

FWD

FORTUNE WEEKLY DIGEST



> CORRUPTION IN INDIA AND WORLD

> INDIA'S NDC OVERVIEW

> CAPF BILL, 2025

23rd MARCH, 2025 - 29th MARCH, 2026

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EDITOR'S NOTE

As UPSC aspirants, it is essential to stay updated on current affairs to excel in the examination. This **Fortune Weekly Digest (ForWard)** brings you the latest news and developments from around the world, carefully curated and analyzed to help you prepare for the Civil Services (Main) Examination.

We understand that time is precious, and we have made sure to present the information in a concise and easy-to-understand manner.

The magazine is divided into different sections. Mains relevant topics have been covered in detail with a UPSC previous year question perspective. The jot downs are examples and interesting facts to enrich your answer writing. Cherrypicks has some key words from the week, helpful again in answer writing and essay. We have also included essay topics and sample questions to help you gauge your preparation.

We have designed this magazine to best supplement the daily current affairs notes we have launched by the name of **FIND (Fortune IAS News Daily)** and **FINDER (Fortune IAS News Daily Explainer)** and the **Fortune Prelims Precise** monthly compilation. This magazine will be explained in detail and your queries addressed in a live class we conduct.

At a time when there is no dearth of current affairs materials, our hope is help you get a one-stop solution for all your current affairs needs.

This magazine is a work in progress and your feedback will be appreciated.

We hope that this magazine will serve as a valuable resource for your exam preparation and contribute to your success in the UPSC examination.

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FIRST ATTEMPT TOPPERS FROM
OUR PRELIMS CUM MAINS BATCH

KASTURI SHA
AIR 68

MANJIMA P
AIR 235

FABI RASHEED
AIR 71

SWATHI S BABU
AIR 522

OORMILA J S
AIR 561

W O M E N I N P O W E R

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CAPF BILL, 2025

Syllabus: GS III - Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate

PYQ MAPPING

Q) What are the internal security challenges being faced by India? Give out the role of Central Intelligence and Investigative Agencies tasked to counter such threats. (2023)

Q) Analyse the multidimensional challenges posed by external state and non-state actors, to the internal security of India. Also discuss measures required to be taken to combat these threats. (2021)

WHY IN NEWS

The Rajya Sabha **passed the Central Armed Police Forces (General Administration) Bill, 2026 on April 1, 2026**, amid an Opposition walkout during the debate.

INTRODUCTION

The proposed **Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) Bill** aims to institutionalise cadre management and regulate the deputation of **Indian Police Service (IPS)** officers within CAPFs under the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**. It has emerged as a significant reform in internal security governance, particularly in the backdrop of recent directions by the Supreme Court of India on service conditions and cadre restructuring.

ABOUT CENTRAL ARMED POLICE FORCE (CAPF)

- ➔ **About:** They are paramilitary forces functioning under the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**, tasked with internal security, border guarding, and assisting civil administration during crises.
- ➔ **Administrative Control:** The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is the cadre-controlling authority for CAPFs and the Indian Police Service (IPS).
- ➔ **Recruitment Mechanism:** Recruitment of officers is conducted through the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).
- ➔ **Cadre Strength:** CAPFs have around 13,000 Group A officers and nearly 10 lakh total personnel.
- ➔ **Existing Deputation Structure:** Currently, 20% of Deputy Inspector General (DIG) posts and 50% of Inspector General (IG) posts are reserved for IPS officers through executive orders.

Constituent Forces of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs)	
Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Function: Internal security and assists states in law and order.	Border Security Force (BSF) Function: Guards borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh.
Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) Function: Secures critical infrastructure and key installations.	Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) Function: Guards the India-China border in high-altitude areas.
Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) Function: Guards borders with in Nepal and Bhutan.	Assam Rifles (AR) Function: Ensures security in Northeast and guards the India-Myanmar border.
National Security Guard (NSG) Function: Conducts counter-terrorism and hostage rescue operations.	

NEED FOR THE BILL

- ➔ **Absence of Comprehensive Legal Framework:** CAPFs have historically been governed by **force-specific Acts and executive instructions**, lacking a unified statutory structure for cadre management.
 - Lack of clarity in seniority between IPS and CAPF officers.
- ➔ **Response to Supreme Court Judgment:** The Bill was introduced following the May 23, 2025 judgment of the Supreme Court directing reduction of IPS deputation within two years.
- ➔ **Cadre Management Issues:**
 - Severe **promotion stagnation** at middle and senior levels.
- ➔ **Administrative Efficiency Concerns:** Government argues that IPS officers bring **field policing experience and inter-state coordination skills**, essential for national security.
- ➔ **Institutional Conflict:** Persistent disputes between CAPF associations and IPS lobby necessitated a **clear legal framework**.
- ➔ **Standardisation Need:** Aims to create **uniform service conditions, tenure rules, and leadership norms** across all CAPFs.

SANJAY PRAKASH & ORS. V. UNION OF INDIA (2025)

Bench: Justices A.S. Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan

Key Highlights of the Judgment

Comprehensive OGAS Status:

- o The Court unequivocally recognized and extended Organised Group-A Service (OGAS) status to the **five Central Armed Police Forces (CRPF, BSF, CISF, ITBP, and SSB)**.

Reduction of IPS Deputation:

- o Recognizing the severe career stagnation of indigenous CAPF cadre officers, the Court directed the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to **progressively reduce the deputation of Indian Police Service (IPS) officers** in senior ranks up to the Inspector General (IG) level **within two years**.

Constitutional Parity:

- o By applying **Articles 14 and 16**, the Bench held that keeping a structural "glass ceiling" that permanently reserves top command posts for an external cadre (IPS) violates the fundamental right to equality of opportunity in public employment.

Aftermath

- o The Supreme Court **dismissed the Ministry of Home Affairs' review petition** on October 28, 2025.
- o **Retired CAPF officials approached the Court** alleging non-compliance with its orders to which the government informed that a legal framework (statutory intervention) was being proposed to address the issue.

KEY PROVISIONS

Statutory Backing to Deputation System:

- o Formalises deputation of **Indian Police Service (IPS)** officers into CAPFs through legislation rather than executive orders.

Reservation of Senior Leadership Posts:

- o 50% of Inspector General (IG) posts are reserved for IPS officers.
- o At least 67% of Additional Director General (ADG) posts are reserved for IPS.
- o 100% of Special Director General (Special DG) and Director General (DG) posts reserved for IPS.

Codification of Cadre Management:

- o Defines rules for **recruitment, promotions, postings, and tenure**.
- o Converts existing administrative practices into legally enforceable provisions.

Centralised Control:

- o Strengthens the role of the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** in appointments and cadre decisions.



CRITICISMS

▼ **Career Stagnation of CAPF Officers:** Limited promotional avenues due to high reservation of top posts for IPS officers and CAPF officers may retire without reaching senior ranks like IG or ADG.

▼ **Contradiction with Judicial Directions:** Perceived as going against the spirit of the **Supreme Court's directive to reduce IPS deputation**.

▼ **Impact on Morale:** Described by associations as "institutionally demoralising," affecting motivation

and efficiency.

▼ **Undermining Professionalisation:** Prevents development of an **independent leadership pipeline within CAPFs**.

