



ISSUE 9, AUGUST

DHAIRYA TIMES

A quest for Horizon



DHAIRYA TIMES

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INTRODUCTION

In a world that's constantly evolving, Dhairya Times, a monthly magazine series presented by Dhairya - The Civil Services Society, seeks to be your trusted guide to navigating the crucial trends, headlines, opinions, stories and ideas shaping our lives everyday.

Our missions stands to providing a platform for peer learning, holistic development and an analytical point of views that push our horizons beyond to build a crucial analysis of ongoing issues.

From in-depth features and peer analysis to all the technical information, we dive deep into the topics that are transforming the global landscape, while also forging in as your go-to resource for understanding the forces shaping the world we are a part of.

As a Society , we thrive to assist students in their academic and professional pursuits. To achieve this, we have come across monthly Current Affairs magazine series, starting from October.

We hope the standpoint of Dhairya and Dhairya Times as a whole brings about the desired change in boosting your understanding of facts along with opinions so stated.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

As we reflect on the journey of completing Magazine - *Dhairya Times* for August 2025, we are reminded that every step was made possible by the unwavering support and expertise of our esteemed Principal Ma'am , Prof. Saloni Gupta, whose vision has shaped our society's mission.

Followed by the significant encouragement of our mentor, IRS Rajesh Gupta sir, for his invaluable insights and expertise, inspiring our students to strive for excellence. Our gratitude also extends to our guest speakers, IPS Preeti Kumari and IPS Abhishek Vashishtha, for sharing their experiences and motivating our students.

We thank our founding mentor Mr. Vimlok Tiwari, our Convenor Mr. Jatin, Ms. Stanzin Chuskit, Dr. Akshat Pushpam, our Associate Teacher's of Dhairya, and Dhairya's Editorial Board Members for their tireless efforts in making our monthly magazine a reality. The due contribution has enabled in shaping this endeavour in ways that words can scarcely capture, providing a valuable resource for Civil Services Aspirants

Sincerely
Nikky Kaushik
President
Dhairya: The Civil Services Society

From the Desk of Principal



Prof. Saloni Gupta

Principal

Bharati College, University of Delhi

Hello my dear students.

I have always believed that your College is a place where three things are made viz. your career, your personality and your friends for life. Each one of these is very important and each one of you must explore all the avenues and opportunities available, towards each one of these payoffs from the college life.

Societies and clubs are platforms that often provide you with the wonderful confluence, if not congruence, of all three of these goals. They connect you to people with similar interests, they create opportunities for you to work in teams, they put you in positions of responsibility and leadership, they help you evolve as individuals and shape your personalities and, in their own intangible ways, they pave career paths for you by doing some or all of the above.

The Dhairya Society of our college is one such society that brings civil services aspirants of our college together and works towards supporting their goal of cracking this hallowed exam, conducted by the prestigious UPSC. Its a matter of great pride and satisfaction that the Dhairya society is bringing the first ever edition of its monthly magazine, aimed at sharing the vital information, tips and strategic advice for fellow aspirants.

I congratulate the office bearers and foot soldiers of this society and extend my best wishes to all our civil services aspirants.

Best wishes and best of luck.



IRS Rajesh Gupta

Greetings to the students of Bharati College in general and to the civil services aspirants connected via the platform of the Dhairya Society (Bharati College) in particular. It gives me immense pleasure to note that Dhairya society is doing commendable work in the field of peer learning, information dissemination and mutual self-help. Dhairya Times, its monthly magazine, is another step in that direction. I am glad to convey my congratulations and best wishes to all those who relate to the Dhairya Society and its meaningful endeavours.

I take this opportunity to give my perspective on the Role of Civil Servants, as a kind of a pep-talk to all you aspirants. As I see it, you as civil servants can help in bringing The Change that the society needs and probably the change that you also wish to see in your country, in the governance around you. This is a great platform that allows you to B the change you want to C. It is also an opportunity and a platform to serve the underprivileged masses and under-served sections. So, Being the Voice of the Voiceless is another role that can and should inspire the youth in our colleges towards this exam/job. This job also allows you to become Self-made and Empowered. **ANYONE CAN BECOME** a civil servant with the right combo of intelligence, diligence, motivation and strategy. So, if you come from humble backgrounds or from a weaker section/gender/class - this is The Job that can empower you and you, in-turn, can empower thousands and lakhs of common people. Be driven by that, be fired by that!

Make no mistakes though, this is a tough exam and so it should be too, for it gets you **THE TOP JOBS** in the country. But hey, when the going gets tough, the tough gets going. So, tell yourself "I'm willing to suffer today, for a better tomorrow". They say those who sweat in peace, don't have to bleed in war. So, prepare yourselves adequately for this war - with the right arsenal, the right strategy, the right work ethics and the right attitude. This exam is tough, but not as tough as it is often made out to be. Dream big, create commensurate processes, believe in your processes and believe in yourself! If your processes are right, the results are bound to be right - sooner or later, in fact sooner rather than later!

Finally, I'll tell you what a teacher of mine at SRCC, my alma mater, had told everyone in our passing out batch - make sure you get what you like, else you'll have to like what you get.

Best of luck.

Jai Hind!



Mr. Vimlok Tiwari (IRS, Assistant Professor)

The accomplishment of two glorious years of Dhairya and the release of a new edition of its flagship project, Dhairya Times, fills me with both pride and a sense of deep nostalgia. What began as a humble initiative has today grown into a space that nurtures dialogue, fosters creativity, and builds a community of knowledge-seekers. Each issue of Dhairya Times is not merely a compilation of information, but a reflection of the passion, dedication, and vision of every member who contributes to it.

For me Serving as Convenor has been one of the most rewarding chapters of my life, filled with learning, challenges, and the joy of creating something meaningful with a dedicated team. As I now step away from academia to join the civil services, I am deeply grateful to every member, contributor, and reader who believed in this initiative and helped it flourish.

From the Desk of Convenors



Mr. Jatin
(Convenor)



Ms. Stanzin
(Co-Convenor)



Dr. Akshat Pushpam
(Mentor)

It gives us immense pleasure to present the August edition of Dhairya Times, the magazine of our Civil Services Society. This issue is a reflection of our collective spirit of learning, discussion and the pursuit of excellence.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our respected Principal, Prof. Saloni Gupta Ma'am, for her constant encouragement and support for the team and also deeply grateful to the editorial team, mentors and members for their dedication.

We sincerely hope these pages encourage every reader to think, engage and aspire higher.

Warm regards

Mr. Jatin (Convenor), Ms. Stanzin (Co-Convenor) and Dr. Akshat Pushpam (Mentor)

Dhairya - The Civil Services Society

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AUGUST



Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

August 1, 2025

- **Cabinet Approves key Railway Expansion Projects** - The Union Cabinet cleared four railway expansion projects covering 574 km across 13 districts in six states. These include a multi-tracking near the strategic Siliguri corridor, another in one of India's highest steel production areas and one that will make up a part of the Delhi-Chennai high-density network. This aims to strengthen connectivity with the Northeast and enhance national security.

(GS Paper 3 – Economic Development, Security)

- **Cabinet Approves Grant for National Cooperative Development Cooperation** - Cabinet has approved a ₹2000 crore grant for the National Cooperative Development Cooperation, with an outlay of ₹2000 crore over four years (FY 2025-26 to FY 2028-29), with Rs 500 crore annually sourced from Government of India's budgetary support. Funds were allocated for setting up new projects, expanding existing plants, and meeting working capital requirements.

(GS Paper 2 – Governance, Social Justice)

- **Green Hydrogen Plant Commissioned at Kandla port** - India launched its first indigenously built hydrogen plant under the National Green Hydrogen Mission. This initiative marks a key step in advancing the country's clean energy transition.

(GS Paper 3 – Technology, Biodiversity)

- **India unveils 2035 Roadmap for Blue Economy** - The Innovation and Sustainable Growth outlines a roadmap of 2035, prioritizing feasible projects and investor confidence to establish blue economy as a vital engine for national development. It focuses on ocean resources and marine infrastructure, aiming to drive economic growth, sustainability and national security.

(GS Paper 3 – Economic Development, Biodiversity)

August 2, 2025

- **India-UN Launch Global Capacity-Building Projects** - India launched four development projects under the "India-UN Global Capacity Building Initiative", aimed at supporting countries of the Global South in meeting Sustainable Development Goals. The project strengthens South-South cooperation and global partnerships.

(GS Paper 2 – International Relations, Governance)

- **Indian Navy Inducts Stealth Frigate Himgiri with BrahMos** - The Indian Navy has achieved a major milestone in indigenous defence manufacturing with the induction of INS Himgiri, the third ship of the Nilgiri-class frigates under Project 17A, delivered by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE). It was inducted to boost India's naval power and strengthen maritime defence capabilities in the Indian Ocean Region.

(GS Paper 3 – Security, Technology)

- **Himalayan Clouds Contain Toxic Metals** - A Bose Institute study has found toxic pollutants in Himalayan rainfall, challenging the notion of "pure mountain rains." Key contaminants like Cadmium, copper, zinc, and chromium were detected in clouds, linked to Vehicular emissions and Industrial pollution. The findings raise concern for ecosystems and human health.

(GS Paper 3 – Biodiversity, Disaster Management)

ACHIEVEMENT

In August 2025, India completed 2,001 crore UPI transactions in a single month. The transactions were worth ₹24.85 lakh crore, reflecting the growing trust of citizens in India's digital financial infrastructure.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last
month and what's to come!

August 3, 2025

- **GCCs in India to Expand Workforce by 48% in FY26** - A report showed rapid expansion of Global Capability Centres (GCCs) in India, reinforcing India's rising role as a hub for technology and innovation.
(GS Paper 3 – Economic Development, Technology)
- **ISRO Plans to launch Semi-Cryogenic LVM3** - ISRO announced an upgrade of its LVM3 (GSLV Mk III) with a semi-cryogenic stage by 2027, aiming to boost payload capacity and enhance India's space self-reliance.
(GS Paper 3 – Technology, Economic Development)
- **ASI Discovered Portuguese-Era Cannonballs in Goa** - The Archaeological Survey of India uncovered cannonballs and relics from Portuguese rule. The site also consisted of a gun foundry, a naval dockyard, and an elephant stable, offering valuable insights into colonial maritime history.
(GS Paper 1 – Indian & World History, Culture, Heritage)

August 4, 2025

- **Indian Army to Standardize UAVs and Counter-UAV Systems** - The Army announced integration of drones and anti-drone systems as standard weapons, strengthening battlefield surveillance, operation capabilities and modern defense preparedness.
(GS Paper 3 – Security, Technology)
- **Philippines President Visited India for Maritime Cooperation** - The Philippines President began a state visit focusing on defense, trade, and maritime cooperation, including discussions on joint naval activities in the South China Sea.
(GS Paper 2 – International Relations)
- **India Ranks 3rd Globally in Organ Transplantation** - India carried out 18,900 transplants in 2024, ranking third globally, behind only the United States and China. It also emerged as the world leader in living donor organ transplants.
(GS Paper 2 – Social Justice, Governance)
- **Tamil Nadu Government Launches Transgender Policy** - The state has launched the policy to safeguard the rights of transgender people in education, employment, healthcare, housing and safety, and to ensure. It allows self-identification of gender without medical certification and proposes legal reforms on inheritance.
(GS Paper 2 – Governance, Social Justice)

ACHIEVEMENT

India's Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections rose significantly reaching ₹1.86 trillion. This marked a 6.5% increase compared to the same month last year.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

August 5, 2025

- EV Opportunity Report & India Electric Mobility Index - Niti Aayog launched the India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI) along with its report titled 'Unlocking a 200 Billion Dollar Opportunity: Electric Vehicles in India'. The report projects a \$200 billion EV market potential. The index IEMI will track supply, demand, and policy readiness to guide states in EV adoption.
(GS Paper 3 – Economic Development, Technology, Biodiversity)
- Justice Nagamohan Commission Submits Karnataka's Internal Reservation Report - The commission recommended 17% sub-quota within Dalits for fairer benefit distribution, reviving the debate on SC sub-categorization.
(GS Paper 2 – Polity, Governance, Social Justice)
- Asian Giant Tortoise Reintroduced in Nagaland's Reserve - The critically endangered Asian Giant Tortoise, the largest in mainland Asia, was reintroduced in Zeliang Community Reserve in Nagaland's Peren district. This marked a key step in biodiversity conservation efforts.
(GS Paper 3 – Biodiversity, Disaster Management)
- India's First International Financial Services Centre in GIFT City, Gujarat - The IFSC was inaugurated to provide global-standard banking, insurance, and fintech services, aiming to position India as a global financial hub.
(GS Paper 3 – Economic Development, Technology)

ACHIEVEMENT

Rasmita Sahoo , athlete from Odisha, won gold medals in the women's 200m single and 500m doubles canoe events at the inaugural Khelo India Water Sports Festival.

August 6, 2025

- India & Philippines Sign 9 MoUs Including Visa-Free Travel - These agreements mark a new phase of collaboration as both nations celebrate the 75th anniversary of their diplomatic ties. The MoUs cover trade, security, and connectivity, with visa-free travel aimed at enhancing people-to-people ties and bilateral cooperation.
(GS Paper 2 – International Relations, Governance)

6 August

Hiroshima Day

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

- WHO Confirms Hepatitis D as Cancer-Causing - WHO classified Hepatitis D as carcinogenic, stressing its role in liver cancer risk, highlighting the need for urgent screening and prevention.
(GS Paper 3 – Social Justice, Governance)
- India–UN WFP Initiative on Rice Fortification in Nepal - India and the UN World Food Programme have launched an initiative to supply fortified rice in Nepal, aiming to improve nutrition and strengthen regional food security.
(GS Paper 2 – International Relations, Social Justice)
- Centre Launches Scheme for Education & Welfare of Minorities - The centre has launched a new scheme for six minority communities, offering scholarships, skills, and welfare schemes. It aims to promote inclusion and social justice.
(GS Paper 2 – Social Justice, Governance)

August 7, 2025

- PM Inaugurates Kartavya Bhawan-3 - The new House of Ministers was inaugurated in Delhi to improve working space, streamline governance infrastructure and advancing the Centre's plan to streamline governance by housing key ministries under one roof.
(GS Paper 2 – Governance)
- India–Russia Strengthen Industrial Ties - At the 11th working group session, both sides signed protocols to boost manufacturing and bilateral trade in aluminum, fertilizers, railways, and mining technology, strengthening strategic industrial cooperation.
(GS Paper 2 – International Relations, Economic Development)
- Bills to modernize India's Maritime laws - The Parliament has passed Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025, Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2025 & Coastal Shipping Bill, 2025. The aim of these bills is to modernize India's maritime legal framework by replacing out-dated colonial era laws.
(GS Paper 2 – Polity, Governance)

ACHIEVEMENT

India emerged victorious in the SAFF U-17 Women's Championship by winning five out of six matches and top the points table with 15 points.

7 August

National Handloom Day

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

- **BharatGen AI Expands to 22 Indian Languages** - The BharatGen AI to support 22 Indian languages of the Eighth Schedule by June 2026. This expansion promotes digital inclusion and strengthens India's AI ecosystem.
(GS Paper 3 – Technology, Economic Development)

August 8, 2025

- **Lok Sabha Passes Manipur GST & Appropriation Bills** - Lok Sabha has passed the Manipur Goods and Service Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025. This bill amends the Manipur Goods and Service Tax Act, 2017. The bills aim to update taxation and budgetary allocations for Manipur, ensuring fiscal alignment with GST reforms and stable governance.
(GS Paper 2 – Polity, Governance)
- **India Hosts 2nd Edition of UN Women's "SheLeads" Programme** - India hosted the SheLeads programme promoting women's leadership and capacity-building. The event highlights India's commitment to gender empowerment.
(GS Paper 2 – Social Justice, Governance)
- **Stamp Released on M.S. Swaminathan's Birth Centenary** - A commemorative Stamp was released at the "Evergreen Revolution" conference, to honor M.S. Swaminathan's contribution to India's Green Revolution and food security.
(GS Paper 1 – Indian & World History, Culture, Heritage)

August 9, 2025

- **Panel Recommends Revision of OBC Creamy Layer Ceiling** - The Parliamentary committee on welfare of Other Backward Classes recommended in its latest report to revise the creamy layer income ceiling, calling it the "need of the hour".
(GS Paper 2 – Social Justice, Governance)
- **India-Vietnam Sign Comprehensive Strategic Partnership** - India and Vietnam signed agreements to deepen defense, trade, and Indo-Pacific cooperation. This aligns with India's Act East Policy.
(GS Paper 2 – International Relations)

8 August

**Quit India
Movement Day**

9 August

Nagasaki Day

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

- Asia's Longest Freight Train "Rudrasta" - Indian Railways successfully tested "Rudrasta," a 4.5 km long freight train. The train ran on the Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) from Ganjkhwaja to Sonnagar, and then on the normal track to Garhwa Road. The trial marks a major boost to logistics and transport efficiency.

