Criticised India's decision to **revoke Article 370** in 2019.

2. Turkey-Pakistan Strategic Partnership

Turkey maintains close ties with Pakistan in:

- Defence cooperation
- Military training
- Strategic diplomacy

Turkey



Military Cooperation



Pakistan



Strategic Concerns for India

3. Operation Sindoor Fallout (2025)

Turkey:

- Criticised India's military action.
- Called it "unprovoked aggression".

India responded by:

- Expanding ties with Cyprus.
- Reviewing economic engagement.
- Restricting Turkish commercial interests.

India's Response after Operation Sindoor

Turkey's Support to Pakistan



Diplomatic Backlash



Economic Measures



Strategic Signalling

Measures taken:

- Cancellation of aircraft maintenance contracts.
- Suspension of academic MoUs.
- Reduction in tourism flows.

- Withdrawal of security clearance for Turkish airport operators.
- Enhanced engagement with Cyprus.

Signs of a Diplomatic Thaw

1. Resumption of Foreign Office Consultations

- Bilateral consultations resumed after four years.

2. Security Cooperation

- Extradition of narcotics trafficker **Salim Dola** from Turkey to India.

3. Increased Diplomatic Engagement

- Both countries have shown willingness to separate economic interests from political disagreements.

Economic Importance of India-Turkey Relations

Bilateral Trade

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Value</i>
Bilateral trade	Over \$10 billion annually
Peak trade level	\$13.82 billion (2022)

Major Indian Exports to Turkey

- Chemicals
- Machinery
- Auto components
- Textiles
- Pharmaceuticals

Major Turkish Exports to India

- Marble
- Agricultural products
- Machinery
- Construction materials
-

Strategic Importance of Turkey for India

Turkey

- Gateway to Europe
- Access to Central Asia
- Link to Mediterranean region

- └ Influence in Islamic world
- └ Infrastructure opportunities

Turkey occupies a critical geopolitical location connecting:

- Europe
- Asia
- Middle East



Why Turkey Needs India

Economic Reasons

- Large Indian market.
- Growing Indian middle class.

- Investment opportunities.

Strategic Reasons

- Diversification beyond Pakistan dependence.
- Expanding Asian economic engagement.

Challenges in Bilateral Relations

Challenge

Kashmir issue

Turkey-Pakistan defence ties

Geopolitical rivalries

Defence cooperation with Pakistan

Impact

Diplomatic tensions

Strategic mistrust

Policy divergence

Security concerns for India

Way Forward

For India

- Continue engagement while safeguarding core security interests.
- Separate economic cooperation from political disagreements where possible.

For Turkey

- Adopt a more balanced approach on Kashmir.
- Increase transparency regarding military cooperation with Pakistan.

For Both Countries

- Expand trade and investment.
- Strengthen counter-terrorism cooperation.
- Increase people-to-people contacts.

Diagram: Future Trajectory of India-Turkey Relations

Political Differences
+
Economic Opportunities
+
Strategic Geography

↓
Pragmatic Engagement
↓
Stable Bilateral Relations

Conclusion

- India and Turkey occupy important positions in Asia's geopolitical landscape. While Pakistan and Kashmir continue to cast a shadow over relations, growing economic interdependence and strategic pragmatism provide opportunities for a calibrated rapprochement without compromising India's core national interests.

UPSC Mains Questions

Q1. "India-Turkey relations are increasingly shaped by extra-bilateral factors rather than bilateral issues themselves." Discuss. (*GS II / III, 250 words*)

Q2. Examine the impact of Turkey's relations with Pakistan on India-Turkey bilateral relations. Suggest measures to improve ties. (*GS II / III, 150 words*)

Quick Prlm

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

- President of Turkey since 2014.
- Prime Minister of Turkey from 2003 to 2014.

Operation Sindoor

- India's military response following the Pahalgam terrorist attack.

Nicosia

- Capital city of Cyprus.

Cyprus

- Its sovereignty dispute with Turkey has influenced regional geopolitics.

Salim Dola

- Extradited from Turkey to India in 2026 as part of bilateral security cooperation.

26.06.2026

Topic : GS Paper II: Governance, Health, Judiciary, Welfare of Vulnerable Sections | GS Paper III: Infrastructure, Road Safety, Disaster Management |
Essay: Governance failures and human lives

• AMONG MEASURES PROPOSED WERE AN SOS PHONE NUMBER, GPS AMBULANCES, GOOD SAMARITAN LAW AND A TRAUMA REGISTRY

Saving lives on road: SC told states to put in 5 key measures, hardly any state did

• **TWO-THIRDS OF DEATHS IN 8 STATES ALONE**

State	Road Deaths (2024)	112 NERS Integration	Good Samaritan Grievance	Trauma Registry	Ambulance: Public GPS Dashboard
Uttar Pradesh	24,118	Partial	No	No	Yes
Tamil Nadu	18,449	Partial	NA	Yes	Yes
Maharashtra	15,715	Partial	Yes	Yes	No
Madhya Pradesh	14,791	Partial	No	Yes	No
Karnataka	12,390	NA	Yes	No	No
Rajasthan	11,790	Partial	No	No	No
Bihar	9,347	Partial	No	No	No
Andhra Pradesh	8,346	No	NA	No	No



Total deaths in top 8 states
1,14,946 (65%)

- Most of the states did not provide GPS device data on private ambulances
- Only 1 of 8 states has linked GPS dashboard with 112 NERS
- Except Karnataka, seven states have their own rescue protocol

SOURCE: STATES'S SUBMISSIONS IN SUPREME COURT

Road Safety and Trauma Care in India:

Status of Supreme Court Directions

Road Accident Statistics

Indicator

Road deaths in 2024

Daily deaths

Hourly deaths

Share of global vehicles

Share of global road deaths

Value

1.77 lakh

~485 per day

~20 deaths/hour

1%

11%

Golden Hour

- The **Golden Hour** refers to the **first 60 minutes** after a **traumatic injury**, during which prompt medical treatment significantly increases survival chances.

Relevant Laws and Policies

1. Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019

- Inserted **Section 134A**
- Provides legal protection to **Good Samaritans**.

