

### India must draw a red line on U.S. unilateral sanctions

**Prelims:** General Studies Paper - 1  
Current events of national and international importance

**Mains:** General Studies - 2  
Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.

#### 1.Context

- Conflict involving the United States, Israel, and Iran has heightened West Asia instability.
- Disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz threaten global oil supply.
- Rising energy and trade costs are impacting India's economy.
- These shocks have contributed to inflation, currency depreciation, and declining exports, **altering India's growth outlook as projected by the International Monetary Fund.**

#### 2.Reassessing India's Alignment with U.S. Sanctions

- India **continues to comply with unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States** despite significant economic costs.
- **Sanctions forced India to halt Iranian and Venezuelan oil imports from 2019**, limiting energy security.
- Frequent sanctions, waivers, and reversals **create policy uncertainty and disrupt long-term economic planning.**
- U.S. pressure **constrains India's strategic autonomy in foreign policy.**
- It **hinders key projects like the Chabahar Port and regional connectivity initiatives.**
- The **dominance of U.S. sanctions especially through the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC)** and limited multilateral action by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) skew the global economic system.

#### 3.Compliance with U.S. Sanctions Deepens Strategic Costs for India

- Compliance with United States sanctions increases pressure on India.
- **Defiance such as India's purchase of S-400 systems** under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act did not attract penalties, showing limits of U.S. coercion.
- **Compliance has imposed high opportunity costs**, including loss of cheaper oil imports and missed chances
- **Projects like Chabahar Port and International North South Transport Corridor were affected.**
- **Reducing compliance can boost strategic autonomy and alternative systems.**

#### 4.Historical Lessons on Strategic Autonomy and External Dependence

- In **1966, the United States under Lyndon B. Johnson used PL-480 food aid** to control India's supplies during a famine.
- **Limited U.S. food aid made India dependent on imports**, exposing its vulnerability.
- Pressure intensified after **Indira Gandhi asserted an independent foreign policy.**
- The **crisis triggered the Green Revolution, leading to self-sufficiency.**
- It highlights the need for India to avoid dependence and maintain strategic autonomy today.

### India's LPG crisis is the wake-up call it cannot ignore

**Prelims:** General Studies Paper - 1  
Current events of national and international importance

**Mains:** General Studies - 3  
Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

### 1.Context

- India **faces a structural energy crisis marked by LPG shortages**, volatile LNG prices, and rising import bills.
- The **crisis highlights deep energy insecurity, posing a strategic risk** to sustained economic growth.
- **Energy instability threatens India's ambition** to become a global manufacturing hub.
- The urgency now lies in **rapidly shifting toward energy self-reliance**.

### 2.India's Unsustainable Energy Dependence and Structural Vulnerabilities

- **India's crude oil import dependence has reached 88.6%**, reflecting weak domestic production.
- **LNG imports (28–29 Million Metric Tonnes) meet demand gaps**, while domestic gas supplies only about half the requirement.
- **Energy demand is expected to triple by 2047**, widening the supply-demand gap.
- **Infrastructure gaps** show systemic inefficiencies.
- Recent LPG shortages and price spikes highlight fragile supply chains.

### 3.Scaling Compressed Biogas for Energy Security

- India has **huge potential for Compressed Biogas (CBG) but suffers from poor execution** despite strong policy support.

**Compressed Biogas (CBG)** is a clean fuel produced by purifying and compressing biogas derived from organic waste such as agricultural residue, dung, and municipal waste.

It has a high methane content and can be used as a sustainable alternative to fossil fuels like CNG in vehicles and industries.

- Programmes like **SATAT (Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation)** and **GOBAR-DHAN (Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources)** provide a solid policy base.
- A **national feedstock security framework needed to ensure reliable biomass supply through mapping, aggregation, and long-term contracts**.

- **Regulatory and financial bottlenecks must be eased** via single-window clearances.
- **Promoting dedicated energy crops like Napier grass** can create a stable and sustainable feedstock base.

### 4.Toward a Structural Shift in India's Energy System

- India can scale **Compressed Biogas (CBG) production to ~20 MMT by 2030** with timely reforms.
- A **strong CBG ecosystem can reduce stubble burning, improve air quality, and boost rural employment** and farmer incomes.
- It **supports a circular economy** by converting agricultural and municipal waste into energy.
- **Incremental fixes are insufficient**; India needs a structural shift in energy production and consumption.
- Like the ethanol blending programme, effective policy and execution can make CBG a major energy success story.

### On the Yashwant Varma probe's future

**Prelims:** General Studies Paper - 1  
Indian Polity and Governance-Constitution, Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy, Rights Issues, etc.