(GS Paper 3 – Economic Development, Technology)

August 10, 2025

- Parliamentary Panel Reviews Steel Scrap Recycling Policy - The panel recommended scientific collection, recycling, and use of steel scrap to promote circular economy and reduce import dependence.

(GS Paper 3 – Economic Development, Biodiversity)

- Azerbaijan & Armenia Sign Peace Deal at White House - A historic deal was signed in Washington to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, mediated by the US. This marks a breakthrough in regional stability.

(GS Paper 2 – International Relations)

August 11, 2025

- India–ASEAN Begin Fresh Trade Negotiations - Talks focused on tariff reduction and supply chain resilience as an alternatives to US protectionism. The move aims to strengthen India's Indo-Pacific economic role.

(GS Paper 2 – International Relations, Economic Development)

- Asiatic Lion Population Rises to 891 - The Environment Ministry reported that the population of Asiatic Lion has risen from 675 (2019) to 891 lions. This reflects the success of conservation efforts and eco-tourism policies.

(GS Paper 3 – Biodiversity, Disaster Management)

10 August

**World Lion Day
& World Biofuel
Day**

ACHIEVEMENT

India launched its first National Biofoundry Network under the BioE3 Policy . The initiative focuses on developing advanced biotechnology and biomanufacturing capacities indigenously.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

- **Cancer AI & Technology Challenge (CATCH) - Under the Indian AI Mission, CATCH is launched to use AI in cancer screening, diagnosis, and treatment. It will help bridge rural healthcare gaps.**
(GS Paper 3 – Technology, Economic Development)
- **Animal Stem Cell Biobank Inaugurated - India's first animal stem cell biobank was set up at NIB, Hyderabad. It will advance veterinary research and improve livestock health.**
(GS Paper 3 – Technology, Biodiversity)

August 12, 2025

- **Parliament has Passed 6 New Bills - These bills include the National Sports Governance Bill, Anti-Doping Bill, The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill' and The Indian Ports Bill and The Income Tax Bill and The Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill. Together, they aim to modernize governance and the economy.**
(GS Paper 2 – Polity, Governance; GS Paper 3 – Economic Development)
- **SC Orders Relocation of Street Dogs - The Supreme Court directed the Delhi government to shift stray dogs to shelters for public safety. It highlighted the balance between animal rights and urban safety.**
(GS Paper 2 – Governance; GS Paper 3 – Disaster Management)
- **China Plans Xinjiang–Tibet Rail Link near LAC - China announced plans to build a railway connecting Xinjiang and Tibet, close to the LAC. This raises security concerns for India's northern borders.**
(GS Paper 2 – International Relations; GS Paper 3 – Security, Infrastructure)
- **Bibi Fatima SHG Wins UNDP Equator Award - A women-led self-help group was honoured for grassroots conservation and livelihood initiatives. It is recognised as a global model of empowerment.**
(GS Paper 2 – Social Justice; GS Paper 3 – Biodiversity)

12 August

International Youth Day & World Elephant Day

13 August

International Lefthanders Day & World Organ Donation Day

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

August 13, 2025

- **Retail Inflation Falls to 8-Year Low** - Retail inflation dropped sharply by 1.55% due to lower food prices. The fall provides RBI with space to sustain an accommodative monetary stance.
(GS Paper 3 – Economic Development)
- **Cabinet Clears 4 New Semiconductor Plants** - The government approved four semiconductor assembly and testing units under India's chip mission. This aims to reduce dependence on imports.
(GS Paper 3 – Technology, Economic Development)
- **Lok Sabha Passes Indian Port Bill 2025** - This bill replaces 1908 Act. The new bill creates a Maritime State Development Council and enforces new safety and tariff norms. It seeks to modernise India's port sector.
(GS Paper 2 – Governance; GS Paper 3 – Economic Development)
- **Health Ministry Launches SH-RETH Index** - A new index was launched to rank states on drug regulation and healthcare standards. The initiative aims at accountability in healthcare governance.
(GS Paper 2 – Governance, Social Justice)

August 14, 2025

- **India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable Held** - The meeting focused on technology, healthcare, and skills cooperation. It strengthens India's economic partnership in the Indo-Pacific.
(GS Paper 2 - International Relations; GS Paper 3- Economy)

ACHIEVEMENT

Bengaluru secured the 26th position in the Global AI City Index 2025.

14 August

Pakistan Independence Day

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

- **RBI Issues Free-AI Mission Framework (7 Sutras)** - The RBI released guidelines for ethical use of AI in finance, stressing transparency, accountability, and consumer protection.
(GS Paper 3 – Technology, Economic Development; GS Paper 4 – Ethics & Integrity)
- **India–Russia–China Strengthen Ties Amid US Tariffs** - High-level visits by Indian and Chinese foreign ministers signaled closer Eurasian coordination. This highlights a counterbalance to US trade policies.
(GS Paper 2 – International Relations)
- **India to Host 2030 Commonwealth Games** - The IOA announced India will host the 2030 Games, boosting India's sports diplomacy and global cultural presence.
(GS Paper 1 – Indian & World History, Culture, Heritage)

August 15, 2025

- **India Seeks “Substantive Agenda” on US Tariffs (Russian Oil Issue)** - At bilateral talks, India pressed the US to roll back tariffs on Russian oil-related imports. It stressed strategic autonomy in energy security.
(GS Paper 2 – International Relations; GS Paper 3 – Economic Development, Security)
- **NITI Aayog: 6.5% GDP Growth Insufficient for Viksit Bharat 2047** - The NITI Aayog CEO said India needs to sustain 8%+ growth with structural reforms and innovation. Only then can India achieve developed-nation status.
(GS Paper 3 – Economic Development)
- **Arctic Summit held in Alaska** - India participated in high-level Arctic talks on climate, science, and polar resources. The dialogue reflected India's strategic interest in polar geopolitics.
(GS Paper 2 – International Relations; GS Paper 3 – Biodiversity, Disaster Management)

15 August

**Indian
Independence
Day**

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

August 16, 2025

- PM Calls for Self-Reliance through Atmanirbhar Bharat - Focus is on reducing import dependency and strengthening Make in India. Governance reforms and inclusive growth are emphasized to enhance India's global competitiveness and economic resilience.

(GS Paper 2 – Governance & Policy)

- GST Reforms Proposed to Simplify Tax Structure - Government plans to remove 12% and 28% GST slabs to reduce compliance. The move aims to widen the tax base and strengthening revenues, while cooperative federalism remains central to fiscal management.

(GS Paper 3 – Economy)

- Global Plastic Treaty Talks Conclude under UN - Negotiations focused on global action against plastic waste. India emphasized balancing development priorities with sustainability. Treaty may shape international waste management policies.

(GS Paper 3 – Environmental & International Agreements)

- India–UK FTA Negotiations Progress - Talks aim at tariff cuts, services expansion, and investment promotion. The deal is key for diversifying trade markets post-Brexit. This strengthens India–UK economic and strategic ties.

(GS Paper 3 – Economy & IR)

August 17, 2025

- Governors' Role Sparks Centre–State Debate - Governors accused of overstepping constitutional roles in states. SC emphasized cooperative federalism and Articles 153–162. Governors must act as bridges, not adversaries.

(GS paper 3 – Polity & Governance)

ACHIEVEMENT

India's services sector growth in August reached a 15-year high, with the HSBC–S&P Global PMI rising to 62.9 and composite PMI at 63.2.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

- **India Charging Report 2025 Tracks EV Progress** - Report highlights EV charging infrastructure expansion across states. Supports India's Net Zero 2070 target and clean mobility mission, driven by FAME-II, PLI, and state EV policies.
(GS Paper 3 – Economy, Infrastructure & Environment)
- **Regulation of Online Gaming Under Consideration** - Concerns rise over addiction, fraud, and child safety. Govt explores central regulation under MeitY to ensure consumer protection. Balance needed between innovation and safety.
(GS Paper 2 – Governance; GS Paper 3 – Economy & Cyber Security)
- **Western Ghats Face Ecological Threats** - Mining and urbanization threaten biodiversity in this UNESCO hotspot. Gadgil vs Kasturirangan reports guide policy choices. Sustainable development is essential to balance ecology and livelihoods.
(GS Paper 3 – Environment & Biodiversity)
- **Chalk 9 Gene Breakthrough for Crop Resilience** - New gene discovery linked to higher crop yield and climate resilience. Supports adaptation to changing weather and food security goals. Aligns with doubling farmers' income strategy.
(GS Paper 3 – Science & Tech, Agriculture)

ACHIEVEMENT

India's first FIFA Talent Academy for girls was inaugurated at Hyderabad's Gachibowli Stadium.

August 18, 2025

- **Vice President's Constitutional Role Revisited** - VP is ex-officio Chairman of Rajya Sabha under Articles 63–64. He ensures smooth functioning and balance of powers in Parliament, and acts as President in case of vacancy.
(GS Paper 2 – Polity)
- **Future of New START Treaty in Doubt** - The US–Russia nuclear arms treaty, strained due to Ukraine conflict. Treaty caps nuclear warheads till 2026 but faces uncertainty. Global arms control regime may be destabilized.
(GS Paper 2 – IR & Global Security)

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

- **India–Namibia MoU Boosts Cheetah Conservation** - MoU continues with cheetahs relocated to Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh. This move enhances biodiversity conservation and bilateral cooperation and symbolizes India's wildlife diplomacy.
(GS Paper 2 – IR; GS Paper 3 – Environment)
- **Invasive Species Threaten Indian Grasslands** - Species like Prosopis and Lantana spread in grasslands. Reduces biodiversity and impacts pastoral livelihoods. Urgent control required for ecosystem balance.
(GS Paper 3 – Environment & Biodiversity)
- **Deep Ocean Mission Enhances India's Blue Economy** - Exploration of polymetallic nodules is underway. These minerals are vital for clean energy and rare earth needs. Mission boosts resource self-reliance and strategic security.
(GS Paper 3 – Science & Tech, Blue Economy)

August 19, 2025

- **Zelenskyy–Trump Talks Influence Global Security** - Discussions centred on Ukraine war and NATO strategy. This impacts US– Russia ties and wider global security. India tracks outcomes for energy and stability.
(GS Paper 2 – IR)
- **Global Hunger Index Highlights India's Challenges** - India ranks low on GHI due to poverty and malnutrition. Climate change and inflation worsen food insecurity. Welfare and nutrition schemes need expansion.
(GS Paper 3 – Social Issues & Food Security)
- **Women Empowerment Central to India's Growth** - Linked to SDG 5 through education, jobs, and political rights. Schemes like BBBP drive empowerment initiatives and are critical for inclusive development.
(GS Paper 1 – Society; GS Paper 2 – Social Justice)

ACHIEVEMENT

Manika Vishwakarma was crowned Miss Universe India 2025 at a grand event in Jaipur. She will now represent India at the global Miss Universe pageant in November.

19 August

World Humanitarian Day

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

- **India Faces Challenges from China's Ejiao Trade** - Ejiao medicine drives illegal donkey-skin trade. This raises biodiversity and animal rights concerns in India. Urgent regulatory measures are needed.
(GS Paper 2 – IR; GS Paper 3 – Biodiversity)
- **Indian Ports Bill, 2025** - The Rajya Sabha passed the Indian Ports Bill, 2025 to replace the 1908 Act, strengthening port governance through Maritime Boards, aligning with global safety and environmental norms, and promoting digitalisation, efficiency, and cooperative federalism for maritime growth.
(GS Paper 2 – Governance ; GS Paper 3 – Economy)

August 20, 2025

- **SC Intervenes Against Governor's Overreach**
SC deemed Governor's actions unconstitutional, reinforcing checks. Highlights balance between constitutional organs. This strengthens judiciary's role in protecting democracy.
(GS Paper 2 – Polity, Separation of Powers)
- **Ukraine Secures New Global Security Pledges**
World powers extended security guarantees to Ukraine. Aims to deter aggression and ensure stability. This impacts global peace and international relations.
(GS Paper 2 – IR & Global Security)
- **Conservation Concerns over Saltwater Crocodiles**
Ecological studies reveal threats to saltwater crocodiles. They play a vital role in coastal ecosystems. Conservation action is urgently required.
(GS Paper 3 – Environment & Biodiversity)
- **Debate on Sedition Law Reform Intensifies**
Proposed reforms seek to protect civil liberties. Balancing free speech with national security remains contentious. Law reform sparks constitutional debate.
(GS Paper 2 – Polity, Rights & Governance)

20 August

**Sadbhavana
Diwas &
Indian Akshay
Urja Day**

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

August 21, 2025

- **Controversial Bill Proposes Ouster of Arrested PM/CMs**

The Bill proposes automatic disqualification of the Prime Minister or Chief Ministers upon arrest. It raises constitutional questions regarding the presumption of innocence and sparks debate on accountability versus democratic principles.

(GS Paper 2 – Polity & Governance)

- **International Solar Alliance Boosts Climate Diplomacy**

ISA advances solar energy adoption among tropical nations. Strengthens India's clean energy leadership and SDG-7 goals and enhances India's climate diplomacy globally.

(GS Paper 2 – IR; GS Paper 3 – Environment & Energy)

- **Real Money Gaming Regulation Under Review**

Online gaming boosts jobs but poses risks of addiction and fraud. Govt considers regulation to ensure consumer safety. Balance needed between innovation and protection.

(GS Paper 2 – Governance; GS Paper 3 – Economy & Cyber Security)

August 22, 2025

- **SC Reaffirms Role as Guardian of Constitution**

Court reiterated power to check executive/legislative excess. Protecting constitutional supremacy and individual rights. Sparks debates on judicial activism.

(GS Paper 2 – Polity & Judiciary)

- **Two-Rate GST Structure Under Consideration**

Proposal aims to simplify GST into two slabs. Could reduce compliance burden and improve efficiency. This move raises fiscal concerns for states.

(GS Paper 3 – Economy & Federalism)

ACHIEVEMENT

India launched its first indigenously built Green Hydrogen plant at Kandla Port under the National Green Hydrogen Mission. The project marks a key step in clean energy transition and energy security. It will also reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

- New Cooperative Policy Prioritises Dalits, Women, Adivasis - Aims to empower marginalised communities via SHGs, FPOs, and cooperative credit.

(GS Paper 2 – Governance , Social Justice)

August 22, 2025

- Jaishankar's Moscow Visit Reinforces Strategic Ties- Talks covered defence, energy, and security cooperation. Reflecting India's multi-alignment strategy in a multipolar world and enhances resilience against US-China competition.

(GS Paper 2 – IR & Strategic Diplomacy)

- Jal Jeevan Mission Advances Rural Water Access- Mission provides piped water to rural households. Reduces women's burden and improves public health. Aligns with SDG-6 (Clean Water & Sanitation).

(GS Paper 2 – Welfare; GS Paper 3 – Water & SDGs)

- LipuLekh Pass Dispute Strains India–Nepal Relations- Tri-junction project faces Nepal's objections. Raises diplomatic sensitivities along with religious and security issues. India must balance strategic and neighbourly concerns.

(GS Paper 2 – IR, Border Issues)

August 23, 2025

- Great Nicobar Project Raises Ecology–Security Debate- Mega project near Malacca Strait strengthens strategic presence. But biodiversity loss and tribal displacement raise concerns. Balancing security and sustainability is critical.

(GS Paper 2 – Governance; GS Paper 3 – Environment & Security)

23 August

**International
Day for the
Remembrance of
the Slave Trade
and its Abolition**

ISRO Day

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

- **UN Declares Famine in Gaza Amid Conflict**

Conflict and blockade led to humanitarian famine. Crisis has regional and global implications. India may extend aid while maintaining balanced diplomacy.

