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Transparency as the foundation of trust in medicine

Prelims: General Studies Paper 1

Current events of national and international importance

Mains: General Studies 2

Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

Why in Focus?

- **Doctors' Day (July 1)** highlights that public trust in healthcare depends not only on doctors but also on transparent regulation, accountable healthcare institutions, and effective doctor–patient communication.

National Doctors' Day is observed annually on July 1 in India to honour the contributions of doctors and healthcare professionals. The day commemorates the birth and death anniversary of **Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy**, a renowned physician, freedom fighter and former Chief Minister of West Bengal.

Key Highlights

- Trust in medicine is built at three levels: regulatory institutions, healthcare delivery systems, and doctor–patient interactions.
- India's National Medical Commission (NMC) has improved medical education and

professional standards, but public access to regulatory information through State Medical Councils remains uneven.

National Medical Commission (NMC) : It was constituted under the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, and came into effect on 25 September 2020, replacing the Medical Council of India (MCI) to improve medical education, regulate medical professionals, ensure ethical standards, and promote transparency and accountability in healthcare.

- In contrast, bodies such as the UK General Medical Council (GMC) provide easily searchable registers containing doctors' qualifications, registration status and regulatory history.
- Healthcare institutions need transparency in costs, procedures, grievance redressal and medical auditing rather than placing blame solely on individual doctors.
- Open Disclosure involves honestly informing patients or families when an adverse incident occurs, explaining what happened and outlining measures to prevent recurrence.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) increasingly promotes approaches that identify systemic causes of medical errors rather than focusing only on individual blame.
- The Indian Medical Association (IMA) reports that over 75% of doctors have experienced some form of workplace violence, with systemic mistrust often contributing to conflict.



Implications

- **Weak regulatory transparency can reduce public trust** in healthcare.
- **Opaque costs and procedures can increase patient dissatisfaction** and conflict.
- **Poor communication may make appropriate medical care** appear inadequate.
- **Systemic mistrust can contribute to violence** against healthcare workers.

Way Forward

- **Make State Medical Council registers accessible**, searchable and user-friendly.
- **Institutionalise Open Disclosure** and **strengthen medical auditing** and grievance redressal.
- **Promote shared decision-making, with doctors** clearly explaining diagnoses, treatment options, costs and risks.
- **Integrate communication, ethics and transparency** into medical education and clinical training.
- **Build healthcare systems that protect both patient rights and doctors' dignity** and safety.

Mains Question

"Public trust in healthcare depends as much on institutional transparency as on clinical competence. Discuss the role of regulatory transparency, open disclosure and doctor–patient communication in strengthening India's healthcare system." (250 Words)

Europe's AI rules may become India's opportunity

Prelims: General Studies Paper 1

Current events of national and international importance

Mains: General Studies 3

Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.

Why in Focus?

- India is considering a standalone AI law,

while the European Union AI Act, in force since August 2024, became applicable from 2 August 2026.

- Its **risk-based framework has significant implications for Indian technology firms** operating in Europe.

Key Highlights

- The EU AI Act follows a **risk-based approach, prohibiting certain AI systems and imposing stricter requirements** on high-risk AI.
- **High-risk systems used in areas such as employment and education require conformity assessment** covering testing, documentation and human oversight under Article 43.

Conformity assessment means the process of checking and verifying whether an AI system meets the legal, technical and safety requirements prescribed by a regulation such as the EU AI Act.

- **Substantial modifications that affect compliance** may require a fresh conformity assessment.
- The **Act may particularly affect India's IT services, where customised and continuously modified AI solutions** are common.
- Companies that make major changes to another company's high-risk AI system may be treated as its provider and become responsible for following the same rules.

Opportunities & Implications for India

- **EU AI regulations can increase demand for Indian expertise in AI governance**, testing, auditing and legal compliance.
- India's large IT and professional-services workforce can help it emerge as a global AI-compliance hub.
- The **India–EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) can strengthen regulatory cooperation and create opportunities for India** in the AI compliance ecosystem.
- **India can seek recognition for qualified Indian conformity-assessment bodies**, turning regulatory compliance into an export opportunity.

