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MCQs

THE HINDU

What is preventive detention?

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1

Indian Polity and Governance-Constitution,
Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy,

Mains: General Studies - 2

Government policies and interventions
for development in various sectors and
issues arising out of their design and
implementation.

Why in Focus?

- The Supreme Court recently addressed **illegal detentions** during protests in Delhi, highlighting the importance of adhering to legal procedures.
- Preventive detention laws, such as the **National Security Act, 1980**, are under scrutiny for their implications on individual liberties.

Key Highlights:

- **Preventive detention** involves detaining a person without trial to **prevent future offences, not to punish past actions**.
- The **National Security Act, 1980 (NSA)** allows **preventive detention** to protect India's defence, foreign relations, and national security.
- **Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS)** allows Executive

Magistrates to issue urgent orders to prevent threats to public safety, health, peace, or the risk of riots and other disturbances.

- The **Preventive Detention Act, 1950**, was in force until 1969, laying the groundwork for subsequent laws.
- The **Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA), 1971** expanded preventive detention powers and was **widely used against political opponents during the Emergency (1975–1977)** before being repealed in 1978.
- The **Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act (COFEPOSA), 1974**, authorizes preventive detention for specific purposes.
- **Amendments to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967** strengthened the State's powers to combat terrorism and prevent unlawful activities.
- **Article 22 of the Constitution** provides safeguards against **arbitrary preventive detention**.
- Historical laws like the **Rowlatt Act, 1919**, and the **Defence of India Act, 1939**, influenced the evolution of preventive detention in India.
- **Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978)** established that procedures restricting personal liberty must be just, fair, and reasonable.

Implications:

- Preventive detention is a **tool for maintaining public order and national security** but risks



infringing on individual freedoms if misused.

- **Prolonged detention without trial and inadequate judicial oversight** raise concerns about the balance between national security and fundamental rights.
- **Shaik Naznen v. State of Telangana (2022)** observed that preventive detention powers are exceptional and not for routine use.
- **Ameena Begum v. State of Telangana (2023)** highlighted the importance of enforcing the “golden triangle” of Articles 14, 19, and 21.

Way Forward:

- **Strengthen judicial oversight** to ensure that preventive detention is used only in exceptional circumstances and with proper justification.
- **Enhance transparency** by clearly communicating the grounds for detention and allowing effective representation.
- **Regularly review and update preventive detention laws** to align with contemporary human rights standards and constitutional safeguards.
- **Promote awareness and training for law enforcement agencies** on the judicious use of preventive detention powers.

Mains Question:

Critically examine preventive detention in India, its constitutional safeguards, judicial interpretation, and challenges in balancing national security with individual liberty. (250 Words)

India-U.S. ties and the hurdle of American unilateralism

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1

Current events of national and international importance

Mains: General Studies - 2

Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

Why in Focus?

- The U.S. announced the suspension of the

Permanent Labour Certification (PERM) programme for eight global IT companies, including Indian firms, on October 8, 2026.

- This decision highlights **ongoing tensions in India-U.S. relations**, exacerbated by unilateral actions from the U.S.

Key Highlights:

- The **PERM programme** is crucial for tech companies to hire non-U.S. professionals and is a step in the green-card application process.

PERM programme: A U.S. program allowing tech companies to hire non-U.S. professionals and a step in an employer-sponsored green-card application.

- Indian companies like **Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, Wipro, Cognizant, and HCL** are affected by this suspension.
- Indian professionals account for over **70% of approved H-1B petitions** annually, indicating the significance of U.S. immigration policies for India.
- Recent incidents are part of a **broader pattern of U.S. actions**, including the mistreatment and racist attacks against Indians, which are **putting India-U.S. relations under strain**.
- India recorded a **trade surplus of \$33.8 billion** in bilateral trade exceeding \$140 billion in FY 2025-26.
- The U.S. seeks access to India's **dairy and agriculture sectors**, which India is reluctant to concede.
- India has **refused to halt Russian oil imports** despite additional U.S. tariffs and sanctions.
- Defence cooperation includes India acquiring over **\$22 billion worth of American military hardware** since 2002.
- The **10-year Framework for the U.S.-India Major Defence Partnership** was signed on October 31, 2025, to expand defence sales and co-production.
- Initiatives like the **India-U.S. Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X)** and the **Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET)** aim to enhance cooperation but face implementation challenges.
- The **2008 India-U.S. civil nuclear agreement** was a historic breakthrough, yet its commercial promise remains largely unrealised.



- U.S. President Donald Trump's claims about ending the conflict in Operation Sindoor have irked India.
- External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** commented that the U.S. is "deliberately becoming a lonelier power."