▼ **Centralisation Concerns:** Enhances central control, potentially weakening internal institutional autonomy.

▼ **Perception of Bias:** Seen as favouring IPS officers, leading to **inter-service friction**.

WAY FORWARD

- * **Balanced Leadership Model:** Ensure **equitable representation** of CAPF cadre officers and IPS officers at senior levels.
- * **Implementation of Judicial Directives:** Gradually reduce IPS deputation in line with **Supreme Court guidelines**.
- * **Transparent Promotion System:** Introduce **time-bound promotions and clear seniority rules** to address stagnation.
- * **Strengthening Institutional Capacity:** Develop **internal leadership pipelines, specialised training, and domain expertise** within CAPFs.
- * **Regular Cadre Review:** Conduct periodic reviews to align with changing security challenges.
- * **Stakeholder Consultation:** Engage CAPF associations, IPS representatives, and policymakers to build consensus.
- * **Towards Professional Autonomy:** Move gradually towards a model where CAPFs function as **professional, self-sustaining security forces**.

CONCLUSION

While the Bill seeks to enhance administrative efficiency and streamline leadership, it also **brings to the fore concerns of equity, morale, and institutional autonomy** within CAPFs. Moving forward, **a balanced and consultative approach aligning executive action with judicial intent** will be crucial for building a professional and effective internal security framework.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Q) “Reforms in Central Armed Police Forces are essential for strengthening India’s internal security.” Discuss. **(10 marks) (150 words)**

SCHEDULED CASTE STATUS

Syllabus: GS II - Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors

PYQ MAPPING

Q) Whether the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) can enforce the implementation of constitutional reservation for the Scheduled Castes in the religious minority institutions? Examine. (2018)

Q) What are the two major legal initiatives by the State since Independence addressing discrimination against Scheduled Tribes (STs)? (2017)

WHY IN NEWS

In **Chinthada Anand v. State of Andhra Pradesh**, the Supreme Court of India, through **Justices P. K. Mishra and Manmohan**, ruled that **Scheduled Caste status is limited to Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists and is lost upon conversion**, upholding the 2025 Andhra Pradesh High Court judgment.

INTRODUCTION

The recent Supreme Court judgment has reignited the **debate on whether Scheduled Caste status should remain restricted by religion** under the constitutional framework. It brings into focus the continuing validity of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, amid claims that caste-based discrimination persists across religions.

SHORT TAKES

> Balakrishnan Commission

- o The Union Government **set up a commission in 2022 under K. G. Balakrishnan** to examine SC status for Dalit converts to Christianity and Islam.
- o It includes **Dr. Ravinder Kumar Jain and Prof. Sushma Yadav**, and has received extensions beyond its initial two-year mandate.
- o The commission **studies whether caste discrimination and social conditions persist after conversion**.
- o Its report will influence **Clause 3 of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950**, which restricts SC status to Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SC CLASSIFICATION

- ➔ **Colonial Construction of 'Depressed Classes':** The British administration identified socially excluded castes to address structural discrimination and governance needs.
- ➔ **Ambedkarite Vision of Social Justice:** The SC category emerged as a corrective mechanism to eliminate untouchability and caste oppression in independent India.
- ➔ **Article 341 of Indian Cons:** Empowers the President to specify Scheduled Castes (SC) through a public notification, subject to parliamentary modification.
- ➔ **Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950:** The 1950 Order restricts SC status only to persons professing Hinduism, later extended to Sikhs (1956) and Buddhists (1990), excluding Christians and Muslims.
- ➔ **Parliamentary Authority:** Any inclusion or exclusion from the SC list can only be done by Parliament, ensuring legislative oversight in caste classification.

ABOUT THE RECENT CASE

Chinthada Anand v. State of Andhra Pradesh (2026)

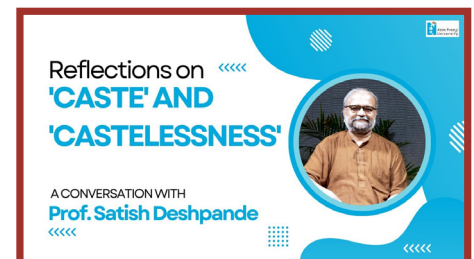
- 🕒 Chinthada Anand belonged to the **Madiga Scheduled Caste community** of Andhra Pradesh but had been **practicing Christianity and working as a pastor for over a decade**.
- 🕒 He alleged that he was **physically attacked and subjected to caste-based abuses** by members of the Reddy community in **Guntur district**.
- 🕒 Based on the complaint, a case was registered under:
 - o **Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989**
 - o Relevant provisions of the **Indian Penal Code (IPC)**
- 🕒 The **Andhra Pradesh High Court** quashed the case, holding that:
 - o As a **practicing Christian pastor**, Anand **could not claim SC status**
 - o Therefore, he was **not entitled to protection under the SC/ST Act**
- 🕒 Following this, he **appealed the ruling** to the Supreme Court of India.

KEY FEATURES OF RECENT JUDGEMENT

- ♣ **Religion-based limitation:**
 - o Scheduled Caste status is **restricted only to Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists** under **Clause 3 of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950**, making the exclusion of other religions **categorical and absolute**.
- ♣ **Immediate loss of SC status upon conversion:**
 - o Conversion to religions like Christianity or Islam leads to **instant and complete loss of SC status**, irrespective of birth or historical disadvantage.
 - o The Court held SC identity and non-listed religions are **mutually exclusive**.
 - o A person who has converted to a non-eligible religion **cannot claim protection under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act** as an SC
- ♣ **Clear distinction with Scheduled Tribe (ST):**
 - o Unlike SCs, **ST status under the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 is not restricted by religion**.
 - o Determination depends on **tribal identity, customs, and community recognition**, not faith alone.
 - o Conversion does **not automatically cancel ST status**.
- ♣ **Strict conditions for reconversion:**
 - o To regain SC status after reconversion, one must prove
 - **Genuine return, total renunciation of previous religion, and caste acceptance.**
 - **The burden of proof lies entirely on the claimant.**

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF EXPANSION

- ✓ **Persistence of Caste-Based Discrimination:** Empirical and sociological studies show that Dalit converts continue to face social exclusion and discrimination.
 - o **Example** The **2008 report by Professor Satish Deshpande** for the National Commission for Minorities concluded that **Dalit Muslims and Dalit Christians face severe socio-economic backwardness**.
- ✓ **Caste as a Social, Not Religious Phenomenon:** Courts themselves acknowledge caste is birth-based and survives conversion, supporting the case for expansion.
 - o **Example:** In **C.M. Arumugam v. S. Rajgopal (1976)**, the Supreme Court held that **caste can persist despite religious conversion**, with converts to Christianity often still facing their original social disabilities.
- ✓ **Violation of Equality (Article 14):** Denying SC status based on religion creates unequal treatment among similarly placed disadvantaged groups.
- ✓ **Restriction on Freedom of Religion (Article 25):** Individuals may be discouraged from converting due to fear of losing reservation benefits.
- ✓ **Recommendations of Expert Bodies:** Various commissions have recommended extending SC status to Dalit Christians and Muslims (e.g., ongoing Balakrishnan Commission).
- ✓ **Principle of Substantive Justice:** Affirmative action should be based on actual disadvantage rather than formal religious identity.