(GS Paper 2 – IR & Humanitarian Issue)

August 24, 2025

- **Flash Floods in Uttarakhand**

Flash floods triggered by intense rainfall in Uttarkashi district, Uttarakhand, have killed several people and destroyed infrastructure, prompting rescue operations and highlighting the region's vulnerability to climate-induced disasters.

(GS Paper 3 – Disaster Management, Environment)

- **42% BC Reservation in Telangana Local Elections**

Telangana passed legislation enabling 42% reservation for Backward Classes in local body polls by removing the 50% cap on reservations, amid calls for the Centre to fast-track legalisation.

(GS Paper 2 – Social Justice & Governance)

- **CEREBO: India's Portable Brain Injury Scanner**

ICMR has launched CEREBO, a handheld, radiation-free device using near-infrared spectroscopy and AI to detect traumatic brain injuries in under a minute, vital for rapid, rural diagnostics.

(GS Paper 3 – Science & Technology; GS Paper 2 – Health)

- **NavIC's Indigenous Resilience Strategy**

Facing concerns over NavIC's sustainability, ISRO is developing and integrating local Rubidium atomic clocks to bolster India's navigation autonomy and reduce reliance on foreign hardware.

(GS Paper 3 – Science & Technology)

ACHIEVEMENT

India and the United Nations jointly launched four capacity-building projects under the “India–UN Global Initiative.” These projects aim to assist Global South countries in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. And further strengthens South-South cooperation and India's global leadership role.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

August 25, 2025

• India: Global Dairy Powerhouse

India produces ~25% of the world's milk (~239 MT in 2023–24), with cooperatives like Amul boosting growth. Rising demand for value-added products supports exports, while the sector sustains rural employment and farmer incomes. Key challenges include low productivity per animal and infrastructure gaps.

(GS Paper 3 – Economy; GS Paper 2 – Rural Development)

• Decontrol: Market-Driven Policy

Decontrol involves reducing government regulation to let market forces determine prices and outputs. It enhances efficiency, competition, and private investment but can raise concerns about equity and inflation. India has applied decontrol in sectors like sugar, cement, and petroleum.

(GS Paper 3 – Economic Reforms; GS Paper 2 – Governance)

• Jan Vishwas 2.0: Decriminalising Minor Offences

The Jan Vishwas 2.0 bill amends 16 laws, decriminalising 288 minor offences and replacing jail with penalties, especially for MSMEs. It reduces compliance burden, promotes innovation, and strengthens trust-based governance. The reform builds on the earlier 2023 Act to enhance ease of doing business.

(GS Paper 2 – Governance; GS Paper 3 – Economy & MSMEs)

ACHIEVEMENT

India
inaugurated its
first
International
Financial
Services Centre
at GIFT City,
Gujarat.

August 26, 2025

• Census 2027 to Maintain Continuity in Urban Classification

The next Census will retain the 2011 definition of 'urban area' to ensure comparability in demographic trends. This aids in long-term analysis of India's rapid urbanisation. Key for policy planning, urban governance, and resource distribution.

(GS Paper 1 – Indian Society ; GS Paper 2 – Governance)

26 August

Women's
Equality Day

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

- **India Post Restricts U.S.-Bound Parcels After Duty Regime Change**

India Post suspended booking of parcels above \$100 to the U.S. after Washington's new customs requirements. The move affects global postal trade and India-U.S. logistics. Links to international trade regimes, tariff barriers, and globalisation challenges.

(GS Paper 1 – Indian Society ; GS Paper 2 – Governance)

- **Trump Picks Loyalist Sergio Gor as India Envoy, Raises Policy Concerns**

U.S. President Donald Trump nominated Sergio Gor as Ambassador to India and Special Envoy for South & Central Asia. Analysts fear it signals a renewed push for U.S. mediation in Indo-Pak issues.

(GS Paper 2 – International Relation)

- **J&K Govt. Temporarily Takes Over JeI-Linked Schools**

Authorities assumed charge of 215 schools earlier run by Jamaat-e-Islami's trust, citing CID's negative reports. Parents and teachers expressed uncertainty over students' future.

(GS Paper 2 – Governance, Internal Security)

- **Nicobar Mega Project Sparks Debate on Tribal and Ecological Rights**

Tribal Council alleged violations of Forest Rights Act in the ₹72,000-cr Nicobar project. The project includes a port, airport, and township, raising fears of ecological and cultural loss. Highlights conflict between development, environment, and indigenous rights.

(GS Paper 2 – Governance ; GS Paper 3 – Environment)

- **Delhi Assembly to Host National Meet of Legislative Speakers**

For the first time, Delhi Assembly will host an All-India Speakers' Conference with Union Home Minister inaugurating it. Aims at strengthening legislative practices and cooperative federalism.

(GS Paper 2 – Polity, Governance)

ACHIEVEMENT

The Indian Navy inducted INS Himgiri, a stealth frigate equipped with BrahMos missiles, under Project 17A. Built indigenously, this ship boosts India's maritime power and defence self-reliance.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

August 27, 2025

- **Jammu Floods: Monsoon Toll Climbs to 122**

Cloudbursts and flash floods in Ramban and Reasi have killed 11 more people, taking August's death toll to 122. Rescue missions continue amid worsening terrain and rainfall.

(GS Paper 1 – Geography; 2– Governance)

- **U.S. Imposes 50% Tariff on Indian Exports**

The U.S. has raised tariffs up to 50% on key Indian goods, affecting 55% of export volume; India is planning relief for exporters through SEZ norm relaxations.

(GS Paper: 3 – Economy)

- **India's Trade Shock Spurs Strategic Shift**

With the U.S. tariff blow, India is accelerating export diversification, exploring markets beyond the U.S. while reinforcing domestic manufacturing.

(GS Paper: GS III – Indian Economy (Global Trade Dynamics))

- **NSS at 75: Pillar of Data-Driven Governance**

Celebrated during 19th Statistics Day, the NSS marks 75 years of underpinning policy decisions with socio-economic data through rigorous sampling.

(GS Paper: GS II – Governance (Data and Evidence-Based Policy))

August 28, 2025

- **H-1B Visa: Balancing Opportunity and Protection**

The U.S. H-1B visa remains crucial for Indian professionals, especially in IT and tech sectors. Recent policy debates emphasize protecting American jobs while allowing high-skilled migration. India seeks dialogue to safeguard its workforce abroad.

(GS Paper: 2– International Relations)

ACHIEVEMENT

According to the annual report released by the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO) under the Union Health Ministry, India carried out a record-shattering 18,900 organ transplants in 2024, ranking it third globally in total organ transplantation. The same report also says India has become the world leader in living-donor organ transplants."

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

- **E-Commerce Models: Market vs. Inventory Debate.**

India regulates e-commerce through two models – marketplace (connects buyers and sellers) and inventory (directly sells from its stock). The government promotes the marketplace model to curb unfair practices. This debate impacts FDI policies and small retailers.

(GS Paper:3– Economy)

- **PM SVANidhi Scheme 2.0 : Boosting Street Vendors' Livelihoods**

The scheme provides collateral-free loans to street vendors for business continuity. Recent changes expand loan eligibility and focus on digital transactions. It aims at financial inclusion and resilience of the urban informal sector.

(GS Paper:2 – Governance & Social Justice)

August 29, 2025

- **India–Japan: A Decade of Strategic Collaboration**

PM Modi and PM Ishiba unveiled a 10-year 'Joint Vision' involving ¥10 trillion (~\$68 billion) in mutual investments across tech, clean energy, and security sectors. This cements an innovation-led strategic partnership and strengthens cooperation within the Quad framework.

(GS Paper:2– International Relations)

- **Deep-Sea Ambitions: India's Samudrayaan Advances**

Budget 2025 allocated ₹600 crore to India's Deep Ocean Mission (Samudrayaan) to support the development of Matsya-6000, aiming for a 6,000 m dive capability.

(GS Paper:3– Science & Technology)

- **Duty-Free Cotton Imports Extended to Assist Textiles**

To counteract 50% U.S. tariffs, India extended the 11% cotton import duty exemption till December 31, 2025, providing relief to garment exporters facing cost pressures.

(GS Paper:3– Economy)

ACHIEVEMENT

NITI Aayog released the India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI) along with its EV Opportunity Report. The study projected a \$200 billion EV market in India. It will help states track progress in EV adoption and boost clean mobility.

29 August

National Sports Day

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

August 30, 2025

- **Energy Sovereignty: India's New 'Oil**

With India importing over 85% of its crude oil and facing an energy import bill of around \$170 billion, the country is pivoting towards domestic capacities such as green hydrogen, biofuels, and nuclear power to reduce supply risks .

(GS Paper: 3 – Environment / Energy)

- **Closing the STEM Gap: Why India Needs More Women**

While women now make up nearly half of STEM enrollments, they constitute just 18–27% of the STEM workforce and only 13.5% of faculty, highlighting systemic hurdles in retention and leadership.

(GS Paper: 2 – Social Justice / Education)

- **Navigating India's China Challenge**

India's ballooning \$99 billion trade deficit with China has prompted push for domestic manufacturing under Make-in-India, tougher quality standards, and import diversification amid geopolitical concerns.

(GS Paper: 2 – International Relations & GS 3 – Economy)

- **IMF's Outlook: India Remains on Strong Macroeconomic Footing**

The IMF's 2024 Article IV review praises India's 6% GDP growth, controlled inflation, low NPAs, and expects continued 6.5% growth with moderate current account deficits through 2025–26.

(GS Paper: 3 – Economy)

August 31, 2025

- **BioE3 Policy Push**

This refers to the Union S&T Ministry's BioE3 Policy, launched on August 27, 2024, aiming to promote biomanufacturing in India by adopting advanced technologies and reducing reliance on imports for critical ingredients like medicines, biofuels, and bioproteins.

(GS Paper 3 – Science & Technology, Economy)

30 August

Small Industry Day

ACHIEVEMENT

India inaugurated its first underwater metro rail section in Kolkata on 22 August 2025. The underwater metro connects Howrah and Kolkata, providing faster, eco-friendly, and modern public transport.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

- Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

This pertains to the 25th SCO Summit held in Tianjin, China, from August 31 to September 1, 2025, where leaders including PM Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin attended, discussing regional cooperation and global influence.

(GS Paper 2 – International Relation)

- Kerala to amend Wildlife Protection Law

Kerala is considering amending the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, to address human-wildlife conflict, specifically to authorize the Chief Wildlife Warden to permit the killing or capture of wild animals that threaten human life or are found in public places.

(GS Paper 3 – Environment & Ecology, Conservation, Biodiversity, Governance)

- Loss of Snow in Gangotri Glacier

A study by IIT Indore and collaborators revealed that the Gangotri Glacier, a primary source of the Ganga, has lost 10% of its snowmelt flow over four decades (1980-2020) due to climate change, with snowmelt contributing less and rainfall-runoff increasing.

(GS Paper 1 – Geography ; GS Paper 3 – Environment & Ecology, Disaster Management)

ACHIEVEMENT

BharatGen AI was expanded to support 22 Indian languages listed in the Eighth Schedule. The project enhances digital inclusion by promoting AI access in regional languages. And further strengthens India's AI ecosystem and cultural diversity.

FOR THE
 PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

AUGUST



Focus of the month

INDIA, UN LAUNCHED GLOBAL CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT

Introduction

- India, in partnership with the United Nations, has launched the Global Capacity Building Initiative, a landmark programme aimed at empowering countries across Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. Announced at the 78th UN General Assembly in 2023 and formally launched in August 2025, this initiative reflects India's commitment to South-South cooperation and the principle of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"—the world is one family.

Background

- Historical Context:** India's role in capacity building goes back to 1964, when it launched the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. Through ITEC, India has provided training, scholarships, and technical expertise to thousands of professionals from developing nations. At the United Nations, India has historically advocated for a more inclusive and representative global order, emphasizing development, equity, and solidarity. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, highlighted the urgent need for international cooperation in areas such as poverty reduction, health, education, and climate resilience — aligning well with India's long-standing development partnerships.
- Current Situation:** On 1st August 2025, India and the UN launched the first phase of the Global Capacity Building Initiative in New Delhi.

Key Developments

- Announcement at UNGA (September 2023)** - India first announced the Global Capacity Building Initiative during the 78th UN General Assembly in New York. It was framed as an extension of India's traditional development partnership programmes like ITEC, but with closer collaboration with the United Nations system.
- Partnership with UN Agencies-** Unlike earlier bilateral training schemes, this initiative directly partners with specialized UN bodies:
 - WFP (World Food Programme) – food security and rice fortification.
 - UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) – digital health platforms.
 - UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) – census and data systems.
 - UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) – vocational training.
- Launch of Phase I (August 2025)** - Official launch was in New Delhi by India's Ministry of External Affairs and the UN Resident Coordinator. Four flagship projects across nine countries in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean started simultaneously.
- Integration with India's Training Ecosystem** - All projects include a capacity-building component through Indian ITEC-affiliated institutes, with training set to begin in September 2025.
- Global South Leadership** - This marks India's shift from being just a recipient of aid to a global provider of technical expertise and solutions.



Strategic Significance

- This initiative underscores India's leadership in South-South cooperation, leveraging its expertise to support development across the Global South in alignment with SDG 17 on global partnerships.
- It reflects the spirit of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" ("the world is one family"), amplifying India's commitment to inclusive collaboration alongside the UN system.

Conclusion

- The India-UN Global Capacity Building Initiative marks a significant step in reshaping international cooperation. By combining India's longstanding expertise in development partnership with the UN's global reach, it directly addresses critical challenges in food security, healthcare, data governance, and youth employment. Unlike traditional aid models, this initiative emphasizes mutual learning, sustainability, and self-reliance for partner countries.

Focus of the month

INDIA RUSSIA CHINA COORDINATION AMID US TARRIFS

Introduction

- The global economic order is witnessing fresh turbulence as the United States imposes steep tariffs on imports from India and China, citing their continued engagement with Russia. This move has triggered debates about trade wars, strategic alignments, and the future of global supply chains.
- In this context, India, Russia, and China—three major powers of the Global South—are exploring deeper coordination to safeguard their economic interests and assert their strategic autonomy.

Background & U.S. Pressure

- In mid-2025, U.S. President Trump raised tariffs on Indian goods to a staggering 50%, citing India's energy imports from Russia and its alignment with the BRICS bloc.
- He also urged the European Union to impose 100% tariffs on imports from India and China, aiming to leverage economic pressure against Russia by targeting its key trading partners.
- U.S. officials, including the NATO envoy, accused India and China of indirectly financing Russia's offensive in Ukraine by continuing to import its oil, calling for harsher economic sanctions.

India's Strategic Response

- India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar responded by calling on Russian businesses to engage more intensively in trade and investments with India, urging diversification and expansion of the economic partnership.
- He highlighted India's booming economy, its 'Make in India' initiative, and infrastructure demands as compelling reasons for deeper collaboration.
- India also pushed back diplomatically, pointing out that both the EU and U.S. continue to trade with Russia significantly—even more than India does—thus framing pressure on India as unfair.

Challenges Ahead

1. **U.S. Economic Pressure:** Prolonged tariffs could hurt India's export sectors (textiles, IT services, pharmaceuticals) and weaken global supply chains.
2. **Balancing Strategic Autonomy:**
 - India values its independent foreign policy and close ties with both the U.S. and Russia.
 - Aligning too closely with Russia and China could strain India's growing strategic partnership with the U.S., especially in defence and technology.
3. **India-China Tensions:** Despite coordination, India and China still have border disputes (e.g., Ladakh) and compete in regional influence. Deep mistrust limits how far their economic and political cooperation can realistically go.



Key Developments

- **U.S. Tariff Escalation (2025):** The U.S. imposed 50% tariffs on Indian goods and urged the EU to raise tariffs on both. Washington accused both countries of indirectly supporting Russia's economy through oil imports and trade links.
- **India's Diplomatic Pushback:** India defended its independent energy policy, noting that the EU and U.S. themselves continue trading with Russia. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar encouraged Russian businesses to expand investments in India, highlighting India's growing infrastructure needs and 'Make in India' opportunities.
- **C. Strengthening Trilateral Engagement:** India, Russia, and China engaged in closer dialogue at forums like BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), signaling greater alignment against U.S. economic pressure. Joint statements emphasized multipolarity and the need to resist unilateral trade restrictions.