Way Forward

- **Adopt a risk-based AI framework balancing innovation, safety, transparency and accountability.**
- **Build AI compliance capacity in testing, auditing, documentation,** governance and conformity assessment.
- **Align Indian AI standards with global frameworks** to facilitate access to international markets.
- **Position India as an AI-compliance hub, turning global regulatory requirements into opportunities** for IT, legal and technical services.

Mains Question

“The EU AI Act presents both regulatory challenges and economic opportunities for India’s technology industry. Discuss.” (250 Words)

Why vital chemotherapy drugs are in short supply in India

Prelims: General Paper 1

Current events of national and international importance.

Mains: General studies 2

Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

Why in Focus?

- India is facing a shortage of two widely used chemotherapy drugs, **cisplatin and carboplatin**, due to rising platinum prices, disruptions in international supply chains and domestic price controls.
- The issue highlights the need for **medicine security, resilient pharmaceutical supply chains and affordable cancer care.**

Key Highlights

- **Cisplatin and carboplatin** are platinum-based chemotherapy drugs widely used for treating several cancers, including **lung, ovarian, head and neck, bladder, breast and testicular cancers.**

- The shortage has been caused by a combination of **sharp increases in global platinum prices**, disruption of shipping routes in West Asia and difficulties in importing raw materials.
- Since these medicines were subject to **price ceilings**, rising production costs made manufacturing financially unattractive for some domestic pharmaceutical companies, leading some manufacturers to reduce or stop production.
- The shortage has resulted in **delays and interruptions in cancer treatment**, particularly in private hospitals. Alternative drugs may be more expensive, less suitable or have different toxicity profiles.
- The problem is particularly serious because platinum-based chemotherapy remains important even with the growth of **targeted therapy and immunotherapy**. Cisplatin is also important in **concurrent chemoradiation** for cancers such as cervical and head and neck cancers.
- To restore production, the **National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)** temporarily increased the ceiling price by 50%. The price of cisplatin was raised from **₹7.26 to ₹10.89 per mL**, while carboplatin increased from **₹60.49 to ₹90.74 per mL**.
- Government hospitals in several States have managed supplies through **multiple vendors, annual tenders, centralised procurement and adequate stocks**, but shortages continue in some government and private hospitals.

Implications

- India’s dependence on imported **Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs-main chemical substances in a medicine) and raw materials** makes essential medicines vulnerable to global price fluctuations and geopolitical disruptions.
- **Price regulation vs availability** creates a policy dilemma. Very low price ceilings can discourage production, while higher prices may increase the financial burden on patients.
- Shortages of essential cancer medicines can lead to **treatment delays, higher costs and poorer health outcomes**, especially where alternative therapies are not equally effective.
- Disruptions in **West Asian transport routes** show how geopolitical conflicts can affect



India's healthcare supply chains even when the final medicine is manufactured domestically.

- With more than **1.5 million new cancer cases annually**, prolonged shortages can place additional pressure on India's already stretched healthcare system.

Way Forward

- Build **strategic reserves of essential cancer medicines** to provide a buffer during temporary supply disruptions.
- Diversify sources of **APIs, platinum and other critical raw materials** and strengthen domestic pharmaceutical manufacturing.
- Develop an **early-warning system** to monitor production, imports, inventories and emerging shortages of essential medicines.
- Strengthen **centralised and pooled procurement**, multiple-vendor systems and long-term supply contracts for critical medicines.
- Maintain a balance between **affordability and viability of domestic manufacturing** through flexible price regulation, targeted incentives and timely revision of price ceilings when input costs rise

Mains Question

India's dependence on global pharmaceutical supply chains can create serious vulnerabilities in access to essential medicines. Discuss the causes and implications of the recent shortage of chemotherapy drugs in India and suggest measures to strengthen medicine security. (15 marks, 250 words)

The constitutional limits on arrest

Prelims: General Paper 1

Current events of national and international importance.