Implications:

- The suspension of the PERM programme **strains India-U.S. relations by affecting Indian IT companies' operations** in the U.S.
- **Trade negotiations are stalled due to U.S. demands**, such as access to India's agriculture sectors, which India cannot afford to concede.
- U.S. **tariffs and sanctions on India for not halting Russian oil imports** further strain trade relations.
- **Delays in defence supplies**, like the **GE F404 engines for India's Tejas aircraft**, expose strategic vulnerabilities and dependency risks.
- **High-end technology cooperation remains largely unfulfilled**, with agreements not translating into tangible outcomes.
- American unilateral actions are being **traded off against India's need for strategic autonomy** and respect in bilateral relations.

Way Forward:

- **India and the U.S. must engage in dialogue** to address unilateral actions and ensure mutual respect in bilateral relations.
- **Strengthening frameworks for technology transfer and co-production in defence** can reduce dependency on foreign suppliers.
- Trade negotiations should **focus on equitable access and reciprocal benefits** to resolve current asymmetries.
- Initiatives like **ICET** and **TRUST** should be operationalized to achieve measurable outcomes in technology cooperation.
- Building trust through consistent diplomatic engagement and addressing contentious issues like the **Mecca Pact** can enhance bilateral ties.

Mains Question:

Critically examine the impact of U.S. unilateralism

on India–U.S. relations in trade, security, and technology. Suggest measures to strengthen strategic cooperation and trust. (250 Words)

India's problem of overtreatment, overmedication

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1

Current events of national and international importance

Mains: General Studies - 2

Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Why in Focus?

- **Overtreatment** and **overmedication** are prevalent issues in India's healthcare system, driven by systemic factors.
- The **Choosing Wisely movement** has highlighted the need for careful selection of healthcare interventions globally.

Key Highlights:

- **Overtreatment** involves unnecessary medical interventions, often starting with a test leading to further tests and prescriptions.
- The **National Medical Journal of India (2016)** reported that routine health-check packages often include **unwarranted tests, leading to overdiagnosis and overtreatment**.
- **Polypharmacy** is prevalent in about 49% of older adults in India, as per a 2021 study in **Frontiers in Pharmacology**.

Polypharmacy: The simultaneous use of multiple drugs by a single patient, often common in older adults.

- A 2025 study in **Scientific Reports** found that **one-third of older adults in India were taking five or more prescribed medicines**.
- The **fee-for-service model** in healthcare incentivizes more procedures and tests rather than restraint.

Fee-for-service model: A payment model where each service is paid for separately, encouraging more services to be provided.

- **Defensive medicine** involves clinicians ordering extra tests to avoid missing rare



diagnoses.

- The **Choosing Wisely movement** encourages careful selection of healthcare interventions.
- **Deprescribing** and **medication reviews** are recommended to address overmedication.

Deprescribing: The process of tapering or stopping medications that may no longer be beneficial or may be causing harm.

Implications:

- Overtreatment is driven by **excessive testing, leading to false positives and unnecessary interventions**.
- **Fragmentation of healthcare** leads to polypharmacy, especially in older adults, due to lack of coordinated care.
- The **transformation of healthcare into a marketplace** blurs the lines between necessary and unnecessary interventions.
- **Fee-for-service models lead to overtreatment** because they reward activity over restraint.
- **Patient expectations for certainty and tangible outcomes** push doctors towards overtreatment.
- **Health insurance companies** may inadvertently **encourage costlier interventions** through moral hazards.

Way Forward:

- **Rebuild stronger primary care and restore the role of the family physician** as the first point of contact for non-emergency health needs.
- **Ensure every medical prescription includes a review date and potential stop date** to prevent lifelong medication.
- Professional medical societies and the **Indian Council of Medical Research** should develop **India-specific lists of low-value tests and treatments**.
- **Reform payment systems and health insurance** to reward better health outcomes and continuous care, rather than simply paying for more services.

Mains Question:

Critically examine overtreatment and

overmedication in India's healthcare system. Discuss its causes and suggest measures to promote rational and equitable healthcare. (250 Words)

India's water plants are failing to catch elusive 'forever chemicals'

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1

Current events of national and international importance

Mains: General Studies - 3

Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

Why in Focus?

- Recent studies have highlighted the presence of **polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)** in water sources across India.
- India's **water treatment systems are struggling to effectively address PFAS contamination**, posing significant environmental and health risks.

Key Highlights:

- **PFAS are synthetic chemical compounds used in coatings, textiles, and industrial products**, known for their resistance to degradation.

Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS): Synthetic chemical compounds with multiple carbon-fluorine bonds, used in various industrial applications and known for environmental persistence.