Conclusion

- The U.S. tariffs on India and China have triggered not only an economic standoff but also a strategic recalibration of global partnerships. In response, India, Russia, and China are deepening coordination to safeguard their trade interests, strengthen energy and technology ties, and promote multipolarity in world affairs.
- However, this cooperation comes with significant challenges: India's delicate balance between the U.S. and Russia, mistrust with China, and risks of Western sanctions. Yet, the very fact that these three powers are finding common ground reflects a shifting global order where no single country can dominate trade and diplomacy.

Focus of the month

GST RESTRUCTURING 12 PERCENT AND 28 PERCENT SLABS TO BE AXED

Introduction

- The Goods and Services Tax (GST), introduced in India in 2017, was a landmark reform aimed at unifying the country's indirect taxation system. However, its multiple tax slabs—5%, 12%, 18%, and 28%—often created confusion, compliance challenges, and uneven impacts on consumers and businesses.
- To simplify the structure and boost consumption, the Government of India, on the recommendation of the GST Council, has decided to eliminate the 12% and 28% slabs, consolidating most goods and services into two main categories: 5% and 18%, while retaining a special 40% slab for sin and luxury goods. This restructuring is expected to make GST more transparent, reduce tax burden on households, and support small businesses, while also aligning India's tax regime with global best practices.

Current Situation

India is overhauling its Goods and Services Tax (GST) to simplify the system and reduce the burden on consumers and businesses. The 12% and 28% tax slabs are being scrapped, with a streamlined structure moving forward.

1. **Impacts of GST Restructuring:** Boost to Consumption: Cheaper prices for daily essentials (like toothpaste, shampoos, processed foods) will encourage higher spending by middle-class households.
2. **Business & Industry Impacts:**
 - **Ease of Doing Business:** Simplification to two slabs (5% & 18%) reduces confusion and compliance costs for businesses.
 - **MSME Support:** Small and medium enterprises benefit from clearer rates and lower taxes on raw materials and finished goods.
3. **Social Impacts**
 - **Relief to Middle Class & Poor:** Household budgets will ease as several everyday items get cheaper.
 - **Perception of Fairness:** A simpler GST structure builds public trust in the taxation system.
4. **Political & Policy Impacts**
 - **Boost to Government Image:** Seen as a pro-people reform, especially ahead of festive seasons like Diwali.
 - **Global Alignment:** Brings India closer to international models of simpler consumption tax structures.
 - **Pressure on States:** States dependent on GST compensation might struggle with reduced revenue flows.

Key Developments

- Group of Ministers (GOM) has approved the proposal to eliminate the 12% and 28% slabs, favoring a more efficient two-tier system.
- The GST Council followed suit, consolidating tax rates into 5% and 18%, effective September 22, 2025.



- Essential items such as toothpaste, shampoo, and processed foods now attract just 5%, while durable goods like cars and TVs have shifted to 18%.
- A new 40% slab for "sin goods" (tobacco, luxury items) remains in place.
- Rationalization aims to spur consumption and reduce inflation by up to 1.1 percentage points, though it may lead to a revenue shortfall of around ₹480 billion (~\$5.5 billion).
- PM Modi hailed these reforms as a bold step toward boosting growth, especially for the middle class and small businesses.

Conclusion

- The restructuring of GST by removing the 12% and 28% slabs marks a historic step towards simplifying India's taxation system. By consolidating into fewer slabs, the reform is expected to ease compliance, reduce the burden on consumers, and stimulate economic growth. It particularly benefits the middle class and small businesses, while keeping a high tax on luxury and sin goods to maintain equity.
- However, the challenge of balancing consumer relief with revenue stability remains. If managed carefully through better tax compliance, widened tax base, and efficient collection, this reform can strengthen India's fiscal health while promoting inclusive growth.
- In essence, this GST reset is not just a technical change—it reflects India's move towards a more transparent, fair, and growth-oriented tax regime.

Focus of the month

INDIA-UK FTA NEGOTIATION PROGRESS

Introduction

- The India-UK free trade agreement that was signed on May 6, 2025 to slash the tariffs on 90 percent of traded goods that offers a significant boost to both the economies. The FTA officially known as Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement marks a milestone in a bilateral relationship of India and UK.
- The FTA seeks to eliminate the tariffs on the key exports of India such as leather goods, footwear and apparel while reducing the import duties on products like whisky and automobiles. Both countries aim to boost the bilateral trade with target of US\$ 120 billion by 2030.

Key Aspects

- **Tariffs Elimination:** This CETA ensures tariff elimination on about 99 percent on tariff lines, covering India's inspired trade basket. At Same time India has opened the 89.5% of tariff lines covering 91% export of UK. Only 24.5% of export will get immediate duty-free market access as India has sensitive sector live dairy, millet, oil etc.
- **Market Access:** The Indian products such as agriculture products gets access to the UK's market giving Indian farmer a chance to fetch premium prices from UK's market. UK's product also like whisky and automobile gets them market in India.
- **Professional Mobility:** The deal also includes the excess of market in the service sector also such as IT, communication, financial services making it easier for skilled professionals to work in both the countries.
- **Digital Trade:** This FTA represent an important evolution, it includes provision on digital trade services, public procurement and innovation that go beyond its prior commitment in the trade agreement. For UK it opens access to one of the world's fastest growing economy home to the vibrant digital sector and a deep talent pool.
- **Social Security Convention:** The Double contribution convention (DCC) come into force alongside the FTA in which employees moving between the UK and India will only have to pay social security contribution in one country at a time.

Goals

- **Doubling Bilateral Trade:** The FTA will underline a bid to double the trade between the two economies and will reach USD 120 billion by 2030.
- **Economic Interaction:** Beyond the tariffs both the country looks forward to partnership routed with trust, innovation and shared prosperity of both the countries for future upcoming economic and political interactions between them.
- **Modern Trade Practices:** Provisions of digital trade has been made these provision aim to make cross border commerce more cost effective and accessible particularly benefiting the small and medium enterprises seeking to participate in the international trade.
- **Enhancing Cooperation:** Both the countries look forward for future cooperation in other sectors also like infrastructure, development, financial services, health, education etc.



India's Perspective

- **Economic Opportunities:** India sees FTA has a significant opportunity to boost the exports of the country and will give future economic gains such as success of this FTA will give India opportunity to sign FTA with other global economies.
- **Job Creation and Regional Growth:** The India UK Comprehensive economic trade agreement will give widespread opportunity to Indian states and will generate employment for Indian professionals and give Indian farmers the opportunity for income from UK's market.
- **Strategic Importance:** This strategic move of India Will build long standing relationship and vibrant diaspora between the India and UK, creating strategic benefit for India and will gave it opportunity to became largest economy.

Conclusion

- As India has signed this FTA after three years of long negotiation. India is hoping that this FTA will prove to be successful and give India benefits in its economic development. The UK also seeks their benefit from India and India has opened opportunity for UK in Indian market and also seeks opportunity for itself that will give India a great boost to its economy. Through this FTA India seeks more opportunities in global market of other countries also, plus this FTA is expected to drive inclusive growth for farmer startup and MSME's, reduce non-tariff barrier, and support a deeper economic partnership.

Focus of the month

WESTERN GHATS FACE ECOLOGICAL THREATS

Introduction

- Western Ghats consists of chain of mountains running parallel to the western coast of India and passing from the state of Kerala, Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka that is also a UNESCO World Heritage site is facing rapid forest loss, increased landslides and raising temperature leading to significant biodiversity decline and ecological disruption.
- This Western Ghats is most critical biodiversity hotspot of India yet this UNESCO World Heritage site faces unprecedented threat from deforestation, habitat fragmentation and unsustainable development.

Significance

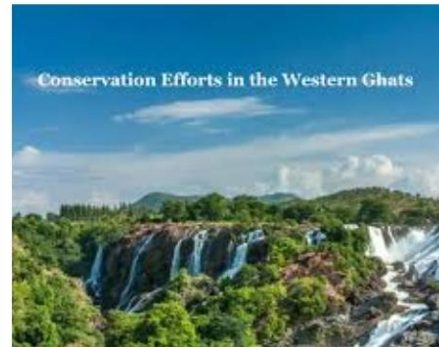
- The ghats influence the Indian monsoon weather pattern that mediate warm tropical climate of the region. If this pattern is disrupted it will affect the life of over 245 million people.
- They act as a barrier to rain laden monsoon winds that sweep in from South-West and protect the region from the heavy rain and flood.
- These Western Ghats are home to tropical Evergreen Forest as well as to the 325 globally threatened species if this Western Ghats are in threat, it will affect the life of these species.

Threats

- **Developmental pressure:** Urbanization together with agricultural expansion and livestock grazing are posing serious threat to the region.
- **Deforestation and Habitat Loss:** Rising deforestation cause by human activities such as urbanization infrastructure development and agriculture has given a threat to habitat of the flora and fauna of that region
- **Unsustainable activities:** The unsustainable activities like slash and burn agriculture, plantation of coffee and tea and mining is leading to the destruction of the region.
- **Overexploitation:** The forest resources are being overly exploited even after the government action illegal poaching of animals and trade of endangered species for commercial gain has given a great loss of biodiversity.

Impact on Biodiversity

- **Displacement of communities:** Many tribal communities that live in the Western Ghats are threatened if these Western Ghats are exploited in the future. These Ghats are life source for these tribal.
- **Biodiversity crisis:** Western Ghats is a home to many globally threatened species threats to the Western Ghats will lead to loss of biodiversity of these species. If degradation is Continued at this space, Scientists predict that there will be loss of 33% of Biodiversity by 2050.



- **Natural disasters:** The threat that we are causing to the nature, to the Western Ghats has led to many natural disasters such as landslides that harm the people living there and let to loss of life.

Actions

These following are the actions taken by the government –

- **Ecological Sensitive Area:** Gadgil committee report 2011 proposed that the entire area be designated as an ecological sensitive area and the smaller region within the region where to be identified as the ecological sensitive zones to protect the Western Ghats.
- **Ban on unsustainable activities:** Kasturirangan committee Recommended bans on mining, quarrying and sand mining in 37% of the Western Ghats protecting the area from the exploitation causes by mining.

Conclusion

- Deforestation, mining, development, and unsustainable agriculture in the Western Ghats have harmed biodiversity and accelerated climate change. Protecting such natural resources is urgent—we must balance development with conservation, as they are not ours to destroy but everyone's duty to preserve for future generations.

Focus of the month

PM CALLS FOR SELF-RELIANCE, HIGHLIGHTS DEMOCRATIC SAFEGUARDS.

Introduction

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a pitch with policy prescription for economic and security related reforms for self-reliance in his Independence Day address stating that for any nation even today the yardstick of atmasamman (self-respect) remained atmanirbharata (self-reliance) while at the same time warning of the conspiracy to change the demographic makeup of the country.

Background

- The PM Shri Narendra Modi address the nation on 79th Independence Day from the rampart of the red Fort, Charting do bold road map for Vikas Bharat by 2047.
- Prime minister's address focused on self-reliance, innovation and citizen empowerment highlighting the India's journey from a nation dependent on others to global confident technology advanced and economically resilient country.
- He stated that across sectors ranging from the strategic defense to the semiconductors, clean energy to agriculture and digital sovereignty to youth empowerment. The road map seeks to transform India into a \$10 trillion economy by 2047 making it locally competitive socially inclusive and strategically autonomy.

Key Components

• ECONOMIC REFORMS

1. **GST Reforms:** Next-generation GST reforms will be unveiled on Diwali, reducing taxes on essential goods and providing relief to MSMEs, local vendors, and consumers.
2. **Reform Task Force for Bharat:** PM Modi announced the creation of a dedicated Reform Task Force to drive next-generation reforms. Its mandate: accelerate economic growth, cut red tape and modernize governance.
3. **₹1 Lakh Crore PM Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana:** PM Modi launched a major employment scheme worth ₹1 lakh crore, under which newly employed youth will receive ₹15,000. The scheme aims to benefit 3 crore young Indians, strengthening the bridge from Swatantra Bharat to Samriddha Bharat

• TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENT

1. **Semiconductors:** India is on mission to develop semiconductor chips on its own to reduce its dependence on other nations. India is successfully developed 16 bit and 32-bit chip looking forward to also become a market for others.
2. **Nuclear energy capacity to grow 10 fold by 2047:** Work is underway on 10 nuclear reactors as part of India's mission to increase its nuclear power generation capacity more than tenfold over the next two decades.



3. Defence:

Using indigenously made weapons, the operation dismantles terror networks, signaling a new era where India will no longer accept nuclear blackmail or threats on foreign terms. To strengthen India's offensive and deterrent capabilities, Mission Sudarshan Chakra, will be launched, aimed at neutralizing enemy defense infiltration's and enhancing India's offensive strength. Indian innovators and youth must focus on developing jet engines within the country, ensuring that future defense technology is entirely homegrown and self-reliant.

Conclusion

- The Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, addressed the nation on Independence Day, 15th August. He stated that India will become a developed nation by 2047. The country is working towards achieving ambitious goals in key sectors such as the economy, technology, defense, internal security, agriculture, and energy. The Government of India has already taken significant steps to realize this vision. India envisions itself as an Atmanirbhar Bharat—a self-reliant nation that does not depend on others for its development and progress. Through its best policies and initiatives, India is determined to achieve self-sufficiency and secure its place as a developed nation.

Focus of the month

INDIA – ASEAN RESUME TRADE.

Introduction

- ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nation) is one of the India's most important trading partner. It accounts around 11% of India's total global trade. In 2024-25 India ASEAN trade touch USD 123 billion showing strong economic links and scope for more corporation in future.
- Seeing this India and ASEAN looking forward to resume negotiation for the India-ASEAN free trade agreement in goods (AITIGA) to boost trade ties, enhance market access, reduced tariff and address non-tariff barriers. The talks aim to review existing provisions improve trade facilities and strengthen overall India ASEAN economic partnership under the border Act East policy.

Historical Background

- India ASEAN relationship emerged as a key cornerstone of our foreign policy the relationship has involved from the look east policy initiated in early 1990s which led India to become a sectoral partner of Asian in 1992, a dialogue partner in 1996 and a summit level partner in 2002.
- The up gradation of this partnership towards strategic partnership during their celebration of 20th anniversary commemorative summit at New Delhi in 2012 was a natural corollary to the growth of India ASEAN relationship during the last two decades.

Details of Negotiations

- The 10th round of talk Concluded in New Delhi between August 10 and 14 with the joint committees focusing on ASEAN India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) advancing the review to enhance its effectiveness, improve market access and strengthen trade facilitation.
- The next ASEAN India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) joint committee will be held on October 6-7, 2025, at ASEAN secretariat in Jakarta, Indonesia hosted by Malaysia.

Objectives

- **Strengthening economic ties:** One of the main objectives of ASEAN India trade in goods agreement is to deepen their economic ties with Southeast Asian countries as a part of India's act east policy.
- **Addressing trade gap:** India is looking forward to filling the trade gap between ASEAN and India, as India's imports from ASEAN are higher than its exports to ASEAN.
- **Trade expansion:** Through this agreement India and ASEAN both are looking forward to increasing its trade in upcoming years
- **Tariffs reduction:** The ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) commits ASEAN and India to progressively eliminate duties on a substantial portion of goods, resulting in reduced tariffs and making trade more economically viable for enterprises.



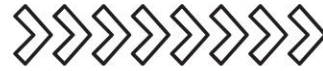
Challenges for India

- **Growing trade deficit:** India is facing trade deficit with ASEAN countries. Export to the ASEAN country is at an average annual growth rate of 1.7%, on the other hand imports from ASEAN significantly increased at annual growth rate of 7.5%.
- **Make in India initiative:** India is seeking to adjust tariffs to protect and promote their domestic manufacture and make in India initiative aiming to reduce import.
- **National interest:** India is taking a pragmatic approach ensuring that trade rules are fair and serve to the national interest.
- **Need for comprehensive review:** A comprehensive review is used to address the imbalance and to ensure that agreement creates more beneficial opportunities for India.