2. Good Samaritan Rules, 2020

- Protect helpers from:
 - Police harassment
 - Hospital detention
 - Legal liability

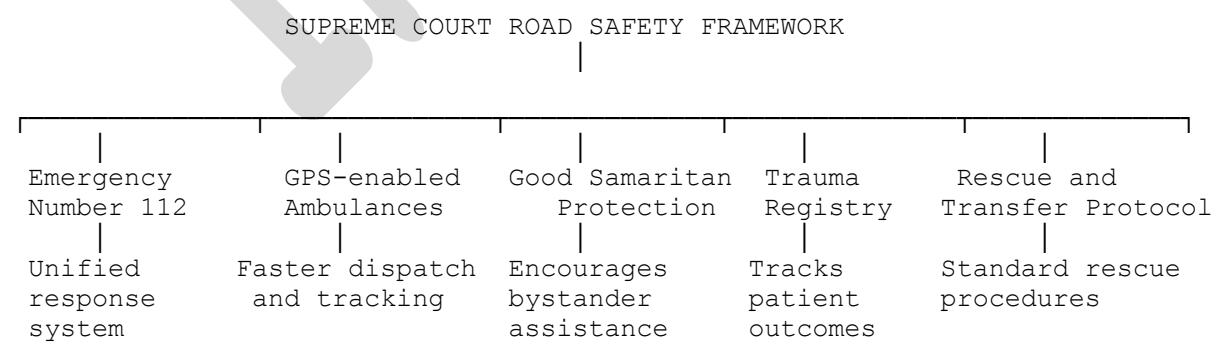
3. Nationwide Emergency Response System (NERS)

- Emergency number: **112**
- Integrates:
 - Police
 - Ambulance
 - Fire services
 - Women helpline

4. National Health Mission

- Supports trauma centres and emergency medical care infrastructure.

Five Key Measures Directed by the Supreme Court



Current Status

Measure

Unified Emergency Number
GPS Ambulances
Good Samaritan Grievance System
Trauma Registry
Rescue Protocol

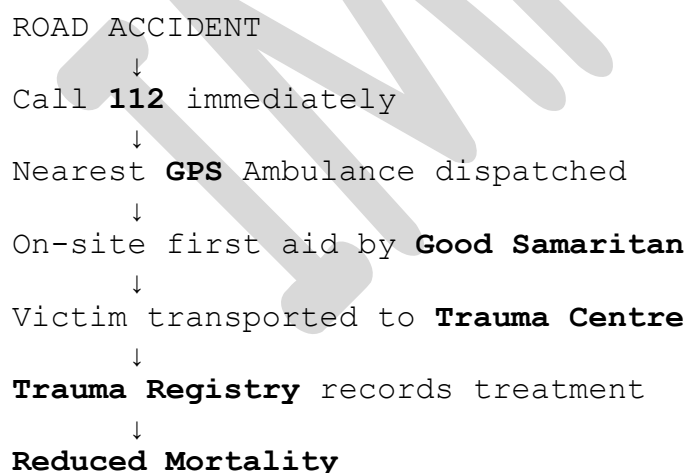
Status

Most states incomplete
Partial implementation
Only 8 states
Missing in 22 states
Only 17 states

Status of High Fatality States

State	112 Integration	Good Samaritan System	Trauma Registry
Uttar Pradesh	Partial	No	No
Tamil Nadu	Partial	Yes	Yes
Maharashtra	Partial	Yes	Yes
Madhya Pradesh	Partial	Under process	Yes
Karnataka	No data	Yes	No
Rajasthan	Partial	Under process	Under process
Bihar	Partial	Partial	No
Andhra Pradesh	Uses 108 system	Partial	Partial

Diagram: Golden Hour Response Chain



Major Challenges

1. Fragmented Emergency Systems

- Multiple helplines create confusion.

- Lack of integration with 112.

2. Fear of Legal Harassment

- Citizens hesitate to help victims.

3. Poor Ambulance Tracking

- No real-time public dashboard.

4. Lack of Trauma Registries

- Weak data for policy making.

5. Urban-Rural Disparity

- Trauma centres concentrated in cities.

Importance of Good Samaritan Law

Fear of Police Questions



Bystanders avoid helping



Delay in treatment



Preventable deaths



Good Samaritan protection breaks this chain

NITI Aayog–AIIMS Finding

- Nearly 30% of trauma deaths occur due to delays in emergency care.

International Best Practices

<i>Country</i>	<i>Practice</i>
UK	National Trauma Network
Germany	Helicopter emergency medical services
Australia	Real-time trauma registries
USA	Level I-IV trauma centre hierarchy

Way Forward

Institutional Measures

- Universal integration with 112.
- Mandatory GPS in all ambulances.
- Public ambulance tracking dashboard.

Medical Measures

- Trauma centres every 100 km on highways.
- Standard triage protocols.
- National trauma registry.

Legal Measures

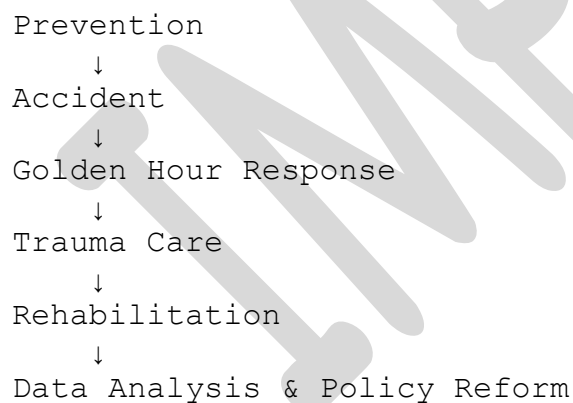
- Effective implementation of Good Samaritan law.
- Time-bound grievance redressal.

Technological Measures

- AI-based ambulance routing.
- Drone-assisted medical delivery in remote areas.

Value Addition Diagram

ROAD SAFETY ECOSYSTEM



UPSC Mains Question

Q1. "Despite accounting for one of the highest numbers of road fatalities globally, India lacks an integrated trauma care system." Discuss the significance of the Golden Hour framework and examine the challenges in implementing it in India. **(GS II / III, 250 words)**

Q2. "Good Samaritan protection is as important as road infrastructure in reducing road fatalities." Examine. **(GS II / II, 150 words)**

Q3. "Road safety is a governance challenge rather than merely a transport issue." Discuss with suitable examples. **(GS II / III, 250 words)**

One-line Conclusion

India's road safety challenge cannot be solved only by better roads; it requires a seamless trauma care ecosystem that ensures no life is lost due to delays after an accident.