ARGUMENTS AGAINST EXPANSION

- ✗ **Original Objective of SC Reservation:** SC status was designed to address untouchability within specific socio-religious contexts, not universal caste disadvantage.
- ✗ **Absence of Caste Doctrine in Other Religions:** Courts have held that caste is not doctrinally recognised in Christianity and Islam.
- ✗ **Risk of Reservation Dilution:** Expanding the beneficiary base may reduce opportunities for existing SC communities due to fixed quotas.
- ✗ **Administrative Complexity:** Identifying genuine beneficiaries among converts is difficult and may lead to misuse or fraudulent claims.

WAY FORWARD

- * **Data-Driven Policy Reform:** Conduct nationwide socio-economic surveys of Dalit converts to assess actual deprivation levels.
- * **Role of Commissions and Expert Panels:** The Balakrishnan Commission's findings should guide future policy decisions on SC status expansion.
- * **Possible Sub-Categorisation:**
 - o Internal reservation or separate quota for Dalit converts can balance equity without harming existing SC groups.
 - o The August 2024 Supreme Court of India ruling in *State of Punjab v. Davinder Singh* upheld that states can create sub-classifications within SC/ST categories to target benefits for the most marginalized groups.
- * **Strengthening Anti-Discrimination Laws:** Extend protections (like SC/ST Act safeguards) based on vulnerability rather than religious identity.
- * **Parliamentary Debate and Amendment:** Any reform must come through Parliament to maintain constitutional legitimacy and democratic consensus.
- * Policies must reconcile formal equality with substantive justice to ensure inclusive development.

CONCLUSION

While the Court reaffirmed the existing legal position, recent tensions underscores the gap between formal constitutional provisions and social realities of caste. A **balanced, evidence-based approach through parliamentary intervention is necessary** to align affirmative action policies with the principles of equality, dignity, and social justice.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Q) "Scheduled Caste status in India is a constitutional construct shaped by both legal provisions and social realities." Discuss in the light of recent judicial developments.
(15 marks) (250 words)

CORRUPTION IN INDIA AND WORLD

Syllabus: GS II - Transparency and accountability

PYQ MAPPING

Q) Q) Discuss how emerging technologies and globalisation contribute to money laundering. Elaborate measures to tackle the problem of money laundering both at national and international levels. (2021)

WHY IN NEWS

The **2025 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)** by Transparency International was released on **10 February 2026**, showing that perceived public-sector corruption remains widespread globally with the average score falling to 42 out of 100.

INTRODUCTION

Corruption remains a pervasive challenge that undermines governance, economic growth, and public trust across the world. The **Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)** provides a global benchmark to understand and compare the prevalence of corruption in public sectors.

SHORT TAKES

➤ Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013

- Establishes an **independent anti-corruption ombudsman** at the Centre (**Lokpal**) and mandates that states set up **Lokayuktas**.
- The Lokpal comprises a **Chairperson and up to eight members** (at least half being judicial members with representation from SC/ST/OBC/minorities and women) and has jurisdiction over

- the Prime Minister (in specific cases), Union ministers, MPs, and central government officials.
- Members of the Lokpal are appointed by a committee consisting of the **Prime Minister, Speaker of Lok Sabha, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Chief Justice of India (or a nominee), and an eminent jurist nominated by the President**.

OVERVIEW OF CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX (CPI)

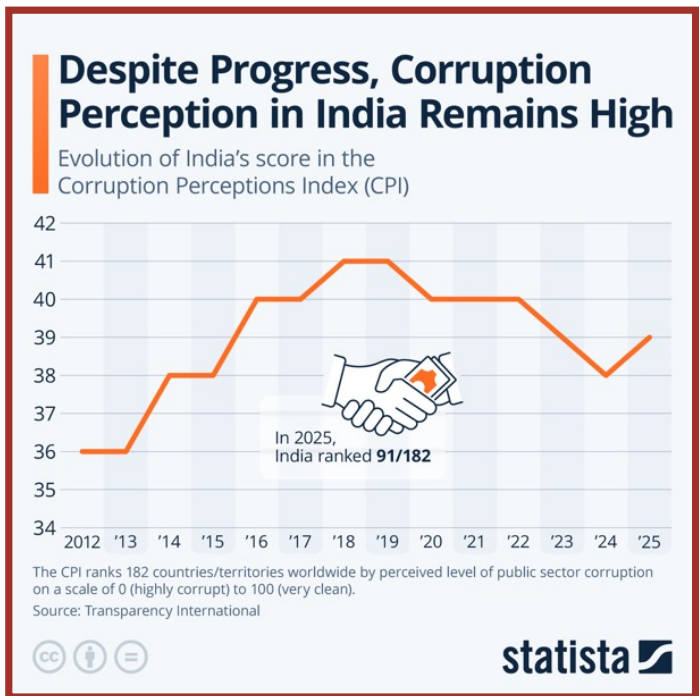
- ➔ **What it is:** The CPI is an annual index published by **Transparency International**, ranking countries by perceived levels of public-sector corruption. It uses expert assessments and business surveys from multiple independent sources.
- ➔ **Scoring scale:** Countries are scored on a scale of **0 to 100**, where **0 = highly corrupt** and **100 = very clean**.
- ➔ **Methodology:** It is based on **13 independent data sources**, covering aspects such as public procurement, regulatory enforcement, judicial effectiveness, and institutional safeguards.
- ➔ **Purpose:** It serves as a global benchmark for governance and integrity, widely cited in policy debates and rankings.
- ➔ **Limitations:** As a perception-based index, it **does not measure corruption incidents directly** but reflects how corruption is seen by experts and business leaders.

GLOBAL TRENDS

- 🕒 **Global average fell:** In the latest **CPI 2025**, the world's average score dropped to **42/100**, the lowest in over a decade, signaling widespread public-sector corruption.
- 🕒 **High prevalence of corruption:** **122 out of 182 countries** scored below 50, showing that a majority struggle to control corruption.
- 🕒 **Top performers:** Only **5 countries** namely **Denmark (89), Finland (88), Singapore (84), New Zealand (81) and Norway (81)** scored above 80, compared to 12 countries a decade ago, reflecting deterioration even among better performers.
- 🕒 **Bottom performers:** Fragile states such as **South Sudan(9) and Somalia (9)** ranked among the most corrupt.
- 🕒 **Democratic backsliding:** Even established democracies such as the **UK and US** have seen declines in their CPI scores, highlighting weakening institutions and governance.
- 🕒 **Drivers of decline:** Restrictions on civic space, lack of press freedom, and erosion of accountability mechanisms are linked with deteriorating scores in many countries.

INDIAN SCENARIO

- 🇮🇳 **India's CPI 2025 rank:** India is placed **91st out of 182 countries** with a score of **39/100**, a marginal improvement from previous years but still below the global average.
- 🇮🇳 **Trend over time:** India's score has **hovered around the high 30s for several years, peaking at 41 in earlier CPI editions**, indicating stagnation in perception of public-sector corruption.
- 🇮🇳 **Regional Comparison:**
 - Performs better than **Bangladesh and Pakistan**
 - Comparable to **Sri Lanka**
 - Slightly behind **China (42 score)**
- 🇮🇳 **Drivers of improvement:** Expansion of **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** and e-governance initiatives has reduced petty corruption in welfare delivery.
- 🇮🇳 **Persistent concerns:** Issues remain in political financing transparency, weak whistleblower protection, and limited safeguards for journalists and civic space.