Conclusion

- The agreement has significantly increased bilateral trade between India and ASEAN. It is central to the India's Act East policy. India is seeking review to a dress widen trade deficit and is concern about the misuse of routing Chinese product and non-tariff barriers that create an uneven playing field. Thus, India is looking forward on negotiation with ASEAN countries to seek solution for these concerns.

EDITORIAL SECTION



Mangrove not only ecological protector but also a business driver

GS Paper- 3; Topic: Conservation, Environmental Pollution & Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment, Disaster Management

Introduction:

- Mangroves are not merely environmental assets; they are powerful economic drivers and critical infrastructure for climate and economic resilience. It is a stark reality that the immense value of these blue carbon ecosystems rarely features in financial balance sheets or national policy frameworks.
- Valuation of mangrove ecosystem services reveals their immense worth:
₹3,535 million in Pichavaram, Tamil Nadu
₹664 billion in the Sundarbans, West Bengal

Economic Benefits

- Fisher folk recognise mangroves as nurseries for juvenile fish, directly linking healthy ecosystems to sustainable fisheries.
- The livelihoods of coastal communities are deeply connected to the health of mangrove and estuarine ecosystems.
- In urban areas like Mumbai and Chennai, mangroves suffer from pollution and degradation, leading to reduced biodiversity and weakened community resilience.
- When communities experience tangible benefits—such as more fish, cleaner air, and protection from storms—they are more motivated to act as long-term custodians.
- Mangroves support alternative livelihoods like aquaculture, beekeeping, and eco-tourism, diversifying income sources.
- Participatory models such as Eco-Development Committees (EDCs) and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) can be adapted for urban mangrove management, promoting inclusive ownership and accountability.

Other Benefits

- Citizen science engages the public in monitoring, understanding, and valuing mangrove ecosystems, sparking both awareness and action.

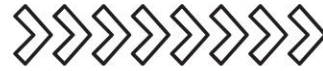
- Training diverse community members to observe and document ecological changes can supplement or substitute formal monitoring systems.
- Mangrove health is linked to broader wetland and river systems—including freshwater flow, sediment transport, and biodiversity.
- Regular community-led monitoring offers early insights into ecosystem trends, helping guide timely conservation interventions.
- Empowering citizens creates a culture of shared responsibility and enhances the visibility of mangroves as vital to climate resilience and community well-being.

Conclusion

Sustainable stewardship isn't a top-down directive, but a collaborative partnership where the health of mangroves and the well-being of communities go hand in hand. Policymakers and businesses must view mangroves not just as biodiversity reserves, but as essential assets for climate resilience and economic stability. Their protection requires a united front—where science, industry, and local communities contribute their distinct strengths to ensure long-term conservation.

- **Source : The Hindu**
- **Date : 2nd August**

EDITORIAL SECTION



The EC should be more transparent and impartial in its action

GS Paper-2; Topic: Polity, Appointment to various Constitutional Posts, Powers, Functions and Responsibilities of various Constitutional Bodies

Introduction:

- It highlights the lack of transparency in voter deletions during the Special Intensive Revision(SIR) in Bihar and the unclear rationale behind the revision, stressing that electoral reforms need greater accountability and justification to ensure a fair democratic process.

Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Electoral Rolls: Issues and Implications

1. Bihar Implementation:

- Scale: 8 crore voter verification.
- Deletions: 65 lakh voters (27,000 per constituency average)
- Categories: Dead (22L), shifted/missing (36L), multiple enrollment (7L)
- Political Impact: Exceeds winning margins in 2/3 rd of 2020 Assembly seats

2. Transparency Concerns:

- Missing Documentation: 2003 Bihar revision records unavailable
- Independent Appraisal: 800-page ECI affidavit lacks methodology details.
- Public Consultation: No prior information or stakeholder engagement.
- Booth-level Data: Deletion reasons not provided to political parties.

3. Constitutional and Legal Issues:

- Right to Information: Citizens' fundamental right to know decision rationale.
- Citizenship Verification: Documents required for proof of citizenship.
- NRC Allegations: Suspicion of backdoor National Register of Citizens.
- Disenfranchisement Risk: Impact on marginalized communities.

3. Democratic Implications:

- Electoral Integrity: Large-scale deletions affecting outcomes.
- Institutional Trust: ECI's credibility and transparency obligations.
- Due Process: Meaningful oversight and safeguard mechanisms.

Conclusion

Transparency has long been the ECI's guiding principle. From making draft rolls publicly available for claims and objections to deploying technology for online search to inviting political parties and civil society to participate in verification drives, the ECI has tried to keep the process open to scrutiny.

- **Source : The Hindu (page no 8)**
- **Date : 27th August**

EDITORIAL SECTION



The missing link in India's battery waste management

GS Paper- 3; Topic- Environment, Conservation, Environmental Pollution & Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment

India's EV and Energy Storage Boom

Lithium battery demand is projected to soar from 4 GWh in 2023 to nearly 139 GWh by 2035, propelled by both EVs and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) in the renewable energy sector.

Emerging Battery Waste Crisis

Lithium batteries alone made up of 700,000 metric tonnes of India's 1.6 million tonnes of e-waste in 2022, and projected to generate over 2 million tonnes of lithium-ion battery waste by 2030.

These batteries, if not properly recycled or disposed off, pose serious risks like:

- **Toxic Leachates:** Heavy metals like lithium, cobalt, and nickel can contaminate soil and groundwater.
- **Fire Hazards:** Improperly stored batteries are prone to thermal runaway and explosions.
- **Air Pollution:** Informal recycling often involves burning or acid leaching, releasing harmful fumes.

A large portion of battery waste ends up in unregulated informal sectors,

Policy Gaps and Challenges

Despite the introduction of the Battery Waste Management Rules (2022), several gaps persist:

1. Weak enforcement of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) mandates.
2. Limited reverse logistics for collecting used batteries from consumers.
3. Insufficient recycling infrastructure, especially outside urban centers.
4. Low consumer awareness about safe disposal practices.
5. Fragmented regulations that overlook non-lithium chemistries like lead-acid and nickel-cadmium.

6. By 2030, India could lose over \$1 billion in foreign exchange due to unrecovered battery materials.

Policy Gaps and Challenges

Despite the introduction of the Battery Waste Management Rules (2022), several gaps persist:

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- Low consumer awareness about safe disposal practices.
- Fragmented regulations that overlook non-lithium chemistries like lead-acid and nickel-cadmium.
- By 2030, India could lose over \$1 billion in foreign exchange due to unrecovered battery materials.

Policy Recommendations

Recalibrate the EPR Floor Price: Set a fair market-aligned floor price that covers full recycling costs—from collection to material recovery—and adjusts as the market matures.

Learning from Global Practices

International benchmarks highlight India's pricing gap:

- UK's EPR floor price for EV batteries: ~₹600/kg;
- Proposed floor price in India: Less than a fourth of that.
- India's pricing remains unviable for sustainable operations, even after adjusting for purchasing power.
- A globally comparable price that reflects real costs is essential for building a robust battery recycling ecosystem.

Conclusion

Emerging Battery Waste Crisis especially Lithium batteries alone made up 700,000 metric tonnes of India's 1.6 million tonnes of e-waste in 2022, and projected to generate over 2 million tonnes of lithium-ion battery waste by 2030. These batteries, if not properly recycled or disposed off, pose serious risks. India is taking various steps and practices that are adopted by other countries for the same.

EDITORIAL SECTION



Vehicle owners deserve support on use of ethanol blended fuel

GS Paper- 2; Topic - Infrastructure, Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

Introduction

India has reached its target of blending 20% ethanol with petrol five years ahead of schedule under the National Policy on Biofuels. The government highlights the benefits such as lower emissions, reduced oil imports, and higher farmer income. Yet, consumer concerns, environmental costs, and the transition to cleaner options are still under debates.

Consumer Reactions and Concerns

• Compatibility of Vehicles:

Vehicles sold since 2023 carry E20 labels, showing fuel compatibility. Manufacturers, including Hero Motocorp, upgraded materials like rubbers and plastics in older vehicles to withstand ethanol exposure.

• Public Opposition:

A local circles survey across 315 districts found two in three petrol vehicle owners opposed E20. Only 12% supported it, citing, reduced mileage and higher maintenance. Consumers demanded freedom to choose fuel type.

• Government's Stand:

The Centre admitted a marginal drop in efficiency, but argued better tuning and compatible materials can reduce it. Minister Hardeep Singh Puri dismissed criticism as a “vilification campaign” driven by vested interests.

• NITI Aayog's Advice:

NITI Aayog suggested compensating consumers for efficiency losses through tax incentives on E10 and E20, balancing policy goals with fairness to users.

Financial and Policy Dimensions

1. Foreign Exchange Savings: Since 2014-15, India claims savings of ₹1.40 lakh crore on account of substituting petrol with ethanol.

2. Limited Relief for Consumers: Despite a 65% fall in oil prices, PSUs reduced petrol prices by only 2%, while dividend payouts rose sharply. This raised concerns about whether the financial benefits reached the public.

India's Challenges:

Vehicle Compatibility:

- Older vehicles (pre-2023) may face issues.
- Manufacturer warranties unclear for >10% ethanol.
- Engine damage concerns for non-compatible vehicles.

Transparency Issues:

- Vehicle owners unaware of blend levels at pumps.
- Lack of clear compatibility information.
- Limited consumer education.

Regional Variations:

- Different states implementing at different rates.
- Inconsistent availability across regions.

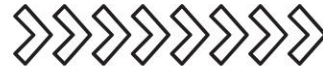
Conclusion

- A LocalCircles survey across 315 districts found two in three petrol vehicle owners opposed E20. Only 12% supported it, citing reduced mileage and higher maintenance. And The government is still on its decision to continue adding 20% ethanol in petrol to reduce dependency on foreign countries and save foreign investment.

• **Source : The Hindu (page no 6)**

• **Date : 12 August**

EDITORIAL SECTION



LG nomination without Nod could affect J&K's electoral process

GS Paper-22; Topic- polity and Governance Functions and Responsibilities of the Union and the States, Issues

Introduction

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs' position allows the Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) of Jammu & Kashmir to nominate five Assembly members without requiring the "aid and advice" of the elected government. This stance challenges the principle of democratic accountability.

Potential Impact on Governance

These nominated members could affect government stability in a 119-member Assembly, thus raising concerns about whether such a framework aligns with democratic principles.

Historical precedent: The 2021 collapse of the government in Puducherry, influenced by nominated members, highlights potential risks.

Democratic Accountability

Jammu & Kashmir's transition to a Union Territory without elected representation underscores the need for democratic accountability.

The Supreme Court has recognized the importance of restoring statehood, which is widely supported in J&K, as crucial for enhancing democratic governance.

Contradiction with Supreme Court Jurisprudence

The Ministry's argument contradicts Supreme Court's rulings in the Delhi services cases, which emphasized the L-G should act upon the elected government's advice, with discretionary powers being exceptions.

The ministry's arguments do not align with evolving judicial interpretations, calling into question the democratic integrity of allowing appointed officials to potentially override electoral outcomes.

Conclusion

The LG's nomination power without the elected government's nod could significantly impact J&K's electoral process, potentially tilting the balance of power and undermining democratic principles. The outcome will depend on the Jammu and Kashmir High Court's interpretation of the relevant laws and constitutional provisions.

- Source : The Hindu (page no 8)
- Date : 14th August

EDITORIAL SECTION



Hyacinth Invasion of India's Waterways Ecological balance

General Studies-3; Topic- Conservation, Environmental Pollution & Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment, Disaster Management

Introduction

Water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*), introduced as an ornamental plant during colonial rule, has today spread across over 2,00,000 hectares of India's inland waters. Its unchecked proliferation has turned rivers, lakes, and backwaters into "green deserts," threatening livelihoods, biodiversity, and governance systems. Vembanad Lake in Kerala, a Ramsar site, faces severe ecological and economic risks from this invasive weed.

Ecological, Economic & Governance Challenges of Water Hyacinth

• Agriculture disruption:

Thick mats obstruct irrigation canals and paddy drainage, reducing water flow, increasing labour costs, and lowering yields for farmers.

• Fisheries collapse:

Water hyacinth blocks fish breeding grounds, reduces oxygen levels, and entangles nets, undermining traditional fishing livelihoods.

• Tourism and transport decline:

The weed clogs waterways, reduces navigability, and mars scenic landscapes, directly threatening eco-tourism and local transport.

• Greenhouse gas emissions:

Decomposing biomass produces methane, a super-potent greenhouse gas, worsening climate challenges linked to inland waters.

• Biodiversity erosion:

Hyacinth mats prevent sunlight penetration and oxygen exchange, suffocating aquatic flora and fauna and collapsing food chains.

• Governance fragmentation:

Responsibility for control is split among agriculture, fisheries, irrigation, and environmental departments, causing duplication and inefficiency.

Impacts on Environment & Ecology in India

• Light and oxygen blockade:

Thick mats cut off sunlight penetration and oxygen diffusion into water, leading to suffocation of aquatic organisms.

• Biodiversity loss:

Native aquatic plants and animals are displaced as invasive monocultures dominate and alter natural ecosystems.

• Hydro-logical disturbance:

Hyacinth obstructs natural water flow, exacerbating flooding, creating stagnant pools, and lowering water quality.

• Collapse of aquatic food chains:

By suffocating fish nurseries and reducing phytoplankton, the weed destabilises predator-prey relationships.

• Tourism and eco-tourism degradation:

The choking of waterways diminishes scenic beauty and reduces accessibility for boats, hitting eco-tourism revenue.

• Climate impact from emissions:

Large-scale decay of the plant releases methane, contributing to global warming from inland water ecosystems.

Conclusion

Water hyacinth must be tackled as both hazard and resource. A single nodal agency with region-specific action plans, mechanised removal, and continuous monitoring is essential.

• Source : The Hindu (page no 10)

• Date : 15th August

EDITORIAL SECTION



Jan Vishwas 2.0 : Towards Regulatory Reform and Ease of doing Business

GS Paper-2; Topic: Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment

Key Development:

Government tables bill to decriminalize 288 minor business offenses.

Key Provisions:

- Advisory warnings for 76 offenses under 10 Acts.
- Replace imprisonment with monetary penalties for minor violations.
- Proportionate penalties with graduated punishments for repeat offenses.
- Administrative processes instead of judicial burden for designated officers.
- Automatic 10% penalty increase every three years.

Affected Areas:

- Motor Vehicles Act, Legal Metrology Act, Drugs & Cosmetics Act.
- Aims to ease business operations and reduce compliance burden.
- Extension of insurance certificate transfer period (14 to 30 days).
- Context: Part of broader business reform initiative to improve ease of doing business.

Scope of changes:

- Amends 355 provisions across 288 Acts.
- Affects over 16 Central Acts administered by various ministries.
- Focus on ease of doing business and reducing compliance burden.

Key reforms:

- **Decriminalization:** Converting penalties from imprisonment to fines.
- **Business facilitation:** Reducing barriers to entrepreneurship.
- **Compliance simplification:** Streamlining regulatory processes.

Impacted areas:

- Trust-based governance for business operations.
- Improved investment climate.
- Reduced judicial burden from minor regulatory violations.

Conclusion:

The Jan Vishwas 2.0 bill is a progressive step towards creating a more business-friendly environment in India. By decriminalizing minor offenses, simplifying compliance, and promoting trust-based governance, the bill aims to improve India's ease of doing business rankings and attract more foreign investment. Its successful implementation will depend on striking a balance between regulatory oversight and reducing unnecessary legal threats.

EDITORIAL SECTION



Turning Crop Waste into Rural Gold : The case for biomass Co -Firing

General Paper-3; Topic: Infrastructure, Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.;
Conservation, Environmental Pollution & Degradation

Introduction

India has introduced the co-firing of biomass pellets in coal-fired thermal power plants to tackle rural distress, air pollution, and the push for cleaner energy.

About Biomass Co-firing

Biomass co-firing involves using agricultural waste (crop residue) as fuel alongside coal in thermal power plants.

SAMARTH Mission

The Ministry of Power has launched the SAMARTH Mission (Sustainable Agrarian Mission on Use of Agri Residue in Thermal Power Plant).

This initiative aims to blend 5% biomass-based pellets.

Benefits of Biomass Co-firing

Biomass co-firing can reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 15% to 20%.

- It also helps control air pollution caused by stubble burning.