Topic : GS Paper III: Economy, Investment, Technology, Growth and Development | GS Paper III: Science and Technology – Artificial Intelligence | Essay: Technology and Economic Development

Silicon Valley to Seoul:

AI Exuberance and Global Market Risks

Brief

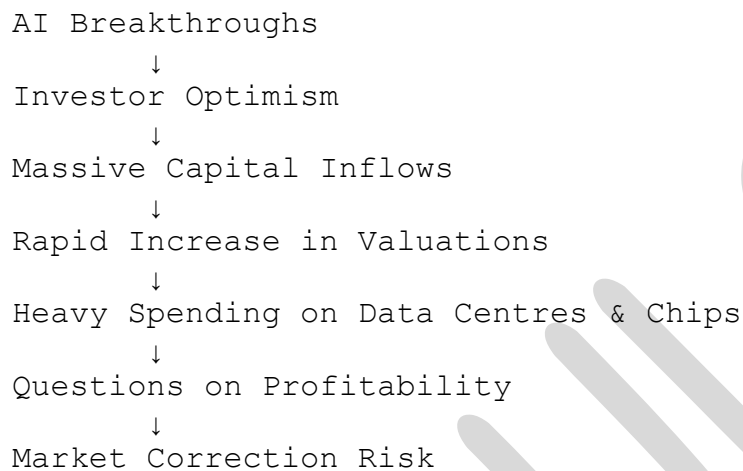
- Global stock markets witnessed volatility amid concerns regarding **overvaluation of AI companies and uncertainty over monetisation of massive investments in Artificial Intelligence infrastructure.**

Core Issue

- The world is witnessing an unprecedented **AI investment boom**, driven by expectations that **Artificial Intelligence will transform industries and generate enormous profits.**
- However, **concerns** are emerging regarding:

- Excessive valuations of AI companies
- Sustainability of huge capital expenditure
- Rising interest rates
- Possibility of an AI asset bubble similar to the Dot-com Bubble (2000)

Diagram: Global AI Investment Cycle



Major Features of the Current AI Boom

1. Massive Capital Expenditure

- AI hyperscalers are expected to spend over **\$5 trillion by 2030** on:
 - **Data centres**
 - **AI chips**
 - **Cloud infrastructure**
 - **Energy systems**

2. Concentration of Market Capitalisation

South Korea

- Semiconductor firms dominate markets:
 - SK Hynix
 - Samsung Electronics

Japan

- AI-related firms witnessing strong gains:
 - Advantest
 - Tokyo Electron

- Kioxia

United States

- Leading AI firms:
 - OpenAI
 - Anthropic

Diagram: Global AI Geography

USA

— AI Models (OpenAI, Anthropic)

South Korea

— Memory Chips (SK Hynix, Samsung)

Japan

— Semiconductor Equipment

Global Data Centres

— AI Computing Infrastructure

Comparison with Dot-Com Bubble

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Dot-Com Bubble (2000)</i>	<i>AI Boom (2026)</i>
Driver	<i>Internet Revolution</i>	Artificial Intelligence
Valuation Basis	<i>Future Expectations</i>	Future Productivity Gains
Capital Flow	<i>Venture Capital</i>	Global Institutional Capital
Infrastructure Investment	<i>Internet Firms</i>	Data Centres and Chips
Risk	<i>Overvaluation</i>	Overvaluation and weak monetisation

Diagram: Bubble Formation Mechanism

Technological Innovation

↓

High Growth Expectations

↓

Speculative Investments
↓
Asset Price Inflation
↓
Interest Rate Increase
↓
Correction or Crash

Role of Central Banks

Historically, asset bubbles tend to burst when:

- Inflation rises.
- Central banks increase interest rates.
- Liquidity in financial markets contracts.

Current Concern:

- Rising US inflation may compel the Federal Reserve to tighten monetary policy.

Implications for India

Positive Aspects

- Indian markets have avoided excessive AI-driven speculation.
- Reduced exposure to a global technology correction.

Negative Aspects

- Foreign investors shifted capital towards AI-heavy markets.
- India witnessed:
 - Large FPI outflows
 - Falling net FDI inflows
 - Pressure on the rupee

Diagram: Impact on Indian Economy

Global AI Boom
↓
Capital shifts to AI economies
↓
FPI Outflows from India
↓
Pressure on Rupee
↓
Reduced Domestic Liquidity
↓
Lower Investment Growth

Challenges for India

1. Limited Participation in AI Value Chain

- Weak semiconductor ecosystem.
- Limited data centre capacity.

2. Declining FDI Flows

- Global investors favour AI-intensive economies.

3. Currency Pressures

- Capital outflows affect exchange rate stability.

4. Innovation Gap

- Insufficient AI research and development expenditure.

Opportunities for India

AI Services Hub

India can become:

- AI application developer
- AI services exporter
- Global talent supplier

Semiconductor Manufacturing

Supported through:

- India Semiconductor Mission
- Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme

Data Centre Expansion

- Increasing digital economy creates domestic demand.

Government Initiatives

- IndiaAI Mission
- Semiconductor Mission
- Digital India Programme
- National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence
- India Semiconductor Incentive Scheme

Way Forward

Short Term

- Improve ease of doing business.
- Stabilise capital inflows.
- Enhance policy certainty.

Medium Term

- Develop semiconductor manufacturing ecosystem.
- Encourage AI startups and innovation.

Long Term

- Build sovereign AI infrastructure.
- Invest in high-performance computing and AI research.

Value Addition Diagram

AI Leadership Strategy for India

Talent
+
Data
+
Semiconductors
+
Computing Infrastructure
+
Research Ecosystem
=
Global AI Competitiveness

UPSC Mains Questions

Q1. "The current global AI investment boom carries both transformational opportunities and systemic financial risks." Discuss with reference to previous technology bubbles. **(GS III, 250 words)**

Q2. "India has largely remained outside the global AI stock market rally. Is this a weakness or a strategic advantage?" Examine. **(GS II, 250 words)**

Q3. "Artificial Intelligence is increasingly becoming an issue of economic sovereignty rather than merely technological advancement." Discuss. **(GS III, 250 words)**

One-Line Conclusion

Artificial Intelligence may become the defining technology of the century, but sustainable value creation will ultimately depend on productivity gains rather than investor enthusiasm alone.