CAUSES OF CORRUPTION

- ♣️ **Lack of transparency:** Opaque government processes allow discretionary decision-making and unethical behaviour by officials.
- ♣️ **Weak institutions:** Ineffective enforcement agencies, judicial delays, and limited accountability encourage corrupt practices.
- ♣️ **Bureaucratic red tape:** Lengthy procedures, excessive approvals, and complex regulations create opportunities for bribery and facilitation payments.
 - **Example:** A pharmaceutical startup must comply with **998 regulatory requirements**, nearly **49% involving criminal liability**.
- ♣️ **Low incentives & pay:** Low salaries or the perception of inadequate compensation for public servants can push officials towards corruption to supplement income.
- ♣️ **Social and cultural norms:** Acceptance of gift-giving,



nepotism, or favoritism can normalise corrupt behaviour in societies.

- ♣️ **Political interference:** Influence of politics in administrative and regulatory decisions increases corruption risks.
- ♣️ **Regulatory burdens:** Complex tax, licensing, and approval systems incentivise circumvention through corrupt shortcuts.

CASE STUDIES

- 🔪 **Singapore:** The **Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB)** is a highly independent anti-graft agency with strong political backing and strict enforcement, supported by high public-sector wages and streamlined procedures to minimise bribery opportunities.
- 🔪 **Hong Kong:** The **Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC)** uses a three-pronged approach namely rigorous law enforcement, systemic prevention, and community education to reduce corruption and build a culture of integrity.

WAY FORWARD FOR STRENGTHENING NAVIC

* Strengthen institutions:

- o Empower bodies like the **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), Lokpal, Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG)**, and state-level anti-corruption bureaus with adequate autonomy, budget, and investigative powers.
- o The **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013** mandates the Lokpal to inquire into corruption complaints against public officials.

* Enhance transparency:

- o Expand **e-governance initiatives** such as **Digital India, e-procurement**, and **direct benefit transfers (DBT)** to reduce discretion and curb leakages in welfare schemes.
- o Open government data platforms like **data.gov.in** allow public monitoring of government projects.

- * **Protect whistleblowers:** Strengthen laws like the **Whistle Blowers Protection Act, 2014**, ensuring confidentiality, legal safeguards, and protection from

retaliation for individuals reporting corruption or misconduct in public offices.

- * **Political finance reform:** Ensure transparency in political funding through **Election Commission mandates**, audit of donations above specified limits, and reduction of cash donations, reducing undue influence and patronage networks.

- * **Civic engagement:** Promote **civil society participation**, investigative journalism, and citizen feedback mechanisms such as **social audits and public grievance portals**.

- * **International cooperation:** Collaborate with global bodies such the **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** to adopt best practices, tackle money laundering, and curb illicit financial flows.

- * **Education and ethics:** Integrate **ethical education, integrity modules, and civic awareness** in school curricula = and professional training programs for civil servants.

CONCLUSION

Addressing corruption requires a multi-pronged strategy combining strong institutions, transparency, citizen engagement, and international cooperation. Only through sustained reforms and ethical governance can India and other countries improve their CPI scores and strengthen public trust.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Q) "Corruption undermines public trust and the effectiveness of democratic institutions." Discuss.
(10 marks) (150 words)

INDIA'S NDC OVERVIEW (2031–2035)

Syllabus: GS III - Environment and Ecology

PYQ MAPPING

Q) Describe the major outcomes of the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). What are the commitments made by India in this conference? (2021)

WHY IN NEWS

The Union Cabinet has approved India's **updated NDC for 2031–2035**, enhancing its climate targets under the Paris Agreement.

INTRODUCTION

India's updated **Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) for 2031–2035**, approved by the Union Cabinet, represents a significant enhancement of its climate ambition under the **Paris Agreement**. It reflects India's dual commitment to **climate justice and sustainable development**, while aligning with the long-term goals of **Net Zero by 2070** and **Viksit Bharat @2047**.



KEY QUANTITATIVE TARGETS (2031–2035)

- ➔ India has significantly scaled up its climate commitments:
 - **Emission Intensity Reduction**
 - Target: Reduce emissions intensity of GDP by **47% from 2005 levels by 2035**
 - Progress: Already achieved **36% reduction (2005–2020)**
 - **Non-Fossil Fuel Capacity**
 - Target: **60% of installed electric power capacity** from non-fossil sources by 2035
- Current status: **52.57% achieved (2026)**, ahead of schedule
- **Carbon Sink Creation**
 - Target: **3.5–4.0 billion tonnes CO₂ equivalent** through forest and tree cover
 - Progress: **2.29 billion tonnes achieved (by 2021)**
- ➔ These targets demonstrate a **shift from incremental to accelerated climate ambition**.

EVOLUTION OF INDIA'S CLIMATE COMMITMENTS

- 🕒 **2015 NDC (Original):**
 - 33–35% emission intensity reduction
 - 40% non-fossil capacity by 2030
- 🕒 **Performance:**
 - Achieved **well ahead of deadlines** (9–11 years early)
- Established India as a **credible climate actor**
- 🕒 **2022 Update & 2031–35 NDC:**
 - Reflects **progressive enhancement of ambition**
 - Aligns with outcomes of the **Global Stocktake (GST)**

SECTORAL STRATEGIES FOR MITIGATION

- ♣️ **Renewable Energy Expansion:** Rapid increase in solar, wind, and other renewables to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and cut emissions.
 - **Example:** Bhadla Solar Park (Rajasthan), one of the world's largest solar parks supplying clean electricity
- ♣️ **Green Hydrogen Mission:** Promotes hydrogen as a clean fuel for industries like steel, fertilizer, and transport to decarbonize hard-to-abate sectors.
 - **Example:** NTPC pilot projects capturing CO₂ from thermal power plants for reuse in chemicals.
- **Example:** Indian Oil's green hydrogen plant at Mathura refinery for cleaner fuel production.
- ♣️ **Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS):** Captures CO₂ from industries and either reuses or stores it underground to prevent atmospheric emissions.
 - **Example:** NTPC pilot projects capturing CO₂ from thermal power plants for reuse in chemicals.

- ♣ **Cleaner Manufacturing (PLI Schemes):** Incentivizes industries to adopt energy-efficient and low-carbon technologies, improving sustainability in production.
 - o **Example:** PLI scheme for solar PV modules boosting domestic manufacturing of efficient solar panels.
- ♣ **Nuclear Energy Expansion:** Provides reliable, low-carbon baseload power to complement intermittent

- renewable sources.
 - o **Example:** Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant providing stable, low-carbon electricity.

- ♣ **Decentralised Solar Initiatives (PM Surya Ghar, PM-KUSUM):** Encourages rooftop solar and solar pumps, reducing transmission losses and empowering rural households.

ADAPTATION AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

- 🌀 **Coastal Protection (Mangroves & Regulation):**
 - o **Example:** MISHTI scheme for mangrove restoration in Sundarbans and coastal Gujarat to reduce cyclone impact.
- 🌀 **Early Warning Systems:**
 - o **Example:** IMD's cyclone alert system during Cyclone Amphan and Fani helped in large-scale evacuation and reduced casualties.
- 🌀 **Himalayan Ecosystem Protection:**
 - o **Example:** National Mission on Sustaining

Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE) for glacier monitoring and biodiversity conservation.