Economic Upliftment for Rural India:

- Farmers can earn ₹3,000 to ₹6,000 per acre by selling their agricultural residue, which they would otherwise burn.
- This directly benefits 10 to 20 million farmers and can inject ₹6,000 to ₹24,000 crores annually into the rural economy.
- Employment Generation.
- Local job creation helps address rural-urban migration.
- Reducing dependency on coal by replacing it with biomass strengthens India's energy security.

Way Forward:

- Clear and Consistent Procurement Norms.
- Capacity Building Support.
- Strengthen logistic support to streamline the supply chain from farms to power plants.
- Better Monitoring and Reporting
- Share best practices and case studies to encourage wider adoption and maintain public trust.

Conclusion

India has already taken the first step through the SAMARTH mission. Strengthening this effort could go a long way in inclusive and balanced development.

EDITORIAL SECTION



India China moving beyond Galwan

General Paper-2; Topic- International relations, India and its Neighbourhood – Relations

Introduction

India and China appear to be moving towards a new modus vivendi to maintain peace and tranquility along their disputed 4,000-kilometer border.

Past border disputes:

- In 2020, the older arrangements, shaped by the agreements of 1993, 1996, 2005, and 2013- broke down in Ladakh after the Chinese massed troops in Tibet.
- They established blockades at six points on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) to prevent Indian troops from patrolling the border.
- A clash at Galwan in June 2020 led to the deaths of 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers, the first such losses on the LAC since 1975.
- The Sino-Indian clash(2022) at Yangtse, north-east of Tawang, suggests that new measures may be needed across the LAC, and not just in Ladakh.

News Highlights

- Mr. Wang was in Delhi at the invitation of NSA Ajit Doval for the 24th Special Representatives talk on the boundary question.
- India and China agreed to resume border trade at three points, restart direct flights, expand the Kailash Manasarovar yatra slots for pilgrims and relax visas.
- Positive discussions on the lifting of export restrictions by China on fertilizers, rare earth products and boring machinery.
- The two sides agreed to expedite the process of boundary resolution of the 3,500 km India-China border.

- The Modi government agreed to build on the 2005 agreement of Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India-China Boundary Question.

Outcomes

- Delhi has decided that it can now “move ahead” from the PLA transgressions, Galwan clashes and the standoff.
- PM Modi travel to Tianjin for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Meeting where he also met with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Conclusion

India and China are taking gradual steps towards rebuilding trust and stabilizing bilateral ties after the Galwan Valley clashes in 2020. The two countries have engaged in diplomatic efforts, border disengagement agreements, and high-level meetings to restore peace and cooperation.

- Source : The Hindu (page no 6)
- Date : 23th August

EDITORIAL SECTION



NISAR has capped a decade long bilateral efforts of NASA and ISRO

General Paper-3; Topic- Achievements of Indians in Science & Technology; Indigenization of Technology and Developing New Technology

Introduction

India and the United States are charting new heights through their collaboration on the NISAR satellite. India and US signed the project in 2014 when Obama was the president of USA. It almost took 11 years of hardship for both the institutions to launch this mission.

India – US history space events

As the first joint satellite mission between NASA and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), NISAR marks a new chapter in the growing collaboration between the two space agencies. Years in the making, the launch of NISAR builds on a strong heritage of successful programs, including Chandrayaan-1 and the recent Axiom Mission 4, which saw ISRO and NASA astronauts living and working together aboard the International Space Station for the first time.

Collaboration Significance:

- Result of over one decade of joint research and development.
- Positions India as equal partner with NASA
- Successful ISS mission with astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla.

Unique Features

- First time two SARs mounted on single satellite
- Uses non-visible microwave radiation for Earth imaging.
- Can work together to produce highly detailed Earth images.
- Operates in all weather conditions, day and night.

Challenges to the mission

- **Dual-Frequency Band System:** Designing and integrating two Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) instruments with different frequencies (L-band and S-band) on a single satellite was an unprecedented technical challenge, requiring intricate balancing of their performance.
- **Large Reflector & Boom:** The deployment of the 12-meter reflector on a 9-meter boom presented challenges, including potential overheating during flight.
- **Data Continuity & Quality:** While NISAR's goals were ambitious, the system design had to balance high-resolution imagery with the continuity and uniformity of the data.
- **Complex Terrain:** SAR data, though powerful, has inherent limitations, especially in complex, mountainous terrains where slope stability and glacier monitoring are critical but challenging for accurate analysis.

Conclusion

NISAR is more than just a satellite—it is a bridge between two democracies, built on shared trust and a common vision for the future. The mission underlines how space cooperation can go beyond technology. Looking Ahead, the success of NISAR could open the door to even deeper India-US collaboration in space exploration.

- **Source : The Indian Express**

EDITORIAL SECTION



Urban Local Bodies Need Funds for Shelter and Sterilization Drives

General Paper-2; Topic: Governance, Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources

Introduction

- Urban local bodies (ULBs) play a crucial role in maintaining the quality of life in cities. Among their many responsibilities, animal welfare—particularly shelters for stray animals and sterilization programs—remains underfunded and neglected. Rapid urbanization has increased the population of stray animals, leading to safety concerns, public health risks, and animal suffering. Yet, local bodies often lack the resources to manage these challenges effectively.

Key Issues

- Funding gaps: ULBs receive limited budget allocations for animal welfare compared to other pressing urban needs.
- Overcrowded shelters: Existing facilities are insufficient to house the growing number of strays.
- Poor sterilization coverage: Inadequate sterilization leads to uncontrolled growth of stray animal populations.
- Public health concerns: Rising dog bites and spread of rabies create health and safety risks for citizens.
- Policy neglect: Animal welfare is often treated as a low-priority issue, with little coordination between state and local governments.

Impact

Unchecked stray populations result in frequent conflicts between humans and animals. The risk of accidents and diseases rises in urban areas. Stray dogs often become victims of cruelty due to lack of proper shelters. Additionally, poor animal management negatively affects tourism and the global image of Indian cities. The overall urban governance system appears weak when such basic concerns are not addressed.

Way Forward

- Increased funding: Dedicated budget lines for animal shelters and sterilization must be ensured.
- PPP models: Collaborations with NGOs and private veterinary services can improve efficiency.
- Awareness campaigns: Citizens should be encouraged to adopt sterilized stray animals instead of buying pets.
- Capacity building: Training municipal staff in humane animal management can ensure better outcomes.
- Policy integration: Animal welfare must become part of urban development and smart city missions.

Conclusion

ULBs cannot ignore animal welfare if they want sustainable and humane urban growth. Adequate funding, partnerships, and community participation are essential to ensure cities are safe and compassionate spaces for both humans and animals.

- **Source : The Hindu (page no 6)**
- **Date : 13th August**

EDITORIAL SECTION



The Politics of Insurgency and Decline of Naxalism

General Paper -3; Topic: Internal Security, Linkages between Development and Spread of Extremism; Role of External State and Non-State Actors in Creating Challenges to Internal Security

Introduction

- For decades, Naxalism has been one of the biggest internal security threats in India. Rooted in socio-economic inequalities, the movement grew rapidly across several states, creating what was called the “Red Corridor.” However, in recent years, Naxalism has seen a steady decline due to stronger security responses, development efforts, and loss of local support. While insurgency politics continues to exist, its intensity and spread have reduced significantly.

Key Issues

- Socio-economic roots: Land alienation, poverty, and lack of development provided fertile ground for the rise of Naxalism.
- Insurgency politics: Naxal groups capitalized on local grievances to mobilize people against the state.
- Violence and extortion: Attacks on security forces and extortion from contractors disrupted governance and development.
- State response: Initial reliance on force alone often worsened the problem.
- Changing dynamics: With roads, schools, and welfare schemes reaching interior areas, support for Naxals has declined.

Impact

The decline of Naxalism has brought relative peace in previously disturbed areas, enabling infrastructure projects and better governance. However, sporadic attacks still occur, showing that complete eradication has not yet been achieved. Politically, insurgency movements highlight the importance of addressing development deficits to prevent alienation of marginalized communities.

Way Forward

- Balanced approach: Security operations must be combined with socio-economic development.
- Dialogue: Encouraging surrender and rehabilitation of Naxal cadres can reduce violence.
- Infrastructure push: Roads, schools, and healthcare in affected areas should be prioritized.
- Employment generation: Alternative livelihoods reduce the appeal of insurgent ideologies.
- Community trust: Local people must feel connected to the state through responsive governance.

Conclusion

The politics of insurgency thrives where governance fails. The decline of Naxalism shows that development and security together are the best weapons against extremism. Sustaining this progress will require continuous political will and inclusive policies.

- **Source : The Hindu (page no 6)**
- **Date : 16th August**

EDITORIAL SECTION



Joint Doctrine on Cyberspace Operations

General Paper-3; Topic: Internal Security, Basics of Cyber Security; Role of External State and Non-State Actors in Creating Challenges to Internal Security

Introduction

- In today's digital age, cyberspace has become a critical arena of national security. Recognizing this, India has recently moved towards developing a joint doctrine on cyberspace operations. This doctrine seeks to provide a unified strategy across defense, intelligence, and law enforcement agencies to address rising cyber threats.

Key Issues

- Rising cyberattacks: India faces frequent hacking attempts targeting critical infrastructure like power grids, banking, and defense systems.
- Lack of coordination: Multiple agencies operate in silos, leading to duplication and inefficiency.
- Private sector vulnerability: Most digital infrastructure is owned by private firms, making them soft targets for cyber criminals and state-sponsored hackers.
- Legal gaps: India's cyber laws are outdated compared to the evolving nature of cyber warfare.

Impact

Cyber threats not only compromise sensitive data but also endanger national security and economic stability. Attacks on financial systems can erode public trust, while breaches in defense networks can expose classified information. The growing dependence on digital services after COVID-19 has made India even more vulnerable.

Way Forward

- Unified command structure: A central cyber defense authority can streamline responses.
- Public-private partnerships: Stronger collaboration with private tech firms is essential to secure critical infrastructure.
- Capacity building: Training cyber experts and ethical hackers can help detect and neutralize threats.

Way Forward

- Updating laws: Modernizing IT laws and creating stricter penalties will act as a deterrent.
- International cooperation: Cybersecurity agreements with friendly nations can help share intelligence and best practices.

Conclusion

The joint doctrine on cyberspace operations is a much-needed step to protect India's digital frontiers. With the right policies and implementation, India can strengthen its cyber resilience and safeguard its future in the digital era.

EDITORIAL SECTION



The Higher US Tariffs Place India at a Relative Disadvantage

General Paper-2; Topic: International Relations, Effect of Policies and Politics of Developed and Developing Countries on India's Interests

Introduction

- The recent decision of the United States to impose higher tariffs on certain Indian goods has raised serious concerns for India's trade competitiveness. While India and the US share close strategic ties, such unilateral trade actions tend to disrupt the balance of economic relations. For an economy like India's, which is heavily dependent on exports for job creation and foreign exchange earnings, tariff hikes by a major partner create long-term challenges.

Key Issues

- Rising costs of exports: Higher tariffs increase the landed price of Indian goods in the American market, reducing demand for textiles, leather, steel, and chemical products.
- Dependence on US markets: The US is one of India's largest trade partners, meaning even small tariff changes create ripple effects across the economy.
- Impact on small businesses: SMEs that rely on exports face shrinking margins and are unable to absorb extra costs, making them noncompetitive.
- Diplomatic strain: Tariff disputes spill over into broader areas of cooperation, potentially affecting technology transfer and investment.

Impacts On India

The most direct impact is on exporters, who lose market access and profitability. Reduced exports can discourage foreign investors from setting up manufacturing units in India. Job losses in labor-intensive sectors like textiles and handicrafts could worsen unemployment. Moreover, India's ambition to integrate into global supply chains could face setbacks if buyers shift to countries with lower tariff barriers.

Way Forward

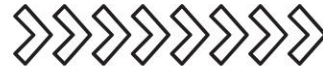
- Diversify export destinations: Strengthening trade with the EU, ASEAN, and Africa can reduce dependence on the US.
- Domestic reforms: Streamlining logistics, lowering compliance costs, and upgrading quality standards can improve competitiveness.
- Bilateral engagement: India must negotiate tariff relaxations with Washington, possibly through sector-specific trade-offs.
- Support to exporters: Financial incentives and credit support can help SMEs withstand tariff shocks.
- Long-term strategy: Building resilient domestic industries will ensure India remains attractive to global buyers despite tariff challenges.

Conclusion

While US tariffs present immediate difficulties, they also highlight the urgency for India to push trade diversification and economic reforms. Turning this challenge into an opportunity could make India more competitive and resilient in the long run.

- **Source : The Indian Express**

EDITORIAL SECTION



Uttarkashi Cloudburst: Lesson for Climatic Resilience in India

General Paper-3; Topic: Disaster Management & Environment, Conservation, Environmental Pollution & Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment

Introduction

- Uttarkashi in Uttarakhand recently witnessed a deadly cloudburst, causing flash floods and heavy loss of life and property.
- Such extreme weather events are becoming more frequent due to climate change.

Key Issues

- Climate change factor: Rising global temperatures are linked to more intense rainfall events and sudden cloudbursts.
- Weak infrastructure: Roads, bridges, and houses in hilly regions are often poorly built and cannot withstand heavy rains.
- Poor early warning systems: Local populations usually receive little or no warning before such disasters strike.
- Tourism pressure: Unregulated tourism and construction in fragile ecosystems worsen the damage.

Impact

The immediate impact is human casualties and displacement of local communities. Infrastructure like highways and communication lines suffer heavy damage, disrupting rescue operations. Economic losses extend to tourism, agriculture, and hydropower projects. Communities that depend on these sectors face prolonged uncertainty and livelihood losses.

Present Scenario

- NDMA (National Disaster Management Authority) has guidelines but implementation is weak.
- State disaster response forces lack manpower and modern equipment.
- Communities in hilly regions remain vulnerable to recurring disasters like floods, landslides, and cloudbursts.

Lessons for India

- 1) Need for climate-resilient infrastructure in eco-sensitive zones.

- 2) Strict regulation on construction in fragile areas.
- 3) Train local communities for disaster response.
- 4) Strengthen forecasting technology for heavy rainfall.

Way Forward

1. Climate-resilient planning: Urban and rural planning in hilly regions must account for disaster risks.
2. Strengthened early-warning systems: Local-level weather monitoring with real-time alerts can save lives.
3. Community preparedness: Training locals in rescue and relief ensures quicker responses.
4. Green infrastructure: Afforestation, watershed management, and eco-sensitive construction reduce vulnerability.
5. Policy integration: Climate resilience should become central to disaster management policy, not an afterthought.

Conclusion

The Uttarkashi disaster is a reminder that climate resilience is no longer optional. India must act fast with strong disaster preparedness, sustainable planning, and community participation..

- Source : The Economic Times
- Date : 6th August 2025

EDITORIAL SECTION



GST 2.0: Tax Reforms for a More Competitive India

General Paper-3; Topic: Economy, Indian Economy and Issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment

Introduction

- GST was introduced in 2017 as "One Nation, One Tax".
- It simplified indirect taxation but faced many challenges.
- GST 2.0 is seen as an opportunity to fix loopholes and strengthen competitiveness.

Need for GST 2.0

- The existence of multiple slabs creates confusion, highlighting the need for rationalisation.
- Frequent changes in tax rates reduce predictability and stability in the system.
- Complex compliance procedures discourage participation by small businesses.
- Exporters face delayed refunds, leading to a loss of global competitiveness.

Key Reforms Expected

- Rate Rationalisation

Move towards a 3-slab structure.

Reduce scope for disputes and classification issues.

- Ease of Compliance

Simplify return filing, especially for MSMEs.

Strengthen digital tools and make the GSTN portal more user-friendly.

- Strengthening Trust

Strict measures to curb fake invoicing and ITC fraud.

Ensure faster and smoother refund mechanisms for exporters.

- Centre-State Balance

Address states' concerns regarding fiscal autonomy.

Provide an assured and transparent compensation mechanism.

Impact on the Indian Economy

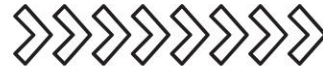
- A predictable and stable tax regime enhances investor confidence and boosts domestic as well as foreign investment.