Topic: GS Paper II: Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health and Education | GS Paper I: Social Issues – Nutrition and Welfare | GS Paper III: Human Resource Development

In West Bengal, Keep Egg on the Menu

Why in News?

- The West Bengal government increased the per-child allocation for the Mid-Day Meal Scheme from **₹6.78 to ₹10**, but the decision to entrust meal operations in the Kolkata Municipal Corporation area to ISKCON has effectively removed **eggs** from the school menu.

Nutritional Significance of Eggs

Eggs
↓
High-quality Protein
↓
Micronutrients (Iron, Vitamin B12)
↓
Reduced Anaemia and Stunting
↓
Improved Child Development

- Economical and culturally acceptable source of nutrition.
- Particularly important in tackling **protein deficiency and anaemia**.

Concerns

- Imposition of a **vegetarian dietary preference** in a culturally diverse state.

- Alternatives such as **paneer, soyabean, rajma and pulses** may face challenges of affordability, supply and acceptability.
- Risks undermining nutrition outcomes among vulnerable children.

Evidence

- According to the latest National Family Health Survey, nearly **30% of children under five remain stunted**.
- West Bengal continues to face high levels of **child undernutrition and anaemia**.

Way Forward

- Ensure **scientifically designed, locally acceptable menus**.
- Nutrition policies should be guided by **public health evidence rather than ideological preferences**.
- Provide dietary flexibility while protecting children's nutritional rights.

UPSC Mains Question

"Food choices in welfare schemes often intersect with issues of nutrition, culture and politics." Examine in the context of school meal programmes in India. (**GS I/II/III, 150 words**)

Conclusion

- School nutrition programmes should prioritise children's health and nutritional outcomes over ideological or dietary preferences.

Topic : GS Paper I: Physical Geography – Earthquakes, Plate Tectonics and Geomorphic Processes | GS Paper III: Disaster Management

FIRST QUAKE of magnitude 7.2 hit west of Moron on Caribbean coast; a minute later, a second 7.5 magnitude earthquake struck.

DISTRAUGHT RESIDENTS search for their loved ones in the rubble; shocked survivors taken away on stretchers.

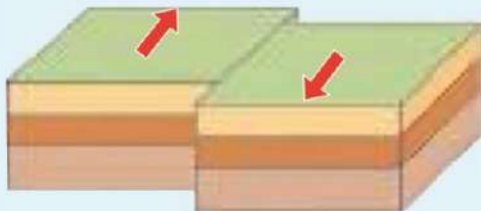
VENEZUELA HAS been facing economic disarray and this disaster poses a huge challenge for President Delcy Rodríguez.

‘Like a horror movie scene’

• What is a fault?

A fault is a fracture or zone of fractures between two blocks of rock. When these blocks move rapidly, they cause quakes.

WHAT HAPPENED IN VENEZUELA?

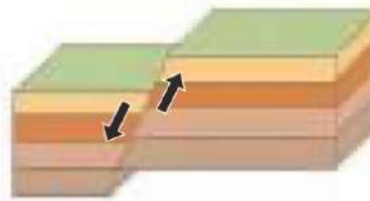
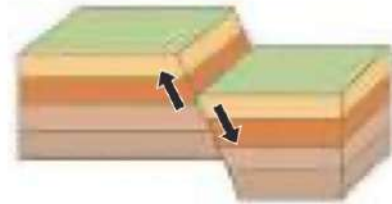


STRIKE-SLIP FAULT:
Two blocks slide past one another

Some other types of faults

Normal fault:

The block above the fault moves downward relative to the block below.



Reverse fault:

Upper block, above the fault plane, moves up and over the lower block

Venezuela Earthquake:

Understanding the Rare Seismic Doublet

Why in News?

- Venezuela experienced two major earthquakes **near Caracas** within a short interval, which the United States Geological Survey classified as a **"Seismic Doublet"** — a relatively rare geological phenomenon.

Location of the Event

- First Earthquake: **Magnitude 7.2**
- Second Earthquake: **Magnitude 7.5**
- Occurred near the boundary of the:
 - **Caribbean Plate**
 - **South American Plate**

Diagram: Plate Boundary and Earthquake Mechanism

Caribbean Plate



STRIKE-SLIP FAULT

←
South American Plate

Horizontal movement of plates
causes sudden release of energy
leading to earthquakes.

What is a Fault?

- A **fault** is a fracture or zone of weakness in the Earth's crust along which rock blocks move relative to each other.

Major Types of Faults

FAULT TYPES

1. Normal Fault

↓
Tensional forces
Block moves downward

2. Reverse Fault

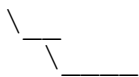
↑
Compressional forces
Block moves upward

3. Strike-slip Fault

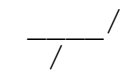
↔
Horizontal movement
along fault plane

Diagram: Types of Faults

NORMAL FAULT



REVERSE FAULT



STRIKE-SLIP FAULT

>>>>>>
<<<<<<

What is a Seismic Doublet?

- A Seismic Doublet refers to:
 - Two earthquakes of comparable magnitude,
 - Occurring close in time,
 - Originating from closely related fault systems.
- Unlike normal aftershocks, the second event can be equal to or stronger than the first earthquake.

Diagram: Seismic Doublet

Earthquake-1 (M 7.2)
↓
Stress redistribution
along nearby fault
↓
Earthquake-2 (M 7.5)
within short interval

Why Was Damage Severe?

Shallow Focus Earthquake
+
Strike-slip Faulting
+
Highly Urbanised Area
+
Seismic Doublet
↓
Massive Infrastructure Damage

Factors:

- Shallow hypocentre increases surface intensity.
- Urban concentration around Caracas.
- Buildings weakened by first quake collapsed during second event.
- Rescue operations complicated by repeated tremors.

Plate Tectonic Context

Caribbean Plate → → →

Transform Boundary

← ← ← South American Plate

This represents a **transform (conservative) plate boundary**, where crust is neither created nor destroyed.

Examples:

- San Andreas Fault
- North Anatolian Fault

Prlm adjustment

Consider the following statements:

1. A strike-slip fault involves horizontal movement of crustal blocks.
2. Transform plate boundaries create new oceanic crust.
3. Seismic doublets are earthquakes occurring close in time and space.