- 🌀 **Heat Action Plans:**
 - o **Example:** Ahmedabad Heat Action Plan – early warnings, cooling centres, and public awareness to reduce heatwave deaths.
- 🌀 **Climate-Resilient Infrastructure:**
 - o **Example:** All-weather roads under PMGSY in hilly areas designed to withstand landslides and extreme rainfall.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- ☀️ **NAPCC (National Action Plan on Climate Change):** Central framework guiding climate policies through missions on energy, water, agriculture, etc.
- ☀️ **SAPCCs (State Action Plans):** States customize climate

strategies based on regional vulnerabilities and needs.

- ☀️ **Convergence with Schemes:** Climate goals integrated with schemes like agriculture, water, and rural development for effective implementation.

INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE LEADERSHIP

- ★ **Global Climate Leadership through Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives:**
 - o India has emerged as a key global climate leader by launching and participating in major international initiatives that promote clean energy, resilience, and low-carbon industrial transition.
 - o **Example:** Through the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, India facilitates solar adoption in

developing countries (e.g., solar projects in Africa); via **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)**, it supports climate-resilient infrastructure in vulnerable nations; the **Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA)** promotes ethanol blending (e.g., India's E20 target); and under **Lead-IT Initiative**, India collaborates with countries like Sweden to decarbonize heavy industries such as steel.

PEOPLE-CENTRIC CLIMATE ACTION

- ☀️ **LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment):**
 - o Promotes **sustainable daily habits** like energy saving, water conservation, and waste reduction through pro-planet behaviour.
 - o Encourages a shift from **“use-and-dispose” to circular economy** (e.g., reuse, recycling, minimal consumption).
- ☀️ **Mass Campaigns (e.g., Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam):**
 - o Converts climate action into a **people's movement (Jan Andolan)** by linking it with cultural and

emotional values.

- o Enhances **afforestation and awareness** through large-scale public participation (e.g., tree plantation drives).

- ☀️ **Behavioural Change Approach:**
 - o Focuses on **long-term habit transformation** (e.g., reducing electricity use, promoting public transport).
 - o Uses **awareness and nudges** to ensure sustainable lifestyles become routine practices.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- ◆ **Green Jobs Creation:**
 - **Example:** Expansion of solar parks in Rajasthan and Gujarat creates jobs in installation, maintenance, and manufacturing of panels.
- ◆ **Energy Security:**
 - **Example:** Increasing domestic solar and wind capacity reduces dependence on crude oil imports from West Asia.
- ◆ **Rural Livelihood Support:**
 - **Example:** Afforestation programs (e.g., CAMPA

funds) generate income for local communities through plantation and forest management.

- ◆ **Innovation Ecosystem:**
 - **Example:** Startups working on EV batteries, green hydrogen (e.g., Reliance, Adani initiatives) boosting clean-tech innovation.
- ◆ **Just Transition:**
 - **Example:** Skill development programs for coal workers in Jharkhand to shift towards renewable energy jobs.

CHALLENGES

- **Climate Finance Constraints:**
 - **Example:** Large-scale renewable projects require billions of dollars; dependence on international funds like Green Climate Fund.
- **Coal Dependence:**
 - **Example:** India still gets ~70% of electricity from coal, making rapid transition difficult without affecting energy supply.
- **State Capacity Issues:**
 - **Example:** Some states lag in implementing rooftop solar schemes due to administrative delays and DISCOM financial stress.
- **Balancing Growth and Sustainability:**
 - **Example:** Rapid infrastructure expansion (highways, urbanization) increases emissions despite green commitments.

WAY FORWARD

- ✦ **Enhancing Climate Finance Mobilisation:** India should expand both domestic and international funding sources for climate action.
 - **Example:** Issuance of **sovereign green bonds** and leveraging funds from the **Green Climate Fund (GCF)** for renewable and adaptation projects.
- ✦ **Phased Coal Transition with Just Transition Framework:** Gradual reduction of coal dependence while protecting the livelihoods of workers.
 - **Example:** Developing **renewable energy hubs in coal regions like Jharkhand** and reskilling coal workers for solar/wind jobs.
- ✦ **Strengthening State-Level Implementation Capacity:** Improve financial and administrative capacity of states for better execution.
- **Example:** Reforming **DISCOMs under RDSS scheme** to enable faster adoption of rooftop solar programs.
- **Promoting Green Technology & Innovation:** Invest in R&D and scale up emerging technologies.
 - **Example:** Expansion of **National Green Hydrogen Mission** to decarbonize steel and fertilizer industries.
- **Behavioural Change & Demand-Side Management (LiFE Approach):** Encourage sustainable consumption patterns among citizens.
 - **Example:** Promotion of **LED bulbs (UJALA scheme)** and public campaigns for reducing energy and water usage.

CONCLUSION

India's NDC (2031–2035) marks a **transition from commitment to leadership** in global climate action. By combining **ambitious targets, inclusive governance, and people-centric approaches**, India demonstrates that **economic growth and environmental sustainability can coexist**. It reinforces India's trajectory toward a **climate-resilient, low-carbon economy**, while upholding the principles of **equity and justice in global climate governance**.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Q)“India’s updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) for 2031–2035 reflects a shift from commitment to climate leadership.” Discuss the key features of the updated NDC and critically examine its implications for India’s sustainable development and climate justice goals.
(15 marks) (250 words)

WEEKLY DOSSIERS

ORBITAL CONGESTION AND GOVERNANCE DEFICIT: A UPSC GS-3 PERSPECTIVE

The rapid expansion of space activities, especially with private players like SpaceX deploying mega-constellations (e.g., Starlink), has transformed Earth's orbit into a **crowded and vulnerable space**. The issue is no longer purely technological but reflects a **failure of global governance**, where regulation has not kept pace with commercial expansion.

Why is Earth's Orbit Becoming Congested?

- ◆ **Falling Launch Costs:** Reusable rockets have made space access cheaper, increasing satellite launches.
- ◆ **Rise of Private Actors:** Commercial constellations for internet, navigation, and surveillance.
- ◆ **Short Lifecycle Satellites:** Increase in small satellites with limited operational life.

Nature of the Governance Deficit

- ◆ **Lack of Monitoring Mechanisms:** Regulators depend on **pre-launch declarations** rather than verifying post-launch compliance.
- ◆ **Weak Enforcement:** No system to ensure satellites are **de-orbited or safely disposed of after** mission completion.
- ◆ **Data Asymmetry:** Orbital data is unevenly shared due to **commercial secrecy and national security concerns**.
- ◆ **Fragmented Regulations:** Different countries have **varying licensing standards**, leading to "regulatory arbitrage".

Challenges in Managing Orbital Debris

- ◆ **Tracking Difficulty:** Small debris pieces are hard to detect but highly destructive.
- ◆ **Cascade Effect (Kessler Syndrome):** Collisions generate more debris, increasing future risks exponentially.
- ◆ **Attribution Problem:** Difficult to identify the origin of debris after damage occurs.