Mains: General studies 2

Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary—Ministries and Departments of the Government; pressure groups and formal/informal associations and their role in the Polity.

Why in Focus?

- The Supreme Court's judgment in **Vihaan Kumar v. State of Haryana (2025)** strengthened safeguards against arbitrary arrest by holding that an arrested person must be **clearly and meaningfully informed of the grounds of arrest**.
- The judgment reinforces the balance between **state authority and individual liberty**, which is central to a constitutional democracy.

Key Highlights

- Under **Article 22(1)**, every arrested person has the right to know the **grounds of arrest** and the right to consult and be defended by a legal practitioner.
- The Court clarified that simply informing the arrested person's relatives or making an unclear entry in official records is **not sufficient**. The arrested person must personally understand why they are being arrested.
- If the **initial arrest itself is unconstitutional**, subsequent remand orders may also become illegal. This makes compliance with arrest procedures essential from the very beginning.
- Under **Article 22(2)**, an arrested person must be produced before the nearest **magistrate within 24 hours**, excluding the time required for travel.
- The **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023** provides corresponding safeguards. For example, **Section 47** deals with communication of grounds of arrest, while **Section 58** relates to detention beyond 24 hours.
- The Court also stressed the **right to dignity under Article 21** and condemned degrading treatment of persons in custody.
- In **Arnesh Kumar v. State of Bihar (2014)**, the Supreme Court held that arrest should not be routine, particularly for offences punishable with imprisonment of less than seven years. Police must establish the **necessity of arrest**.

Implications

- Unnecessary arrests can seriously affect a person's **personal liberty, reputation and dignity**, even before guilt is established.
- Failure to properly communicate the grounds

of arrest can make constitutional safeguards merely **formal rather than meaningful**.

- Excessive use of arrest powers can lead to **custodial harassment, abuse of authority and erosion of public trust** in the criminal justice system.
- At the same time, the State needs adequate powers of arrest to prevent crime, protect victims and ensure effective investigation. The challenge is to prevent **misuse without weakening legitimate law enforcement**.
- The **Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978)** judgment linked Articles **14, 19 and 21**, creating the constitutional **Golden Triangle**. Arbitrary arrest can therefore violate the broader principle of **non-arbitrariness and due process**.
- The issue ultimately reflects the constitutional balance between **individual liberty and legitimate state authority**.

Way Forward

- Police should ensure that the grounds of arrest are communicated **clearly, directly and in a language understood by the arrested person**.
- Arrest should be based on **necessity and legal justification**, rather than being treated as an automatic consequence of registration of a criminal case.
- **Digital and time-stamped arrest records**, proper arrest memos and CCTV monitoring can improve transparency and accountability.
- Police personnel should receive regular training on **constitutional safeguards, BNSS provisions, human rights and custodial procedures**.
- Courts and oversight institutions should ensure effective remedies against **illegal arrests, custodial abuse and procedural violations**.

Mains Question

“The power of arrest is essential for maintaining rule of law, but its arbitrary exercise poses a serious threat to personal liberty.” Discuss in the light of constitutional safeguards and recent Supreme Court jurisprudence on arrest in India. (15 marks, 250 words)

KEYWORDS

Bar Council of India (BCI)

- The **Bar Council of India (BCI)** is a **statutory body established under the Advocates Act, 1961**, to regulate and represent the legal profession in India.
- The **BCI prescribes standards of professional conduct and etiquette, exercises disciplinary jurisdiction over advocates**, and regulates legal education.
- It **conducts the All India Bar Examination (AIBE) and grants a Certificate of Practice** to advocates eligible to practise law in India.
- The **BCI comprises members elected from the State Bar Councils, along with the Attorney General of India and Solicitor General of India as ex-officio members**; members elected from State Bar Councils serve for five years.
- The BCI elects its Chairman and Vice-Chairman from among its members, and they serve for two years.