Which of the above are correct?

Answer: 1 and 3 only

Value Mains

Difference Between Aftershock and Seismic Doublet

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Aftershock</i>	<i>Seismic Doublet</i>
Magnitude	Smaller	Similar or larger
Cause	Stress adjustment	Independent fault rupture
Frequency	Common	Rare
Damage potential	Lower	Very High

UPSC Mains Question

Q1. "Explain the formation of strike-slip faults with suitable diagrams. How do seismic doublets differ from ordinary aftershocks?" **(GS I / III, 250 words)**

Q2. "Plate tectonics not only explains the occurrence of earthquakes but also their spatial distribution and intensity." Discuss with examples. **(GS I / III, 250 words)**

Conclusion

The Venezuela earthquake highlights how geological settings such as transform boundaries and strike-slip fault systems can produce complex seismic events like doublets, significantly increasing disaster risk in densely populated regions.

Passport as Proof of Citizenship?

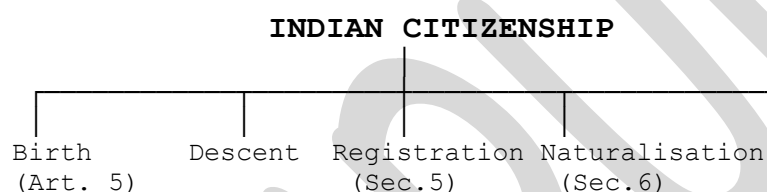
Brief

- The Ministry of External Affairs clarified that a **passport is primarily a travel document and not conclusive proof of Indian citizenship.**

Citizenship in India: Constitutional & Legal Basis

- Articles 5–11 of the Constitution define citizenship at the commencement of the Constitution.
- Governed mainly by the **Citizenship Act, 1955.**
- No law identifies any single document as definitive proof of citizenship.

Modes of Acquiring Citizenship



1. Citizenship by Birth

- Born in India between **1950–1987** → Citizen by birth.
- **1987–2004** → One parent must be an Indian citizen.
- **After 2004** → One parent citizen and the other not an illegal migrant.

2. Citizenship by Descent

- Born outside India to Indian parent(s), subject to registration conditions.

3. Citizenship by Registration

- For persons of Indian origin, spouses of Indian citizens, etc.

4. Citizenship by Naturalisation

- Requires residence in India for prescribed periods under the Act.

Passport and Citizenship: Relationship

Passport Issued



Government satisfied that
person appears to be an Indian citizen



Passport acts as EVIDENCE



Does NOT CREATE citizenship

Supreme Court Position

- **Sarbananda Sonowal case (2005):** Burden of proving citizenship lies on the claimant.
- **State of Andhra Pradesh v. Abdul Khader (1962):** Passport is evidence of nationality but not conclusive proof.

Why No Single Citizenship Document Exists?

India relies on a combination of:

- Birth certificate
- Electoral rolls
- School records
- Passport
- Government documents
- Family lineage records

Quick Prlm

- ✓ Articles **5–11** deal with citizenship.
- ✓ Citizenship Act enacted in **1955**.
- ✓ Passport is **not** legally conclusive proof of citizenship.
- ✓ Citizenship can be acquired by **Birth, Descent, Registration and Naturalisation**.

Q1. Which of the following are modes of acquiring Indian citizenship under the Citizenship Act, 1955?

1. Birth
2. Descent
3. Registration
4. Naturalisation
5. Adoption

Select the correct answer:

- A. 1, 2, 3 and 4 only
- B. 1, 2 and 5 only

- C. 2, 3, 4 and 5 only
D. 1, 3, 4 and 5 only

Answer: (A)

Q2. Consider the following statements:

1. A passport is conclusive proof of Indian citizenship.
2. Articles 5 to 11 of the Constitution deal with citizenship.
3. Citizenship by naturalisation is governed by the Citizenship Act, 1955.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 2 and 3 only
B. 1 and 2 only
C. 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (A)

Possible UPSC Mains Question

Q. "Citizenship in India is a legal status determined by constitutional and statutory provisions rather than by possession of a single document." Discuss in the context of debates surrounding proof of citizenship in India. (**GS II, 150 words**)

Q. "Neither the Constitution nor the Citizenship Act identifies any single document as definitive proof of Indian citizenship." Discuss the implications of this position for governance and citizenship verification in India. (**GS II, 250 words**)

Answer Framework

Introduction: Constitutional basis of citizenship.

Body:

- Citizenship as a legal status.
- Role of documents as evidentiary tools.
- Challenges in documentation and migration.
- NRC and verification debates.
- Need for robust civil registration systems.

Conclusion:

Strengthening birth registration and digital civil records while ensuring due process and inclusiveness is essential for balancing administrative efficiency with constitutional values.

• WHO IS AN INDIAN CITIZEN?

Under the Citizenship Act of 1955, there are four ways to obtain citizenship:

1. Citizenship by birth: For birthright citizenship, those born in India between 1950 and 1987 are citizens.

- For those born between 1987 and 2003, citizenship is accorded only if either parent is a citizen of India at the time of their birth.

- For those born after 2003, citizenship is accorded only if either parent is a citizen at the time of their birth and the other is not an illegal immigrant.

2. Citizenship by descent: A person born outside India and who has at least one Indian parent will be granted citizenship, provided that the birth is registered within one year with the Indian consulate in the jurisdiction.

3. Citizenship by registration: This is for persons related to an Indian citizen through marriage or ancestry.



- Citizenship is treated as a legal status arising from facts such as birth, parentage, domicile or naturalisation.
- Documents serve as evidence of those facts. A **passport** is issued because the government is satisfied a person is a citizen. It does not create citizenship.

4. Citizenship by naturalisation:

Naturalisation certificate can be granted to a person who isn't an illegal immigrant and has lived in India for 12 months continuously before applying.

- In the 14 years before the 12-month period, the person must have lived in India for at least 11 years. This is relaxed for some categories.

Waiver clause: If the Centre believes the applicant has rendered distinguished service to science, philosophy, art, literature, world peace or human progress, it may waive all or any of the conditions in the Act. This is how the Dalai Lama or Adnan Sami, the Pakistani singer, got Indian citizenship.