Limitations of Existing International Legal Framework

- ◆ Governed mainly by the Outer Space Treaty
 - **Article VI:** States responsible for national activities (including private actors)

- **Article VII:** Liability for damage caused by space objects

◆ Key Issues:

- Designed for a **state-centric, low-activity era**
- No provisions for **cumulative harm or congestion control**
- Absence of a **duty-of-care standard** for orbital sustainability

Way Forward: Strengthening Orbital Governance

- ◆ **Standardised Global Regulations:** Harmonise licensing norms across countries.
- ◆ **Mandatory Debris Mitigation Standards:** Enforce measurable thresholds and compliance audits.
- ◆ **Data Sharing Mechanisms:** Improve **Space Situational Awareness (SSA)** through open data systems.
- ◆ **Binding International Framework:** Move beyond voluntary guidelines to **legally enforceable rules**.
- ◆ **Ethical Governance Framework:** Incorporate environmental law principles like **precaution and sustainability**.

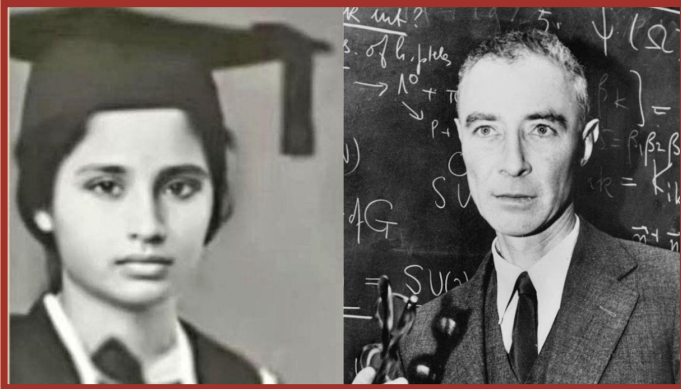
India's Opportunity in Space Governance

- ◆ India, with its expanding space sector, can play a leadership role
 - Develop **robust national space legislation**
 - Integrate **orbital sustainability into licensing norms**
 - Promote **responsible private sector participation**
 - Leverage institutions like ISRO for global cooperation

Conclusion

The growing congestion in Earth's orbit highlights that **technological progress without governance leads to systemic risk**. A shift is needed from **reactive liability to proactive responsibility**. Sustainable use of space demands **ethical, legal, and institutional reforms**, ensuring that orbital commons remain accessible for future generations.

T.K. RADHA: A PIONEER FROM KERALA TO GLOBAL PHYSICS



T.K. Radha (Radha Gourishankar) stands as an inspiring example of **early Indian women in STEM**, who rose from rural Kerala to engage with global scientific leaders like J. Robert Oppenheimer. Her journey reflects **academic excellence, perseverance, and gender barriers in science** during mid-20th century India.

Early Life and Education

- ◆ Born in **Thayyur, Thrissur (Kerala)**, Radha studied under modest conditions (kerosene lamps).
- ◆ **Excelled academically:**
 - **100% in Mathematics, 98% in Physics** at Stella Maris College
- ◆ Pursued Physics Honours at Presidency College, despite societal resistance to co-education.

Academic Excellence and Research Career

- ◆ Completed Master's and PhD in **Nuclear/Particle Physics** under Alladi Ramakrishnan at Madras University.
- ◆ Exposure to global physicists like Niels Bohr and Robert Marshak.
- ◆ Received prestigious **post-doctoral offers** from:
 - ◆ Stanford University

- ◆ University of Rochester

Meeting with Oppenheimer: A Historic Milestone

- ◆ In 1965, invited by J. Robert Oppenheimer to the **Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton**.
- ◆ Had direct academic interactions with him, discussing her research.
- ◆ Symbolizes:
 - Recognition of Indian talent globally
 - Rare achievement for an Indian woman in the 1960s

Challenges and Career Shifts

- ◆ Marriage and migration to Canada led to:
 - Career interruptions due to **gender bias in hiring**
- ◆ Reinvented herself by:
 - Learning **Computer Science**
 - Working as a **computer analyst at University of Alberta**

Continued Contributions

- ◆ Continued publishing research papers and collaborating academically.
- ◆ Bridged **physics and computational sciences**, showing adaptability.

Conclusion

T.K. Radha's journey is not just about scientific achievement but about **resilience against structural constraints**. Her story highlights the need for **inclusive policies in science and education**, ensuring that talent is not lost due to gender or societal barriers.

U.S.–ISRAEL–IRAN CONFLICT AND INDIA'S EV GAP

The recent West Asian conflict has led to a sharp rise in global oil prices, exposing India's **high dependence on fossil fuels**. In contrast, China's early shift to electric mobility has reduced its vulnerability, highlighting India's **EV adoption gap**.

Oil Shock and Strategic Risk

- ◆ Oil prices surged significantly, with the OPEC basket

rising ~67% in a month.

- ◆ The **Strait of Hormuz**, through which ~20% of global oil passes, remains a major chokepoint.
- ◆ India's heavy reliance on imported oil makes it directly exposed to such disruptions.

India vs China: EV Gap

- ◆ China has over **50% EV share in new car sales**, while India is around **6%**.
- ◆ Total EV base and adoption in China are far higher due to **early policy push and scale**.

Infrastructure Constraints in India

- ◆ Limited charging infrastructure (higher EV-to-charger ratio).
- ◆ Slower ecosystem development compared to China.

Economic Implications

- ◆ Rising fuel prices increase **transport and logistics costs**, feeding inflation.
- ◆ Higher import bills worsen **trade deficit and fiscal pressure**.
- ◆ Direct burden on households through **petrol, diesel, LPG prices**.

Why China is Better Insulated

- ◆ Strong EV ecosystem and domestic manufacturing base.
- ◆ Policies supporting large-scale electrification.

Way Forward

- ◆ Accelerate EV adoption, especially in **passenger vehicles**.
- ◆ Expand **charging infrastructure** through PPP models.
- ◆ Strengthen **battery manufacturing and supply chains**.
- ◆ Integrate EVs with **renewable energy sources**.

Conclusion

The conflict shows that **energy security and mobility transition are interconnected**. Bridging the EV gap is essential for India to reduce **geopolitical vulnerability and ensure economic stability**.

BEYOND VERDICTS: KEY JUDICIAL INTERVENTIONS

Jojari–Luni–Bandi River System and Pollution Concerns

- ◆ The Supreme Court of India, through a **high-level committee**, has highlighted **severe industrial pollution** in the **Jojari–Luni–Bandi river system**, turning it into a **toxic mix of sludge, untreated effluents, and municipal waste**.
- ◆ The Luni River originates from the **western slopes of the Aravalli ranges** near Ajmer and flows about **511 km** before draining into the Rann of Kachchh. Its **major tributaries** include **Jojari, Bandi, Mithri, Lilari, Sukri, and Jawai** rivers.

Supreme Court: Patriarchy Drives Violence Against Women

- ◆ The **Supreme Court** in *Shankar v. The state of Rajasthan* noted that **dowry harassment and domestic abuse persist** despite legal reforms and welfare schemes, reflecting deep **patriarchal norms**.
- ◆ While **urban areas** show progress, **rural and semi-urban households** still restrict women's autonomy. **NCRB data** records over **4.48 lakh crimes against women** in 2023, with dowry violence causing **6,000+ deaths annually**.
- ◆ The Court emphasized that **laws alone cannot change entrenched societal beliefs**. It concluded that control over **women's choices and lives** persists, and social transformation requires **collective societal effort**.