- Lower compliance burden particularly benefits MSMEs, fostering entrepreneurship and ease of doing business.
- Faster refund mechanisms improve export competitiveness, strengthening India's position in global markets.
- A strengthened and transparent revenue base ensures fiscal stability for both the Centre and the States.

Conclusion

GST 1.0 laid the foundation for a unified indirect tax system in India, but several gaps in design and implementation limited its effectiveness. Moving forward, GST 2.0 must prioritise simplicity, transparency, and fairness to ensure that taxpayers, especially MSMEs and exporters, experience a predictable and business-friendly tax regime. A reformed GST, with rationalised rates, smoother compliance, and a stronger centre-state balance, can significantly enhance competitiveness and revenue stability. Ultimately, such reforms will enable GST to act as a key driver in realising India's ambition of becoming a \$5-trillion economy.

EDITORIAL SECTION



Administrative Reforms: The Road to Good Governance

General Paper-2; Topic: Role of the Civil Services in a Democracy; Government Policies and Interventions for Development in Various Sectors and Issues Arising out of their Design and Implementation

Introduction

- Good governance implies quick, transparent, and fair delivery of public services. It demands accountability from officials and a system that works without biasness or unnecessary delays. To achieve this, India must prioritise meaningful administrative reforms.

Existing Challenges in India's Administrative Framework

1. Legacy of Colonial Bureaucracy

.India's administrative system still reflects practices from colonial era, even decades after independence.

.During British rule, governance was designed for control rather than public welfare.

.Some officers continue to adopt a similar approach, acting more like rulers than public servants.

2. Red-Tapism and Corruption

.The "Chakravayuh of Files" symbolises excessive paperwork and procedural delays.

.Simple approvals, such as No Objection Certificates (NOCs), often pass through multiple desks despite the final decision resting with a single authority.

3. Procurement processes can take several months due to multiple layers of clearance.

Weak Feedback Mechanisms

Constructive feedback is often perceived as personal criticism, discouraging professional growth.

This mindset prevents open discussions that could improve efficiency.

4. Ineffective Annual Performance Review (APR)

Most officers are rated as "outstanding," irrespective of their actual performance.

The absence of genuine evaluation demotivates efficient officers and allows underperformers to remain complacent.

5. Ambiguity in Rules and Regulations

Rules which are vague and open ended in nature give officers excessive discretion.

An active officer may use the same rules to fast-track projects that a risk-averse officer could use to halt them.

This indicates a person-centric rather than process-centric system.

6. Lack of Institutional Memory

Departments often fail to maintain proper records, project learnings, or officers' notes.

Successor officers frequently start from scratch, wasting time and resources.

For example, a District Collector may need to recreate a flood action plan because previous documents were not digitised or archived.

Here are some real examples:

- In India, summers are becoming dangerously hot. In some places, it goes above 50°C. People get sick, crops dry up, and children can't go to school.
- Floods are happening more often in places like China, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. They destroy homes and farms.

Storms and cyclones are stronger and more damaging than before, especially in coastal areas.

.In the Himalayas, glaciers are melting faster. This puts rivers and water sources at risk.

Proposed Administrative Reforms

1. Simplification and Clarity of Rules

.Rules must be simplified and made unambiguous to prevent misuse.

.A process-driven system ensures continuity regardless of officer transfers or personal influence.

.Discretionary powers of individuals should be minimised.

2. Digitisation of Processes

.Widespread digitisation can streamline operations and curb corruption.

.E-office systems and online platforms reduce opportunities for arbitrary decision-making.

.The online nomination process for Padma Awards is an example of making systems more inclusive and transparent.

3. Promotion of Specialisation

The current practice of generalist postings of IAS officers should evolve towards creating subject-matter experts.

.Specialisation allows for more informed decisions and efficient project implementation.

4. Integration of Science and Technology

.Technology should be embedded within administrative processes.

.For instance, using satellite data for flood management can speed up responses and reduce reliance on lengthy paperwork.

5. Independent Performance Evaluation

.Performance audits should be conducted by neutral third parties.

.This prevents inflated ratings and identifies both high performers and non-performers.

.Adopting a model similar to private-sector evaluations will enhance accountability.

Conclusion

.Good governance is not merely a policy slogan but a commitment to structural and attitudinal change.

.Simplified rules, digitisation, specialisation, technological integration, and impartial evaluations are essential steps.

.Through these reforms, India can create a responsive, efficient, and citizen-oriented administrative system, paving the way for sustainable development and public trust.

- Source: The Indian Express

EDITORIAL SECTION



India Transforming Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

General Paper-2; Topic: Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources

Introduction

.The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has introduced several important changes in India's education system, especially in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

. For many years, government schools admitted children only from Class 1.

.This created inequality because children from better-off families attended private preschools, while those from poorer families depended mainly on Anganwadi centres.

.To reduce this gap, NEP 2020 proposes preschool classes for children aged 3–6 years in government schools. This step marks a major shift in how India approaches early childhood education

Key Changes in ECCE

1. Expansion of the ECCE Network

.NEP 2020 aims to universalise ECCE by 2030, ensuring that every child receives quality early education.

.Around 14 lakh Anganwadi centres will be expanded, and three preschool grades Balvatika-1, Balvatika-2, and Balvatika-3 will be introduced in government schools.

.Many states are using funds from the Samagra Shiksha scheme to set up these preschool classes. However, some states are yet to fully utilise these resources, which leads to slow progress.

.This expansion is expected to reduce educational inequality and prepare children better for formal schooling.

2. Increased Emphasis on Education

.There is a noticeable shift toward prioritising education over traditional ECCE services like health and nutrition.

.In places such as Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, preschools in primary schools are now preferred over Anganwadi centres, causing migration of children.

.To stay relevant, Anganwadis must integrate early education into their services through initiatives like Poshan bhi Padhai bhi, which combines nutrition and learning.

.At the same time, experts caution against excessive "schoolification." Preschools should remain play-based and interactive, rather than becoming formal classrooms too early.

3. Reorientation of Anganwadi Services

.A potential shift is being considered where Anganwadi centres would mainly focus on children aged 0–3 years and maternal care, using home visits to support early development.

.Research shows that home-based interventions during the first three years of life can significantly improve cognitive and emotional development.

.Currently, most Anganwadi workers spend their limited resources on children aged 3–6 years, leaving little time for younger children and mothers.

.If government schools handle preschool classes, Anganwadis can dedicate more attention to the critical early years and improve maternal health services.

Challenges in Implementation

.Adequate training for Anganwadi workers and school teachers will be necessary to handle these new responsibilities.

.Infrastructure upgrades, including classrooms, learning materials, and digital tools, must be ensured.

.Coordination between education, women and child development departments will play a key role in smooth implementation.

.States must make full use of schemes like Samagra Shiksha to avoid regional disparities.

Conclusion

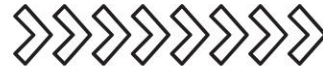
.The NEP 2020 has planted the seeds of a transformative change in ECCE by expanding access, prioritising education, and redefining Anganwadi roles.

These reforms can reduce inequality, improve school readiness, and ensure age-appropriate care for all children.

.However, success will depend on timely action, adequate funding, and strong collaboration between institutions. If implemented effectively, this shift can create a more equitable and robust foundation for life long learning.

- Sources - The Hindu
- Date :- 1st August

EDITORIAL SECTION



The Right to Repair Must Include the Right to Remember

General Paper-3; Topic: Science and Technology – Developments and their Applications and Effects in Everyday Life

Introduction

- The concept of the Right to Repair is gaining importance globally, including in India. It ensures that consumers and communities can repair their own devices and equipments instead of being forced to replace them.
- But the right to repair is not just about fixing objects, it is also about remembering, valuing, and preserving the human skills, knowledge, and community practices that make repairment possible.

UNDERSTANDING THE RIGHT TO REPAIR

The Right to Repair allows individuals or independent repairers to access tools, spare parts, and information needed to fix products.

In India, with increasing digitalisation and consumer goods, repair is essential for reducing waste, saving costs, and promoting sustainability.

However, repair work depends on the tacit knowledge and experience of informal repairers, who are often unrecognised and unsupported.

Why Remembering Matters

Repair work is not only a technical task but also a cultural practice carried forward through generations.

Many local repairers have unique diagnostic skills developed over years of experience. These skills are rarely documented and can be lost if not supported.

Philosopher Michael Polanyi's idea, "We know more than we can tell," highlights that much of this wisdom is embedded in practice, not formal instructions. Preserving this knowledge ensures a repair-ready future

Strengthening Community Involvement

1. Formal Recognition of Informal Repairers

Platforms such as e-Shram can be used to register and recognise informal repair workers.

Recognition will connect them to social security benefits, insurance, and financial support.

2. Linking Skill Development

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship should design programs tailored to the diagnostic and problem-solving nature of repair work.

Such training should not replace traditional skills but enhance them with updated knowledge for modern technologies.

3. Supporting Local Ecosystems

Repair shops are part of a community network that sustains both digital and material life.

Supporting these ecosystems strengthen the local economy, reduces electronic waste, and makes technology more accessible.

Challenges in Implementation

.Many companies restrict access to spare parts or repair manuals, which limits independent repair.

.Informal repairers often lack legal or financial protection, leaving them vulnerable.

.There is limited awareness among consumers about their rights or the environmental benefits of repair.

.Coordination among government departments, private companies, and communities is necessary to create an inclusive framework.

Way Forward

.Introduce clear policies mandating manufacturers to provide affordable spare parts and manuals.

.Expand e-Shram or similar platforms to cover all categories of repairers.

.Launch awareness campaigns on the environmental and economic value of repair.

.Support partnerships between industries, local repairers, and skill development missions to transfer knowledge effectively.

Conclusion

The right to repair is more than a technical issue. It is about remembering and valuing the quiet, skilled labour that sustains our devices and everyday lives.

Recognising and empowering informal repair communities will ensure a sustainable, repair-ready future where human wisdom and community knowledge continues to thrive alongside technological progress.

- Sources - The Hindu (page no 10)
- Date - 4th August

EDITORIAL SECTION



The Obsession with Hindi is a Diversion from the Needs of School Education

General Paper-2; Topic: Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources

Introduction

- Language debates in India often focus on the promotion of Hindi as a national language. While the importance of Hindi as a link language is undeniable, the excessive focus on imposing or prioritising it can distract from more pressing issues in school education.
- Improving quality, access, and equity in education requires addressing fundamental challenges rather than spending political and social energy on language disputes.

Background

India is a multilingual country with 22 scheduled languages and hundreds of regional dialects.

The Constitution, through the Eighth Schedule and the three-language formula, provides space for linguistic diversity.

Recent discussions and policies that promote Hindi as a medium of instruction have stirred debate, especially in non-Hindi speaking states.

Why the Debate on Hindi is a Diversion

1. Core Issues Remain Unresolved

India's school education system still faces problems like inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages, outdated curricula, and low learning outcomes.

According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), basic reading and arithmetic skills remain poor in many states.

2. Equity and Inclusivity Take a Backseat

The priority should be improving access for marginalised communities, reducing dropout rates, and providing quality teaching rather than imposing a single language.

Regional languages often connect better with young learners, making early education more inclusive.

3. Strain on Non-Hindi Speaking States

States such as Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala have strong regional language identities.

Overemphasising Hindi creates resistance and diverts administrative focus from actual reforms like digital learning or teacher training.

4. Language Policy vs. Learning Outcomes

Research suggests that children learn best in their mother tongue during early years.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 already supports mother-tongue education up to Class 5. Focusing solely on Hindi goes beyond NEP's balanced approach and risks politicising education.

Key Priorities for School Education

1. Teacher Quality and Training

Invest in continuous teacher training, modern pedagogical methods, and performance evaluation.

2. Infrastructure and Digital Access

Upgrade classrooms, provide digital tools, and ensure electricity, clean water, and internet access in rural areas.

3. Curriculum and Skill Development

Focus on critical thinking, problem-solving, and vocational skills that prepare students for future challenges.

4. Language Diversity Respect

Strengthen regional languages and multilingual education to foster inclusivity and cultural pride.

Way Forward

Policymakers should prioritise universal access, learning outcomes, and teacher empowerment rather than language politics.

Encourage multilingualism without imposing a single language, ensuring balance between national integration and cultural diversity.

Foster dialogue between the Centre and states to address genuine educational reforms.

Conclusion

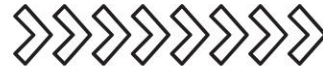
The debate over Hindi should not overshadow the urgent reforms needed in India's school education system. Quality teaching, equitable access, and inclusive curriculum are far more critical to achieving the goals of education.

By focusing on real challenges, India can build a robust and inclusive education framework that serves all children, regardless of language.

• Sources - The Hindu (page no 8)

• Date - 11th August

EDITORIAL SECTION



Governors as Chancellors Do More Harm than Good in Universities

General Paper-2; Topic: Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Education and Human Resources; Appointment to various Constitutional Posts, Powers, Functions and Responsibilities of various Constitutional Bodies

Introduction.

- In India, Governors traditionally serve as Chancellors of state universities.
- While this arrangement was intended to provide neutrality and ensure academic standards, it has increasingly become a source of tension between state governments and Governors.
- Many education experts argue that this system often hampers university's autonomy and politicises higher education, doing more harm than good.

Background

.Under most state university Acts, the Governor is the ex-officio Chancellor, responsible for appointments of Vice-Chancellors (VCs), approving statutes, and presiding over convocations.
.The original purpose was to keep universities independent of local politics and provide oversight.
.Recent disputes in states like Kerala, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu show how this role has become controversial.

Concerns and Negative Impacts

1. Politicisation of Higher Education

.Governors, appointed by the Centre, often clash with state governments on VC appointments or policy directions.
.This undermines cooperative federalism and diverts attention from academic priorities.

2. Delays and Administrative Paralysis

.Disagreements between Governors and states have delayed appointments, funding approvals, and policy decisions in universities.
.Such delays harm students, research, and overall academic performance.

3. Undermining University Autonomy

.Universities require academic freedom to function effectively.
.When Governors interfere in day-to-day matters, it erodes institutional independence and discourages innovation.
.Rules which are vague and open ended in nature

4. Lack of Accountability

.Governors are not directly accountable to state legislatures or the public for their actions as Chancellors.
.This creates an imbalance where decisions affecting universities are made without sufficient checks and balances.

5. Distracting from Core Educational Challenges

.Focus on political disputes between Governors and governments divert energy from pressing issues such as outdated curricula, poor infrastructure, and research funding gaps.

Arguments in Favour (Counterview) Arguments in Favour (Counterview)

.Supporters argue that Governors as Chancellors act as neutral arbiters, protecting universities from local political interference.
.They can bring an external perspective and uphold academic standards when state politics threaten university integrity.
.In some cases, Governors have intervened to stop irregular appointments or corruption.

Way Forward

.States can consider amending university Acts to limit the Governor's powers or appoint eminent academicians as Chancellors.
.Create independent university boards or commissions to handle appointments and policy decisions transparently.
.Strengthen state higher education councils to ensure quality and coordination without excessive political involvement.
.Encourage a cooperative approach where Governors, state governments, and universities work collaboratively rather than adversarially.

Conclusion

.The practice of Governors acting as Chancellors, while designed to safeguard academic integrity, has often led to unnecessary conflicts and administrative delays.
.A reformed system that respects university autonomy, ensures accountability, and minimises political interference, is essential for improving higher education.
.Moving towards a model where professional academic leadership takes precedence over political appointments will better serve the goals of quality and innovation in India's universities.

- Sources - The Hindu (page no 10)
- Date - 15th August

EDITORIAL SECTION



A Tribute to M. S. Swaminathan: The Man Who Fed India

General Paper-3; Topic: Issues Relating to Agriculture; Food Security

Introduction

- Mankombu Sambasivan Swaminathan, better known as the father of India's Green Revolution, revolutionized the agricultural face of the country and provided food for millions.
- His vision and scientific acumen guided India through the harsh food shortages of the 1960s and towards self-sufficiency.
- Recalling his achievements is important to comprehend India's progress from a food-scarce country to a food-secure nation

Early Life and Background

.Swaminathan was born in 1925 in Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu. He was highly impacted by the concepts of rural development as envisioned by Mahatma Gandhi.

.He completed his education in agricultural science and went on to conduct further research in plant genetics, with a special emphasis on wheat and rice.