- BY APURVA VISHWANATH

28.06.2026

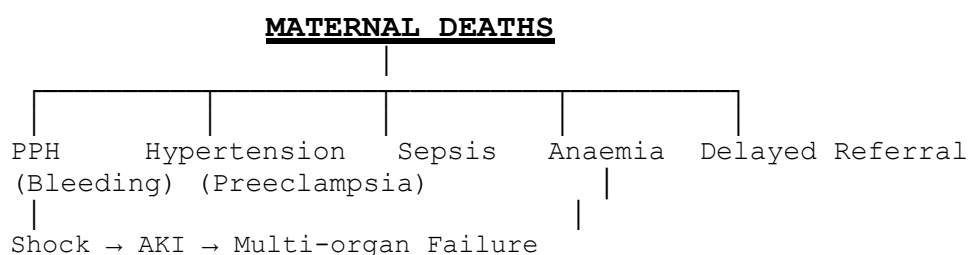
Topic : GS I | GS II

Rajasthan Maternal Deaths – Beyond Spurious Oxytocin

Brief

- Maternal deaths following Caesarean deliveries in Rajasthan (Kota, Bikaner and Jodhpur) triggered concerns over allegedly substandard oxytocin. However, doctors suggest that **obstetric complications rather than oxytocin alone** may have been responsible.

Major Causes of Maternal Deaths



1. Postpartum Haemorrhage (PPH)

- Excessive bleeding before or after delivery.
- Leading cause of maternal mortality globally.
- Oxytocin helps control bleeding but alternative interventions exist.

2. Hypertensive Disorders

- Includes **Preeclampsia and Eclampsia**.
- Can lead to:
 - Acute Kidney Injury (AKI)
 - Heart failure
 - Multi-organ dysfunction

3. Sepsis

- Infection due to:
 - Prolonged labour
 - Multiple vaginal examinations
 - Delayed management of ruptured membranes

4. Anaemia

- Around **80% of pregnant women in government hospitals are anaemic**.
- Increases vulnerability to shock and infection.

5. Placenta Accreta

- Placenta abnormally adheres to uterine wall.
- Rising due to increasing Caesarean deliveries.

Role of Delayed Referral

Complication at Home
↓
Delay in Referral
↓
Excessive Blood Loss/Shock
↓
Kidney Failure
↓
Multi-Organ Failure
↓
Maternal Death

Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)

<i>State</i>	<i>MMR (per lakh live births)</i>
Maharashtra	36
Tamil Nadu	38
Andhra Pradesh	47
Rajasthan	87
India	88
Chhattisgarh	141
Uttar Pradesh	141
Madhya Pradesh	159

Emerging Concern: Rise in C-Sections

- NFHS-6 reports C-section deliveries increased to 27.2% nationally.
- Urban areas report rates as high as 40.5%.

Government Initiatives

- Janani Suraksha Yojana
- Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram
- Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan
- LaQshya Programme

Way Forward

- ✓ Strengthen antenatal care and high-risk pregnancy identification.
- ✓ Ensure availability of blood banks and emergency obstetric care.
- ✓ Improve referral transport and emergency response systems.
- ✓ Promote skilled birth attendance and infection control practices.
- ✓ Audit maternal deaths to identify systemic gaps.

Prelims Pointers

- **MMR** = Maternal deaths per **100,000 live births**.
- SDG Target 3.1 aims to reduce global MMR to **below 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030**.
- PPH is among the leading causes of maternal mortality in India.

Probable UPSC Mains Questions

Q1. Maternal mortality in India is increasingly linked to systemic healthcare gaps rather than isolated medical failures. Discuss with reference to recent maternal deaths in Rajasthan. (**GS I / II, 250 words**)

Q2. Despite significant reductions in Maternal Mortality Ratio, preventable maternal deaths continue to occur in India. Examine the causes and suggest remedial measures. (**GS I / II, 250 words**)

Q3. Discuss the role of antenatal care, institutional deliveries and referral systems in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3 related to maternal health. (**GS I / II, 150 words**)

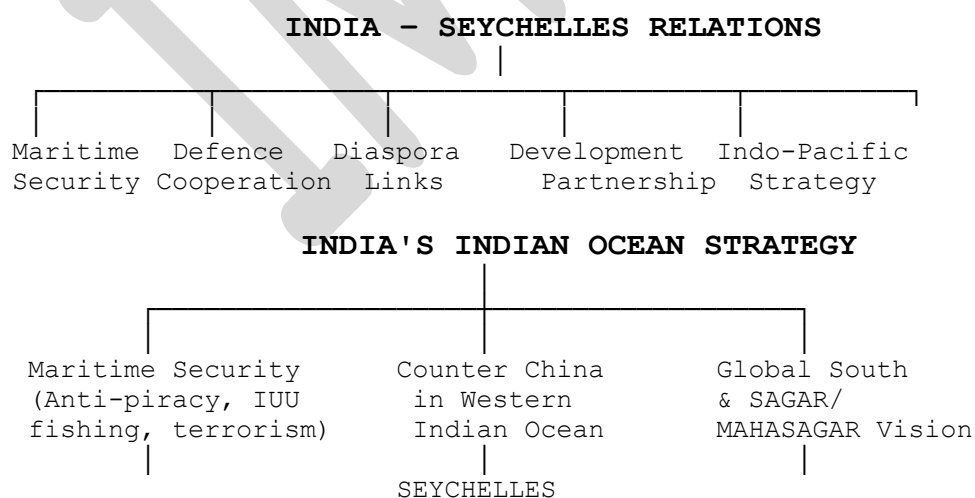
Topic: GS II

India-Seychelles Relations at 50 Years

Brief

- PM Narendra Modi visited Seychelles as **Guest of Honour** for its **50th Independence Day (29 June 1976–2026)**, marking **50 years of diplomatic relations**. *This was his second visit (first one – 2015).*
- The **first** Indian PM to visit Seychelles was **Indira Gandhi in 1981**.

India–Seychelles Relations: Key Dimensions



1. Strategic & Maritime Importance

- Key partner in **Vision MAHASAGAR** (*Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions*).
- Located in the **Western Indian Ocean**, close to Africa, West Asia and Asia.
- Supports India in combating:
 - Piracy
 - Maritime terrorism
 - Illegal fishing

2. Defence Cooperation

- Transfer of **Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) Lespwar** to Seychelles Coast Guard.
- Capacity building, coastal surveillance and maritime security cooperation.
- Member of the **Colombo Security Conclave**.