Supreme Court: Toll on National Highways Under Union List

- ◆ The **Supreme Court** in *T S R Venkatramana v. Union of India* held that **tolls on national highways** fall under the **Union List (Entry 23 & 96, List I)** and can be levied by the **NHAI**.
- ◆ **States** can levy tolls **only on non-national highways (Entry 59, List II)**. The Court upheld the **2008 National Highways Fee Rules** and rejected the challenge to Parliament's legislative competence.

Independence of Constitutional Institutions Crucial for Democracy

- ◆ Supreme Court Justice **BV Nagarathna** emphasized that constitutional institutions like the **Election Commission of**

India (ECI) and the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) must function independently and free from political influence.

- ◆ She noted that **control over elections (Article 324)** effectively determines political competition, making the ECI's independence crucial for a healthy democracy.
- ◆ The **CAG (Article 148)** ensures **accountability in public spending** by auditing independently of the executive or legislature.
- ◆ Similarly, the **Finance Commission (Article 280)** prevents fiscal dependence from translating into political dependence, maintaining neutrality in fund allocation. Justice Nagarathna concluded that the **structural independence of institutions** is vital for **neutrality, accountability, and balance of power**, and weakening them risks constitutional collapse.

Gujarat High Court Bars AI in Judicial Decision-Making

- ◆ The **Gujarat High Court** has issued a policy prohibiting judges from using **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** for **decision-making, adjudication, reasoning, or judgment preparation**, while allowing its use for **administrative tasks, research support, drafting assistance, translation, and case management**.
- ◆ The policy, released by **Justice Vikram Nath**, applies to **all judicial officers, court staff, legal assistants, interns, and administrative personnel** across the High Court and district judiciary. It emphasizes that **judicial independence must be preserved**, and judges remain fully responsible for all orders and judgments issued in their name.
- ◆ AI may assist in **preliminary legal research, improving language or structure of drafts, translation, and administrative scheduling**, but all outputs must be **verified by human oversight**. Violations of the policy will be **treated as misconduct**, attracting disciplinary or legal action under applicable laws, including the **Information Technology Act, 2000**, and the **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023**.

ETHICS - CASE STUDY

Q) Rohit is a senior officer in the State Civil Services, currently serving as the District Supply Officer. He is known for his integrity and commitment to public service. One day, he receives a file regarding the allocation of a major government food supply contract. After careful evaluation, he finds that a particular company does not meet the required eligibility criteria and recommends rejecting its application. However, later that evening, Rohit learns that the owner of that company is his close childhood friend who had supported him financially during his difficult student years. His friend calls him and emotionally reminds him of their past relationship and requests him to “adjust” the evaluation report, assuring that no one would notice and promising future personal help if needed. Rohit is now in a dilemma between his personal loyalty and gratitude towards his friend and his professional duty to uphold fairness, transparency, and public interest.

Questions

- Identify the ethical issues involved in the case.
- What are the options available to Rohit? Evaluate each option.
- What should be Rohit’s course of action? Justify your answer with ethical reasoning.
- How can civil servants manage conflicts between personal values and professional ethics?

ETHICS - EXAMPLES

- Empowerment:** Dr. Kanika Sharma founded Hapchi in 2021 after questioning the effectiveness of “good touch, bad touch” lessons, launching the HapSafe curriculum for Grades 1–12 covering abuse prevention, emotional resilience, and online safety. Partnering with 60+ schools, it has reached over 60,000 students, along with parents and educators.
- Governance Ethics:** Harada Gaydhane, sarpanch of Bela village in Maharashtra, led community-driven changes like tree planting, clean cooking (LPG and solar), rooftop solar adoption, and waste segregation to address everyday issues like pollution and declining farm productivity. These cumulative efforts transformed Bela into India’s first net-zero village, earning it the 2024 Rashtriya Panchayat Puraskar.
- Social Responsibility:** After witnessing a deadly landfill collapse in Ghaziabad, Praveen Nayak founded Garbage Clinic in 2018 to tackle Delhi’s waste crisis through a “garbage ambulance” system using e-rickshaws. The initiative now runs 18 centres, where waste is collected, segregated, composted, and recycled, reducing landfill burden and generating revenue.
- Resilience:** Ahida, a young girl with Down Syndrome, discovered her confidence through dance and theatre, going on to perform in plays like Ramayana and short films. At just 15, she earned national recognition as Miss India (Down Syndrome) Runner-Up 2022 and debuted in the film Dhurandhar, showcasing her talent and challenging societal stereotypes.
- Innovation:** Team Neurostars, Vaishnavi Patil, Abhishek Patil, and Ganesh Mahadik from Rajarambapu Institute of Technology developed ‘DreamConnect’, an AI-powered chatbot to help parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder manage daily challenges through real-time guidance, Autism Quotient (AQ) based personalised responses, and behaviour tracking.
- Gender Ethics:** Kolgaon village in Shrigonda taluka of Maharashtra’s Ahilyanagar district imposed a Rs 500 fine on abusive language involving mothers and sisters through a gram sabha resolution. The initiative, raised by local SHG member Puja Jagtap, aims to curb normalised verbal abuse and promote everyday dignity.
- Environmental Ethics:** A 3-km stretch of the Buckingham Canal in Cuddalore, once clogged with plastic and waste, was revived through community efforts that removed 750 kg of garbage and restored water flow. The Tamil Nadu Forest Department then planted 20,000 mangroves using a fishbone canal system, transforming it into a thriving ecosystem linked to the Pichavaram mangroves.

MODEL ESSAY

"The real problem is not whether machines think but whether men do"

Introduction

- Quote by B F Skinner
- Meaning: The real danger lies in **declining critical thinking, blind dependence on machines, and intellectual complacency** rather than the rise of "thinking machines."

Why Humans Are Not Thinking Enough

- **Overdependence on Technology:** Humans increasingly rely on AI, search engines, and algorithms instead of independent reasoning. **Eg:** Cases of deaths from blindly following GPS navigation
- **Decline in Critical Thinking:** Education and digital culture often promote rote learning and quick answers over deep analysis.
- **Information Overload:** Excessive information leads to superficial understanding rather than reflective thinking.
- **Algorithmic Influence:** Social media and digital platforms shape opinions, reducing independent judgment.
- **Spread of Misinformation:** The **2023 fake Pentagon explosion image** went viral and briefly impacted stock markets due to unverified sharing.

Why Human Thinking Still Persists

- **AI as an Enabler:** Machines enhance human thinking by handling repetitive tasks, freeing humans for creativity and innovation. **Eg:** AI tools like AlphaFold mapped **200+ million protein structures**, but humans apply this knowledge for drug discovery.
- **Evolution of Thinking Tools:** From writing to calculators, tools have always extended human

cognition.

- **Human Creativity and Ethics:** Machines lack consciousness, emotions, and moral reasoning, which remain uniquely human.
- **Rising Awareness:** Growth of critical thinking education and digital literacy initiatives counters blind dependence. **Eg:** Finland's education system formally integrates media literacy

Way Forward

- Education systems must emphasize **reasoning, problem-solving, and analytical skills** over rote learning.
- Citizens must be trained to question algorithms, verify information, and understand AI limitations.
- Policies should ensure **transparency, accountability, and human oversight** in AI systems.