Fédération Internationale de Hockey - FIH (International Hockey Federation)

- FIH (Fédération Internationale de Hockey) is **the world governing body for hockey, responsible for promoting and regulating the sport globally**.
- It **was established in 1924 in Paris, France, with seven founding national associations**.
- FIH **governs field hockey and indoor hockey and frames the rules and regulations** applicable to international competitions.
- The **headquarters of the FIH is located in Lausanne, Switzerland**.
- It **organises and oversees major international competitions, including the Hockey World Cup and FIH Pro League**.



- **India is a member of FIH**, and the organisation plays an important role in the global development, standardisation and promotion of hockey.

Pharmexcil

- **Pharmexcil (Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India)** recently reported that India's pharmaceutical exports grew by **6.8% year-on-year**, reaching **US\$8.1 billion during April-June 2026**.
- **Established in 2004** under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**, Pharmexcil is an **Export Promotion Council** responsible for promoting India's pharmaceutical exports in global markets.
- It facilitates the issuance of the **Registration-cum-Membership Certificate (RCMC)** to eligible pharmaceutical exporters.
- Its promotional activities cover **bulk drugs, Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs), formulations, biologicals, vaccines and surgical equipment**, among other pharmaceutical products.
- **Headquartered in Hyderabad**, Pharmexcil promotes India's pharmaceutical exports through **international trade delegations, buyer-seller meets, trade fairs and regulatory/market support** for its members.

Places in News

Kuril Islands

- **The Kuril Islands are in the news** because **Russian President Vladimir Putin** made his first visit to **Iturup (Etorofu)**, one of the southern islands in the chain, drawing a **strong diplomatic protest from Japan**.
- Geographically, it is a **1,300-km volcanic island archipelago** stretching between the **Sea of Okhotsk** and the **North Pacific Ocean**, positioned between **Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula** and **Japan's Hokkaido Island**.
- A longstanding **territorial dispute** exists where **Russia controls the entire chain**, but **Japan claims sovereignty over the four southernmost islands-Iturup, Kunashir, Shikotan, and the Habomai islets**-calling them its "**Northern Territories**."
- The **Soviet Union occupied these islands in the final days of World War II in 1945**, and because of this unresolved **sovereignty dispute**, **Russia and Japan have never signed a formal peace treaty** to officially conclude World War II hostilities.
- Strategically, the islands give **Russia year-round, ice-free naval access to the Pacific Ocean** through deep-water straits, while the region is also rich in **fisheries and marine mineral reserves**.



Species In News

Khejri Tree

- The Rajasthan government recently approved the **Rajasthan Trees (Protection) Bill, 2026**, which bans the **illegal felling of the Khejri tree on non-forest lands**, following an **11-day massive protest ("Khejri Bachao Andolan")** by the Bishnoi community.
- Scientifically known as *Prosopis cineraria* (belonging to the **pea family, Fabaceae**), it is a **nitrogen-fixing leguminous tree** that naturally improves **soil fertility**, provides **high-nutrition fodder**, and helps prevent **desertification** in arid regions.
- The tree is highly resilient to **extreme heat and droughts**; its extensive root system can penetrate **up to 30 metres deep** into the earth to access groundwater, allowing it to thrive in desert climates with **less than 500 mm of annual rainfall**.
- It holds significant **geographical and political prominence** as the **state tree of both Rajasthan** (where it is called **Khejri**) and **Telangana** (where it is known as **Jammi**), and it is also the **national tree of the United Arab Emirates (UAE)**, known as **Ghaf**.
- Historically, it is at the centre of **India's earliest environmental conservation efforts**; during the **Khejarli Massacre of 1730**, **Amrita Devi and 362 other Bishnoi community members** sacrificed their lives to protect **Khejri trees** from being felled by the **King of Jodhpur**.