3. Diaspora Links

- About **6,000 Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs)** (~5% population).
- Around **9,000 NRIs** work in Seychelles.
- Predominantly Gujarati and Tamil communities.

4. Development Partnership

- Grants, Lines of Credit and infrastructure support.
- Special Economic Package of **\$175 million** announced by India.
- India remains a major destination for medical tourism and professional training.

Significance for India

- ✓ Strengthens India's **Global South outreach** viz. trade, investment and people-to-people ties.
- ✓ Enhances India's role as a **net security provider in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).**
- ✓ Acts as a strategic counterbalance to **growing Chinese influence in the IOR.**

Potential UPSC Mains Questions

Q1. Discuss the strategic significance of Seychelles in India's Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific policy. (**GS II, 150 words**)

Q2. "Small Island Developing States (SIDS) occupy a disproportionately important place in India's maritime diplomacy." Examine with reference to Seychelles. **(GS II, 250 words)**

Q3. Evaluate the role of India's development partnerships and diaspora diplomacy in strengthening relations with Indian Ocean island nations. **(GS II, 250 words)**



Quick Mains

- Diplomatic relations established in **1976** after Seychelles' independence.
- Around **5% of Seychelles' population (≈6,000 people)** are of Indian origin, mainly **Gujarati and Tamil communities**.
- Over **9,000 NRIs** work in construction, trade and professional sectors.
- Seychelles is a key partner in India's **MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions)** vision.
- Strategic location near **Africa, Middle East and major Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs)**.
- Member of the **Colombo Security Conclave**, strengthening Indo-Pacific security cooperation.
- India supports Seychelles through **Lines of Credit, grants, capacity building and maritime assistance**.

Diagram on cultural ties

Indian Diaspora in Seychelles (~5% population)

↓

Community-driven cultural relations

↓

Mahatma Gandhi statue installed at Peace Park, Victoria (2022)

↓

Indian-origin community active in trade, construction & professions

↓

Over 9,000 NRIs employed under Gainful Employment Permits

↓

Recognition through **Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards:**

- **V. Ramadoss (2006)**
- **Justice D. Karunakaran (2015)**

↓

Strengthens India-Seychelles people-to-people and cultural ties

Topic : GS II

India-Bangladesh Relations -

Need for a Strategic Reset

Brief

- Recent decisions such as restoration of Indian tourist visas and renewed high-level engagements indicate a **thaw in India-Bangladesh relations** after tensions following the political transition in Bangladesh in 2024.

Flowchart: Evolution of Relations

Sheikh Hasina Era (2009–2024)



Strong Strategic Partnership
(Connectivity, Security, Trade)



Political Change in Bangladesh (2024)



Trust Deficit and Diplomatic Friction

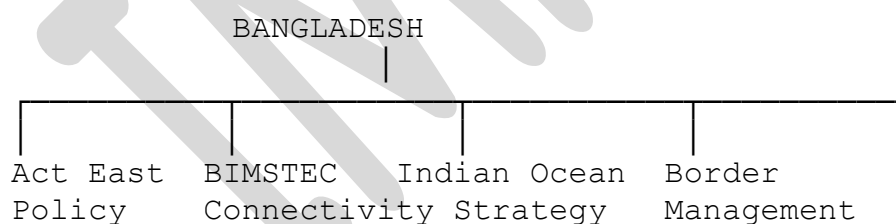


Visa Restoration + Leadership Meetings



Renewed Engagement and Cooperation

Why Bangladesh Matters to India?



Areas of Cooperation

- 4,000 km land border management.
- River-water sharing and energy cooperation.
- Trade, connectivity and regional integration.
- Counter-terrorism and security cooperation.
- Crucial partner in **BIMSTEC** and India's **Act East Policy**.

Challenges

- Perception of India's "**big brother**" attitude.
- Political changes affecting bilateral trust.
- Minority issues and domestic political rhetoric.
- Trade and transit-related concerns.

Way Forward

- Pursue **people-centric diplomacy** beyond party politics.
- Enhance economic interdependence and connectivity.
- Strengthen institutional dialogue mechanisms.
- Build trust through mutual sensitivity and respect.

Potential UPSC Mains Question

"Bangladesh is central to the success of India's Neighbourhood First and Act East policies." Discuss the opportunities and challenges in India–Bangladesh relations in the changing political context. *(GS II, 250 words)*

30.06.2026

Topic: GS Paper III (Environment | Infrastructure | Sustainable Development)

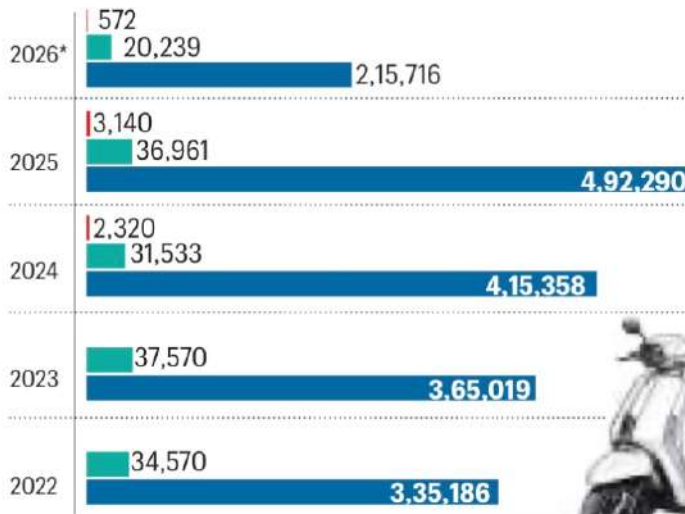
DELHI GOVT APPROVES EV POLICY 2.0: NO NEW CNG AUTORICKSHAWS FROM JANUARY NEXT YEAR

Delhi mandates all new 2-wheelers be electric from '28 to fight pollution

100% road tax waiver for four-wheelers priced up to Rs 30 lakh; cash incentives for buying electric two- three-wheelers

• TWO-WHEELERS IN THE CAPITAL

CNG EV PETROL



* UNTIL JUNE 15; SOURCE: CAQM, MoRTH, ENVIROCATALYSTS

18 lakh

petrol 2-wheeler
registrations
in 2022-2026

67% of
Delhi's
total vehicle stock
are two-wheelers

LARGEST CONTRIBUTORS to PM2.5
(31%) and CO (51%) in NCR



Brief

- The Delhi Government has announced a **time-bound transition to electric mobility**, moving beyond subsidies towards mandatory adoption timelines.