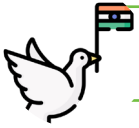
Conclusion

- The challenge is not the rise of intelligent machines but the decline of reflective humans.
- A balanced approach—where technology supports but does not replace human thinking—is essential for a sustainable future.

Sample Quotes

- *The line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being - Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn*
- *The ignorance of one voter in a democracy impairs the security of all - John F Kennedy*
- *The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives.- Robert Hutchins*

MAINS JOT DOWN



GS I: IMPORTANT PERSONALITIES IN NEWS

- The Prime Minister paid tributes to Shyamji Krishna Varma on his death anniversary. Born in Mandvi, Gujarat, he was a revolutionary, journalist, and philanthropist who played a key role in India's freedom struggle.
- He founded the **Indian Home Rule Society (1905)** to promote revolutionary nationalism and established **India House** in London as a hub for Indian freedom fighters. He also served as the first president of the **Bombay Arya Samaj** and influenced leaders like Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. His journal, "**The Indian Sociologist**," was an important medium for spreading nationalist ideas.



GS II: GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND INTERVENTIONS

- The Lok Sabha has passed the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025** to strengthen the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 by **reducing delays** and ensuring **value maximisation**.
- The Bill introduces **Creditor-Initiated Insolvency Resolution Process (CIIRP)**, replacing the underused fast-track route, along with a **Group Insolvency Framework** and **Cross-Border Insolvency Framework**.
- It also reinforces the **Clean Slate Principle** and sets **strict timelines**, 14 days for National Company Law Tribunal and 3 months for National Company Law Appellate Tribunal to dispose of cases.



GS II: INDIAN POLITY

- The report by Access Now for the KeepItOn Coalition highlights the rising trend of **internet shutdowns globally**.
- In 2025, a record **313 shutdowns across 52 countries** were recorded. India reported **65 shutdowns**, the **lowest since 2017** but still the **highest among democracies** and **second highest globally**.
- While India is noted as an **exception for publishing shutdown orders legally**, the report argues that such shutdowns remain **incompatible with democratic principles**.



GS II: HEALTH

- The **Qdenga vaccine** has received approval from the Drugs Controller General of India for use in individuals aged **4 to 60 years** against **dengue**, a **viral infection transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes** and caused by four serotypes (**DENV-1 to DENV-4**).
- It is a **live-attenuated tetravalent vaccine** that provides protection against all four strains of the virus. A key advantage is that it **does not require pre-vaccination screening**, making it easier to deploy in large-scale immunisation programs.



GS III: DEFENCE

- The Indian Navy hosted the **IONS Maritime Exercise (IMEX) Table Top Exercise (TTX) 2026** in Kochi.
- The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) is a voluntary initiative aimed at enhancing maritime cooperation among navies of Indian Ocean littoral states. Its chairmanship rotates **every two years by consensus**, and India has assumed this role in 2026.

- ➔ Membership is open to countries with territory bordering or located within the Indian Ocean, and the grouping currently comprises 25 member nations.



GS III: AGRICULTURE

- ➔ India is one of the world's largest fertiliser consumers and producers, ranking **second in consumption and third in production**. Despite strong domestic output, meeting about **73% of total demand (2025)** with production reaching **524.62 lakh tonnes**, the country remains heavily import dependent, especially for **DAP (~60%) and urea (13 to 20%)**.
- ➔ The **Gulf region** is a major supplier, contributing significantly to urea, DAP, and nearly **50% of LNG imports**, which is a key input for urea production



GS III: ENERGY

- ➔ The National Statistics Office under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released *Energy Statistics India 2026*.
- ➔ It reports that **Total Primary Energy Supply (TPES)** grew by **2.95% in FY 2024–25** to about **9.3 lakh KToE**. Renewable energy generation reached around **47 lakh MW** as of March 2025, led by **Rajasthan**, followed by **Maharashtra** and **Gujarat**. **Solar energy (~71%)** forms the largest share of renewables, followed by wind and large hydro, while **coal continues to dominate** India's overall energy mix.



GS III: INDIAN ECONOMY

- ➔ The Reserve Bank of India has directed banks to **stop engaging in NDD contracts in rupee**. **NDDs are derivative contracts** where two parties agree on a **future exchange rate of the rupee**, but settle only the difference in **cash (usually in US dollars)** instead of actual currency delivery.
- ➔ These transactions occur **offshore**, outside RBI's direct control, and are widely used by **foreign investors, hedge funds, and global banks** due to limited access to India's onshore currency markets.
- ➔ From April 1, the Reserve Bank of India has mandated that all digital transactions must use **Two-Factor Authentication (2FA)**, with at least one **dynamic factor**.
- ➔ The move aims to **enhance security** by addressing vulnerabilities in OTP-only systems, which are prone to phishing and SIM-swap attacks.
- ➔ The rule applies across payment modes like **cards, UPI, and wallets**, and includes authentication factors such as **PIN, OTP, biometrics, or device-based verification**.
- ➔ The **Ministry of Cooperation** has highlighted a significant financial stress in the cooperative sector.
- ➔ Out of **8.48 lakh cooperative societies in India**, **about 2.11 lakh (24.8%)** are running in losses, 1.41 lakh (16.6%) are non-functional, and 47,688 (5.5%) are under liquidation.
- ➔ The issue is particularly severe in Uttar Pradesh, which has the highest share of defunct societies at 41.8%, followed by Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, and West Bengal.

CHERRYPICKS OF THE WEEK

NET OPEN POSITION (NOP)

- It refers to the difference between a bank's foreign currency assets and liabilities.
- It measures the bank's exposure to exchange rate fluctuations, **a higher NOP indicates greater risk due to currency movements.**

EARTH HOUR

- It is a global environmental movement launched in 2007 in Australia by the World Wide Fund for Nature. It is observed annually on the last Saturday of March (8:30–9:30 pm) through the symbolic "lights off" event, bringing together people from over 190 countries to promote climate action and sustainability.

ULTRA-LUMINOUS X-RAY SOURCES (ULXS)

- They are astronomical systems where a compact object like a **black hole or neutron star** accretes matter from a companion star, releasing huge amounts of energy as X-rays.
- In some cases, their luminosity exceeds the **Eddington limit** (maximum theoretical brightness) by **over 100 times**, making them among the brightest X-ray sources in the universe.

REGISTERED UNRECOGNISED POLITICAL PARTIES (RUPPS)

- **RUPPs** are political parties that are either **newly registered**, have **not secured the required vote share** in elections to gain state party status, or have **never contested elections** since registration.
- These parties do not receive benefits available to recognised parties, such as **free broadcast time** and **exclusive rights to a reserved election symbol**.

GLACIAL LAKE OUTBURST FLOODS (GLOFS)

- They are sudden and catastrophic events caused by the rapid release of meltwater from glacial lakes due to the failure of unstable natural dams made of ice or loose debris. These glacial lakes are mainly of two types: **moraine-dammed lakes**, which form behind ridges of rock and sediment left by retreating glaciers, and **ice-dammed lakes**, which occur when a glacier blocks the natural flow of meltwater in a valley.