- **Conventional water treatment systems in India are not equipped** to remove PFAS effectively.
- A 2025 review in the **Journal of Hazardous Materials Advances** examined PFAS monitoring in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal.
- PFAS contamination is a **genuine concern in India**, but its national extent remains unclear due to **differences in testing and analysis methods**.
- A 2024 study in **Environmental Sciences Europe** found high PFAS levels in Chennai's groundwater and treated water.



- **High-resolution mass spectrometry** can detect a wider range of PFAS, making detection more accurate.

suggest measures for better detection, regulation, and removal. (250 Words)

High-resolution mass spectrometry: A technique used to identify chemical compounds with high precision, useful for detecting PFAS.

- The **International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)** classified perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) as '**carcinogenic to humans**' and perfluorooctanesulfonic (PFOS) as '**possibly carcinogenic to humans**' in 2025.
- **CSIR-Indian Institute of Toxicology Research** is participating in a UNEP-funded National Implementation Plan to **build baseline data on PFAS**.

Implications:

- PFAS contamination **poses health risks as these substances are carcinogenic**(likely to cause cancer) and can accumulate in living organisms.
- **Incomplete exposure data delays regulatory controls**, as the extent of PFAS hazards is not fully quantified.
- Indian water treatment facilities face **challenges in removing PFAS** due to technological limitations.

Way Forward:

- Establish interim limits for **well-studied PFAS and enhance monitoring and screening efforts**.
- Develop low-cost materials for **adsorption-based treatment** to remove PFAS from water.

Adsorption-based treatment: A water treatment process that uses materials to capture and remove contaminants like PFAS from water.

- Implement **systematic sampling and use machine-learning approaches** to resolve mixed sources of contamination.
- **Conduct baseline monitoring, toxicological studies, and enforceable regulations** to manage PFAS contamination.

Mains Question:

Discuss the environmental and health impacts of Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) in India's water systems. Examine treatment challenges and



KEYWORDS

National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)

- In the news: The role of the National Legal Services Authority in providing free legal aid to undertrials was highlighted in a report on reducing jail time for undertrials.
- The **National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)** was established under the **Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987** to provide free legal services to weaker sections of society, ensuring justice is not denied due to economic or other disabilities. It operates under the **Supreme Court of India**.
- NALSA is **responsible for laying down policies and guidelines for legal services** under the Act.
- Despite this, **many undertrials lack timely legal aid** due to limited outreach and low awareness.
- A Maharashtra legal aid programme showed that timely legal aid significantly improves bail outcomes, with an 84% success rate compared to 26% in district courts.
- The programme **supports vulnerable groups such as migrant workers, women, minorities, and casual workers**.

Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on UPI Transactions

- **In the news:** The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has postponed the implementation of the Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on UPI transactions to a date after Deepavali.
- The MDR is a **fee charged to merchants for processing payments through digital methods** like UPI.
- The **proposed rate was 0.4% on transactions exceeding ₹2,000** at medium and large merchant establishments.
- The **implementation was delayed following appeals from traders and Confederation of All India Traders**

(CAIT), citing the importance of the festive and wedding season for business.

- The **Supreme Court directed the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), Union Government, and Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** to submit affidavits explaining the rationale for imposing MDR on specified UPI transactions.

ERONET Software

- In the news: The ERONET software was highlighted for disproportionately flagging Muslim electors for “logical discrepancies” in Delhi’s draft electoral rolls during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process.
- **ERONET (Electoral Roll Management System)** is a centralized software developed by the **Election Commission of India (ECI)** to enhance transparency and accuracy in voter registration and maintenance of electoral rolls.
- During the SIR process in Delhi, Muslims, who make up **13.6%** of electors, were flagged for **20.3%** of “logical discrepancies” and **30%** under reasons related to family size.
- The software identified **19.33 lakh electors** for “logical discrepancies” based on eight criteria, including name mismatches and family size indicators.
- In Bihar, where “logical discrepancy” checks were not implemented, Muslims constituted **18.4%** of deleted electors, consistent with their **17.7%** population share.

Species In News

Zebrafish (Danio rerio)

- **In the news:** A study published in February reported that a mix of 24 PFAS compounds delayed the hatching of zebrafish eggs and affected their growth and heart rates.
- The **Zebrafish (Danio rerio)** is a small freshwater fish native to the streams of the southeastern Himalayan region,

widely used as a model organism in scientific research due to its transparent embryos and rapid development.

- Known for their **regenerative abilities, particularly in heart and fin tissues**, zebrafish are valuable for studies in genetics, developmental biology, and toxicology.
- **PFAS compounds accumulated in zebrafish blood and impaired offspring growth**, highlighting their sensitivity to pollution and the risks PFAS pose to aquatic ecosystems.