Key Highlights

- **From April 2028:** Only Electric Two-Wheelers (E2Ws) can be purchased by residents.
- **From January 2027:** Mandatory electrification of commercial three-wheelers.
- Policy combines **incentives + regulatory mandates**.
- Targets a predominantly **green vehicle fleet by 2030**.

Transition Roadmap

Subsidies & Awareness



Mandatory Timelines Introduced



Electric 3-wheelers (2027)



Electric 2-wheelers only (2028)



Cleaner Urban Transport by 2030

Why the Policy Matters

- Reduces **tailpipe emissions**, a major contributor to Delhi's air pollution.
- Two-wheelers constitute nearly **two-thirds of Delhi's vehicle fleet**.
- Supports India's commitments under the **Paris Agreement** and **Net Zero 2070 target**.
- Enhances investment attractiveness in the green economy.

Challenges

EV Expansion

↓
Charging Infrastructure Gap
↓
Dependence on Imported Lithium & Critical Minerals
↓
Supply Chain Vulnerabilities
↓
Higher Transition Costs & Technological Constraints

Way Forward

- Expand charging infrastructure and battery-swapping stations.
- Promote domestic manufacturing under **PLI schemes**.
- Diversify sources of critical minerals.
- Encourage battery recycling and circular economy practices.

Keywords for UPSC

- Sustainable Urban Mobility
- Decarbonisation of Transport
- Energy Transition
- Critical Minerals Security

Probable UPSC Mains Question

"Electrification of urban transport is essential for improving air quality and achieving climate goals, but it poses significant infrastructural and supply-chain challenges." Discuss with reference to Delhi's EV policy. (**GS III, 250 words**)

ANTI-SOCIAL ACTIVITIES BILL, MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC ORDER (AMENDMENT) BILL PASSED IN ASSEMBLY

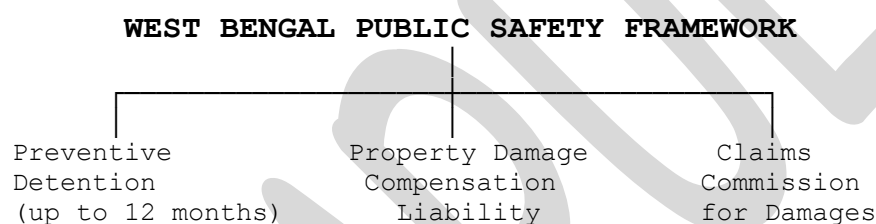
Detention without trial, rioters to pay for vandalism: Two law & order Bills passed

West Bengal Public Safety Bills, 2026

Context

- The West Bengal Assembly passed two major laws aimed at tackling **organised crime, riots and public disorder**:
 1. **West Bengal Public Safety and Control of Anti-Social Activities Bill, 2026**
 2. **West Bengal Maintenance of Public Order (Amendment) Bill, 2026**

Key Provisions



1. Preventive Detention

- Detention of suspected gang members or habitual offenders for **up to 12 months without trial**.
- Authorities may restrict movement or extern individuals from specified areas for **up to one year**.

2. Expanded Definition of Anti-Social Activities

Includes:

- Organised crime and intimidation.
- Illegal mining and sand extraction.
- Unlawful dispossession and business obstruction.
- Activities causing fear or insecurity among citizens.

3. Compensation for Riot Damage

- Establishment of a **Claims Commission** to assess damages.

- Liability extends to **organisers, financiers, instigators and logistical supporters** of violence.
- Compensation claims to be filed within **three years**.

Issues and Concerns

Public Order Measures

↓

Improved Crime Control

↓

Concerns over Preventive Detention

↓

Potential Misuse & Civil Liberty Issues

↓

Need for Judicial Safeguards

Constitutional Dimensions

- **Article 21** – Right to Life and Personal Liberty.
- **Article 22** – Safeguards against arbitrary arrest and preventive detention.
- Balance required between **public order and fundamental rights**.

Probable UPSC Mains Question

"Preventive detention laws seek to ensure public order but often raise concerns regarding civil liberties and misuse. Discuss in the context of recent state-level public safety legislations in India." *(GS II, 250 words)*

UCC BILL : **proposed in West Bengal**

- UCC is a proposed framework to replace religion-based personal laws with one common set of secular laws governing **marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption for all citizens.**
- Rooted in **Article 44** of the Constitution, it seeks to promote gender justice and national integration.
- The BJP has already **implemented UCC in Uttarakhand** and passed the law in Gujarat.

➤ Assam became the third BJP state to implement UCC and passed a Bill last month after returning to power in the state.

✂ "However, an important issue needs to be clarified. Nothing contained in this Code shall apply to the members of any Scheduled Tribes within the meaning of clause 25 of **Article 366** read with **Article 342** of the Constitution of India.

- Articles 342 and 366 of the Indian Constitution work together to define and identify **Scheduled Tribes (STs)**.
- **Article 342** empowers the President to specify tribal communities for each state,
 - while **Article 366(25)** provides the overarching legal definition of these groups.

Article 342: Specification of Scheduled Tribes

This article establishes the constitutional mechanism for identifying STs.

- **Presidential Notification:** The President, after consulting the Governor of a state or union territory, can publicly notify which tribes, tribal communities, or groups are designated as Scheduled Tribes for that specific state.
- **Parliamentary Authority:** While the President issues the initial list, only the Indian Parliament has the power to subsequently modify this list by including or excluding communities through formal legislation.

Article 366: Definitions

Article 366 is the constitution's general glossary, which defines various terms used throughout the document.

- **Article 366(25):** Specifically defines "Scheduled Tribes" to mean such tribes, tribal communities, or groups within them that are deemed under **Article 342** to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of the Constitution.
- **Reading Them Together:** Article 366(25) does not list any tribes on its own; instead, it serves as a cross-reference, meaning it must always be read alongside Article 342.

IMPULSE