.His scientific education coupled with the sense of social responsibility shaped his lifelong endeavor to better the lives of farmers.

The Green Revolution in India

.India struggled with chronic famines and depended greatly on food imports from the United States in the 1960s.

.Swaminathan collaborated directly with Nobel Peace Prize winner Norman Borlaug to implement high-yielding wheat and rice varieties.

.He urged Indian farmers to use modern methods, such as irrigation, fertilisers, and better seeds.

.Punjab, Haryana, and west Uttar Pradesh emerged as the hubs of the Green Revolution, and in a decade's time, India transitioned from being a food-deficit nation to a food surplus one.

Wider Contributions to Agriculture

.Swaminathan felt that science must benefit the farmer directly. He pushed for sustainable and inclusive farming approaches, decades ahead of sustainability becoming an international agenda.

.He stressed a balance between productivity and environmental conservation, cautioning against excessive use of chemical fertilizers and water resources.

.As a policy advisor and administrator, he was instrumental in developing agricultural research establishments, including the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

.He established the M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), which seeks to empower rural communities through knowledge and technology transfer.

Awards and Global Recognition

.Swaminathan was conferred several honours, such as the Ramon Magsaysay Award, the Albert Einstein World Science Award, and India's top civilian honours, the Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Vibhushan.

.Globally, he was renowned for bridging farm innovation with social improvement, earning him a place of honour in international food security debates.

Relevance Today

.His appeal for an "Ever-Green Revolution" is still very much valid as India grapples with new challenges such as climate change, land degradation, and water shortages.

.Swaminathan's work reminds us policymakers to invest in research in agriculture, assist small farmers, and harmonize sustainability in food production systems.

Conclusion

.M. S. Swaminathan was not just a scientist. He was a visionary, who was convinced that science should work for humanity.

.Through his leadership of India's Green Revolution, he made sure that Indians would never go through the pangs of famine on the same scale as before.

.His legacy still determines India's agricultural policies and motivates initiatives towards food security and green farming. .It is not just a reminder but also a clarion call to carry on his initiative of feeding the country with an unspoiled environment.

EDITORIAL SECTION



India's Vocational Training System to Boost Employment

General Paper-2; Topic: Issues relating to Education, Human Resources, Skill Development; Development and Management of Social Sector/Services

Introduction

- India is at a critical moment. Our young population is our greatest asset, but they need the right skills to thrive in a changing economy. Each year, millions enter the workforce, yet many are unprepared for available jobs.
- To fully harness our demographic potential, India must rethink and improve its vocational training system

GAPS IN THE CURRENT SYSTEM

The existing vocational training framework has not kept up:

1. Lack of awareness and respect – Many students and families still see skill-based training as a fallback, opting for traditional degrees even when jobs are hard to find.
2. Outdated teaching methods – Many courses fail to align with current industry needs or new technologies.
3. Quality issues – A lack of trained teachers, poor infrastructure, and inconsistent certification reduce the credibility of vocational programs.
4. Informal workforce excluded – Most workers in India belong to the informal sector and rarely gain access to structured training or recognition.
5. Weak industry connections – Limited collaboration with businesses leads to fewer opportunities for apprenticeships and real-world experience

Why Reform is Urgent

India's economy is changing rapidly due to automation, new technologies, and global competition.

If we do not reform, the skill gap will grow, leaving young workers struggling while industries facing shortages.

Updating vocational training will create jobs and ensure India has workers ready for areas like clean energy, advanced manufacturing, logistics, and digital services.

What Needs to Change

- 1. Align courses with industry needs – Employers should help shape the curriculum to make training practical.
- 2. Expand apprenticeships – Paid, hands-on training will boost confidence and enhance employability.
- 3. Leverage digital tools – Online platforms and simulations can deliver quality training to remote regions.
- 4. Start early in schools – Introducing vocational subjects in schools will normalize skill-based education and reduce social stigma.
- 5. Partner with the private sector – Public-private partnerships can enhance funding, quality, and job connections.
- 6. Recognise informal skills – Workers who have learned on the job should receive certification to improve their opportunities.
- 7. Teach soft skills – Skills like communication, teamwork, and adaptability are just as crucial as technical know-how.

Moving Forward

- The government, especially through initiatives like Skill India and PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana, must take the lead in expanding and modernizing vocational training.
- However, success also relies on businesses, schools, and communities valuing skills alongside degrees.

Conclusion

A modern vocational training system can close the gap between education and employment.

By valuing practical skills, using technology, and fostering strong industry connections, India can prepare its youth for meaningful jobs and sustainable economic growth.

ANNEXURE

Policies

1. NATIONAL SPORTS GOVERNANCE BILL 2025-

Parliament has passed the National Sports Governance Bill 2025, which aims to enhance transparency, resolve disputes, and bring all sports bodies, including the BCCI, under a common regulatory framework.

Key Provisions are:

Empowers the central government to establish the National Sports Board (NSB) and establishes National Olympic Committee, National Paralympic Committee, and Sports Federations for each designated sport. Mandates national/regional sports federations (affiliated with international bodies) to have a General Body, 15-member Executive Committee (at least 2 outstanding sportspersons & 4 women), and Ethics, Dispute Resolution, Athletes Committees.

Creates National Sports Tribunal (3-member; chaired by sitting or former Judge of the SC or the Chief Justice of a HC) with civil court powers for speedy disputes; excludes doping, internal disputes, and international event matters, with appeals to the Supreme Court.

The Centre can frame rules, relax eligibility, and restrict national teams' participation abroad for reasons of security, public order, or safety

A notable feature of the Bill is the inclusion of the BCCI, which until now has operated as an autonomous entity under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975, and is not officially recognised as an NSF.

This bill marks a major shift in the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports from a perceived 'controller' role to that of a 'facilitator,' aiming to empower Indian sports to achieve global competitiveness while reducing bureaucratic inefficiencies and legal disputes.

2. PROMOTION AND REGULATION OF ONLINE GAMING ACT 2025-

The Parliament has passed the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025 effectively banning online money games while promoting and regulating other kinds of online games. It was introduced in the House as a Finance bill under Article 117(1) and 117(3) of the Constitution of India with the due recommendation of the President. With this move, the government seeks to protect vulnerable sections of society, promote responsible gaming, and support the growth of India's digital innovation ecosystem.

The legislation is structured around three key segments of gaming:

- **E-Sports**– Recognised as a creative and recreational industry with strong growth potential, the Bill supports e-sports development as a mainstream sector.
- **Online Social Games**– Encouraged as safe entertainment options that do not involve financial risks or addictive gambling mechanisms.
- **Online Money Games**– Completely prohibited, covering activities such as fantasy sports, poker, rummy, and other real money-based platforms where players deposit funds with monetary return expectations.

ANNEXURE

Policies

Imprisonment of up to three years and fines up to Rs. 1 crore for first-time offenders.

Another major highlight of the bill is the creation of a statutory Online Gaming Authority tasked with coordinating policy support for the sector, regulating and supervising gaming platforms, supporting e-sports and legitimate online social gaming enterprises, and curbing harmful practices such as money laundering, addictive algorithms, and fraudulent gaming models.

In conclusion, the Online Gaming Bill 2025 seeks to balance digital innovation with public safety. By regulating harmful practices and protecting vulnerable users, the government aims to ensure that online gaming grows responsibly without putting families and society at risk.

3. INCOME TAX ACT 2025-

The Income Tax Bill 2025 has been passed by Parliament to modernise and replace the decades-old Income Tax Act of 1961. The goal is to make the law shorter, clearer, and more streamlined,

Some of the new provisions introduced in the bill are:

Provisions for Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT) and Alternate Minimum Tax (AMT) have now been separated into two distinct sub-sections, improving clarity.

Taxpayers now have the option to update their returns up to four years from the end of the relevant assessment year, allowing mistakes to be corrected without penalty or extra tax liability.

The period for which assessments can be reopened has been reduced to five years, giving greater certainty for taxpayers and preventing long-drawn scrutiny.

The primary objective of the new Income Tax Bill is simplification and rationalisation, not altering tax rates or slabs, which continue to be adjusted separately through the Union Budget.

Introduction of “tax year” defined as April 1 to March 31.

The law has been significantly simplified and modernised: the number of sections and chapters has been reduced, the word count nearly halved, and more tables and formulae have been added for clarity.

The Bill retains the definition of “virtual digital space”, giving tax authorities powers during searches and seizures. This includes email servers, social media accounts, online investments, cloud servers, and digital applications.

While it keeps existing tax rates and slabs intact, it introduces clearer definitions, reduced legal complexity, and stronger digital-age powers for authorities. At the same time, there are trade-offs especially related to privacy and the powers of tax officials that will need careful oversight to ensure that taxpayer rights are protected.

ANNEXURE

Policies

4. THE BANKING LAW (AMENDMENT) ACT 2025-

The Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025 is a major reform aimed at modernising India's banking sector. It introduced 19 amendments across five core banking legislations—the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934; Banking Regulation Act, 1949; State Bank of India Act, 1955; and the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Acts of 1970 & 1980. The goal is to strengthen governance, improve audit quality, enhance depositor protection, and make cooperative banks more accountable.

Key Provisions of This Act are:

The Act raises the threshold for “substantial interest” in a banking company from ₹5 lakh to ₹2 crore. The update reflects present economic realities and helps reduce conflicts of interest for directors and officers.

In cooperative banks, the tenure of directors (excluding chairpersons and whole-time directors) has been extended from 8 to 10 years. This move aligns with the 97th Constitutional Amendment and is expected to bring more stability and continuity in governance, avoiding frequent turnover that weakens accountability.

Public Sector Banks (PSBs) are now permitted to transfer unclaimed shares, dividends, and bonds to the Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF). This brings PSBs in line with the Companies Act, 2013, ensures better use of unclaimed funds, and strengthens investor protection while reducing the burden of dormant liabilities on banks.

The Act empowers PSBs to decide on the remuneration of statutory auditors. By allowing banks flexibility to attract skilled auditors with competitive pay, this provision is expected to improve audit quality, enhance financial oversight, and lower the risk of fraud or misreporting.

The requirement of weekly reporting to the Reserve Bank of India has been relaxed. Banks can now submit reports on a fortnightly, monthly, or quarterly basis. This reduces the compliance burden on banks while still maintaining effective regulatory supervision and improving the quality of data submitted.

The Act aims to strengthen trust in banks and protect depositors. It marks a shift towards more relevant, accountable, and modern banking regulation in India.

5. CONSTITUTION (135TH AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025 EXECUTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY PROVISION-

Union minister and minister of cooperation “Amit Shah” introduced the Bill in Lok Sabha on 20 August, 2025. The main purpose of the bill is to elevate the declining standards of morality in public life and bring integrity to politics.

ANNEXURE

Policies

Amit Shah stated about this bill are:

- Individuals who have been holding important constitutional positions such as Prime Minister , Chief Minister and Minister of the Central and State Government, will not be able to govern while they are in jail.
- This bill also includes the provisions which allows politicians to seek bail from the court within 30 days if they fail to secure bail then on the 31st day either the Prime Minister or Chief Minister can remove the Minister. Otherwise, they will be officially disqualified from their performing duties (Article 75).
- A minister who has been removed on the basis of this provision,can be reappointed after being released from custody.

During the framework of the constitution , its architect could not have imagined there would be a political figure who would refuse to resign on the moral basis before being arrested. But in recent years, this situation has been raised where the Chief Minister or Minister unethically runs the government behind the jail.

6. FASTAG ANNUAL PASS LAUNCH-

Toll Payment Efficiency: It is an electronic toll connection system Fastag yearly pass introduced by National Highway Authority of India on 15 August, 2025 to make Highway travel more convenient, reduce traffic jams at toll plaza and promote digital payment which can reduce corruption . This tag automatically deducts the amount from the linked bank account by contacting the sensor installed by the toll plaza. As it was also announced earlier by Union Transport Minister “Nitin Gadkari” which include two initiatives options:

- **Annual Toll Pass:** For just 3,000₹ you will get unlimited access to national highways and expressways upto 200 trips.
- **Lifetime Toll Pass:** For 30,000 you will get the same benefits for 15 years basically for those who travel more.

Tamil Nadu led the most number of annual passes purchased over the last month, followed by the states of Haryana and Karnataka. All the process of registration and upgradation of FASTag yearly pass was done through the Rajmargyatra app. Applicable on about 1,150 toll plaza on the National Highways and Expressways of India. The pass has seen rapid adoption by five lakh subscriptions within the four days of introduction of the bill.

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Policies

7. CENTRALISED DIGITAL MUSIC LICENSING REGISTRY PLAN-

Streamlining Licensing: The Ministry of Information and Broadcast is gearing up to launch this policy by October in collaboration with right societies. The announcement followed the first meeting of the Joint Working Group which was held on 26 August, 2025 at National Media Centre, New Delhi.

The session saw representation from multiple ministries such as culture, skill development, youth affairs and sports, finance and DPIIT—participated, along with the Sports Authority of India and state governments from Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana and Karnataka.

The major takeaways were a plan to integrate approval for the live events into India Cine Hub portal to create model policies and reduce bureaucratic hurdles. The key industries players includes- Saregama, Wizcraft, Bookmyshow, district by Zomato and Touchwood entertainment along with associations like Ilea, Cll, Ficci. The live entertainment market of India, valued at ₹20,861 crore in 2024 and growing annually at 15%, is one of the fastest-expanding creative economy segments.

According to Jaju, the government's ambition is to locate India among top five live entertainment destinations by 2030, which will unlock 15-30 million jobs. He also stated, “The JWG will focus on leveraging the concert economy to boost infrastructure, create jobs, attract tourists and strengthen India’s soft power”.

8. UTTARAKHAND MINORITY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS BILL, 2025-

Inclusive Minority Education: The Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly passed the Minority Educational Institutions Bill, 2025 in monsoon season. The main purpose of the bill was to reform the Madras leaving other minorities unrecognised. They recognised other minorities in addition to Muslims and extended benefits to Sikhs, Christian, Jain, Buddhist and Parsi which were earlier sidelined during the Congress government's tenure.

The urgency for the reformation became precisely for these problems such as: discrepancies in mid-day meal schemes, irregularities in scholarship distribution, and lack of transparency currently plaguing the madrasa management in Uttarakhand. The concerns raised above are also validated by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights which reveal deep structural issues in the functioning of Madras.

The multi-faceted approach of this bill are :

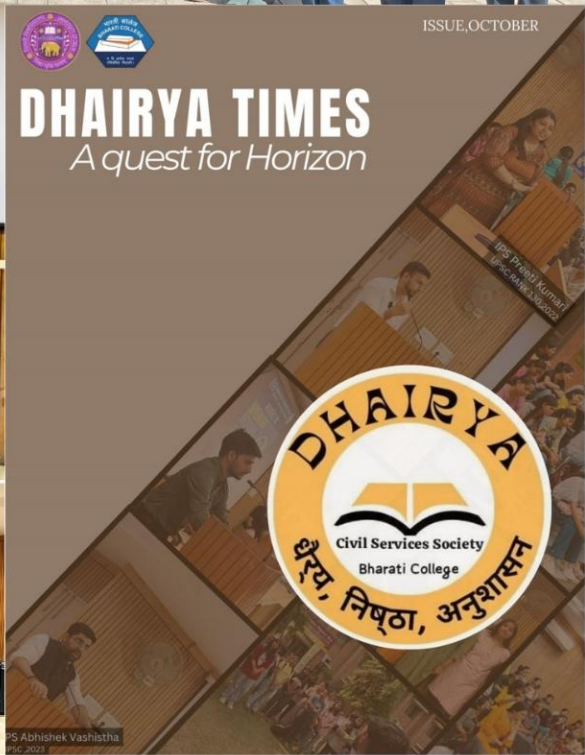
- It provides for the study of Gurumukhi and Pali languages to promote inclusivity.
- It establishes a standardised body called Uttarakhand State Authority for Minority Education (USMEA) for overseeing the management of all the minority institutions.

As a quality control measure, the Bill also prescribes mandatory affiliation with the Uttarakhand Board of School Education (UBSE) to ensure standardisation of curriculum and uniform management.

QUESTION FOR WRITEUP

The decision to conduct Population Census - 2027 has reopened the debate on delimitation in India. Discuss in various aspects.





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