**Mains:** General Studies - 2  
Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary—Ministries

### 1. Issue at Hand: Resignation vs Inquiry

- The resignation of **Justice Yashwant Varma** raises a recurring legal question.
- **Key issue:** Does a **judicial inquiry continue** if a judge resigns before removal?
- Past cases:
  - ➔ **Justice P.D. Dinakaran (2011)** → Inquiry stopped after resignation
  - ➔ **Justice Soumitra Sen (2011)** → Resigned before final vote; process became **infertuous**
- Present situation shows **lack of reform** and **uncertainty**

## 2. Constitutional & Legal Framework

- **Article 124(5)** of the Constitution:
- The Constitution asks Parliament to **enact a law regulating two exercises**:
  - ➔ The first involves **investigating** whether the **allegations against a judge are true**.
  - ➔ The second is the **presentation of an address seeking his removal**.
- Two distinct stages:
  - ➔ **Inquiry (fact-finding, judicial in nature)**
  - ➔ **Removal (political decision by Parliament)**
- The **Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968** keeps the **investigation and removal processes separate**
  - ➔ **Sections 3 and 4 deal with the investigation of charges**
  - ➔ This **investigation does not depend on any decision by Parliament**
  - ➔ Inquiry is seen as a **public good**:
    - ↳ Ensures **accountability**
    - ↳ Protects judge's **reputation if innocent**

## 3. Supreme Court Interpretation

### Key rulings:

- **Sub-Committee on Judicial Accountability vs Union of India (1991)**  
→ Investigative stage = Judicial in character, removal = **political process**
- **Sarojini Ramaswami case (1992)**  
→ Until the report reaches the Speaker, the **process is statutory and open to judicial review**

### Implication:

- Inquiry **should not depend on judge's tenure**
- Similar to disciplinary proceedings → **resignation should not terminate inquiry**

### Judges (Inquiry) Rules, 1969 allow inquiry even if:

- Judge **does not appear**
- Judge **does not cooperate**

## 4. Problems with Allowing Inquiry to End on Resignation

### If resignation ends inquiry:

- Judges can **escape accountability**
- **Adverse findings avoided**
- **Evidence becomes unusable**
- **Reputation remains formally intact**

### Weakness in 2011 precedent:

- No clear **legal basis** for ending inquiry
- Reliance on **irrelevant foreign cases**

### Core gap:

- **Law is silent**, but interpretation suggests inquiry **should continue**

## Challenges for India's informal urban workforce

**Prelims:** General Studies Paper - 1  
Economic and Social Development-Sustainable Development, Poverty, Inclusion, Demographics, Social Sector Initiatives, etc.

**Mains:** General Studies - 3  
Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

## 1. Growing Precarity of Urban Workers

- Recent protests in **Noida industrial units** highlight rising **worker insecurity**
- **Informal sector workers** (around **90% of workforce**) face **declining bargaining power**
- **Regular salaried jobs** remain **low** in urban areas (Periodic Labour Force Survey)
- Majority of workers are engaged in **informal and unstable employment**

## 2. Structural Changes in Urban Economy

- Decline of **formal industries** (e.g., closure of **Mumbai mills, Ahmedabad textile plants**)
- Urban spaces now focus on **survival activities**:
  - ➔ **Food, housing, childcare, basic needs**

- This process is called **urbanisation of social reproduction**
- Result: **Fragmented labour** and weakened **organised workforce**

### 3. Policy Shift and Increasing Vulnerability

- Influence of **Washington Consensus** (by **John Williamson**)
- Shift from **rights-based services** → **market-driven model**
- Key features:
  - ➔ **Privatisation**
  - ➔ **Trade liberalisation**
  - ➔ **Fiscal discipline**
- Consequences:
  - ➔ **High cost of living**
  - ➔ **Land insecurity** and **slum growth** (40% urban poor in slums)
  - ➔ Workers spend **30-50% income on rent**
  - ➔ Many live in **hazard-prone areas** (flood-prone, unsafe locations)
- Issues worsened by:
  - ➔ **Privatisation of water & electricity**
  - ➔ **Gentrification and slum eviction**
    - ↳ **Gentrification - Poor areas are upgraded for richer people, making them expensive**
  - ➔ **Dilution of labour laws**
  - ➔ Loss of **urban commons**
- **Debt traps** due to reliance on **money lenders** (RBI Bulletin 2025)

### 4. Need for Inclusive Urban Governance

- **Kerala Urban Commission** promotes **worker-inclusive policies**
- Introduction of **'workers council'** in city governance
- Informal workers seen as **co-producers of development**
- Need to build **linkages (intersectionality)** between:
  - ➔ **Trade unions**
  - ➔ **Informal sector workers**

- Important in context of:
  - ➔ **Climate change**
  - ➔ **Urban disasters**
  - ➔ **Precarious development**

### KEYWORDS

#### SATAT (Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation) Scheme

- The SATAT (Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation) Scheme was **launched by the Government of India in October 2018 to promote Compressed Biogas (CBG) as a clean transport fuel.**
- It is a **collaborative effort between the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas with PSUs** like Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited, and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited to promote Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG).
- The **scheme focuses on converting agricultural residue, cattle dung, and municipal solid waste into renewable CBG.**
- It helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lowers India's dependence on imported crude oil and natural gas.
- CBG enhances energy security and has the potential to replace CNG in automotive, industrial, and commercial sectors.

## Species In News

### Cocoa (Theobroma cacao L.)

- **Cocoa (Theobroma cacao L.)**, native to the **Amazon region of South America**, was introduced to **India in the early 20th century**
- **Cocoa beans** are the main raw material for **chocolates, beverages, confectioneries**, and other **edible products**
- India's cocoa sector has **limited presence in international exports**, with most **processed products consumed domestically**
- As a **tropical crop**, cocoa has **high potential for expansion in India**
- Major producing states: **Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu**
- Globally, cocoa is largely produced in **tropical regions of Africa**
- Although the genus has **over 20 species**, only **Theobroma cacao** is **widely cultivated**

