

# 9 PM Current Affairs Weekly Compilation

For UPSC CSE mains examination



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**UPSC**

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**Features :**

Arranged as per syllabus Topics  
Most complete coverage of major  
News Papers editorials

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### **Global power shifts are creating rising instability**

**Source:** The post Global power shifts are creating rising instability has been created, based on the article “**From a rules-based world to shambolic disorder**” published in “**The Hindu**” on 1st May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-International Relations-Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

**Context:** Global instability is worsening due to rising geopolitical tensions, disruptive leadership, and declining institutional authority. This article examines how global power shifts, the U.S.'s internal divisions, and conflicts across Europe, West Asia, and Asia are reshaping the international order.

For detailed information on **Understanding Global Power Shifts and Emerging Influences** [read this article here](#)  
**Rise of Disruptive Leadership and Global Uncertainty**

**1. Strategic Shifts Amid Global Disruption:** Before Trump's presidency, warning signs of global instability were visible. Despite new strategic tools, experts foresaw heightened disruption due to shifts in power, new technologies, and political conflict.

**2. Influence of Disruptive Leaders:** Leaders like Trump, Xi Jinping, Putin, and Zelenskyy are reshaping the global landscape. Their influence is seen as a break from past trends, with potential to overturn the current world order.

**3. Democratic Disintegration in the U.S.:** The U.S., once a symbol of democracy, is now deeply divided. This internal disruption is straining its global relations and weakening its leadership role.

#### **U.S. Economic Policy and Global Trade Instability**

**1. Trumponomics and Economic Decline:** Trump's tariff wars reflect a transactional mindset that is destabilizing global trade. Leading economists report a sharp fall in U.S. growth and a drop in GDP.

**2. Damage to Education and Jobs:** Foreign students contribute over \$40 billion to the U.S. economy and support 400,000 jobs. Trump's policies targeting them are harming key educational institutions like Harvard and Columbia.

**3. Self-Inflicted Weakening:** These actions are damaging U.S. soft power and weakening its long-term economic and intellectual capabilities.

#### **West Asian Conflicts and European Dilemmas**

**1. Escalation in West Asia:** Israel's offensive in Gaza and Syria, with no U.S. restraint, is seen as a regional pogrom. Its expansionist ambitions are reshaping borders and escalating tensions.

**2. Collapse of Governance and New Threats:** Syria is in crisis under new leadership. Türkiye faces political unrest, and Israel may strike Iran's nuclear facilities. Old conflicts like Ethiopia-Eritrea have reemerged.

**3. Europe's Dilemma and NATO's Future:** Europe is locked in conflict with Russia over Ukraine. Trump's criticism of Europe's defense raises doubts about NATO's stability and the EU's future role.

#### **Resurgence of Terror and Regional Instability in Asia**

**1. IS Expansion into Africa and Afghanistan:** Islamic State affiliates have launched attacks in Mozambique, Congo, and Afghanistan. This signals a dangerous revival of global terror threats.

**2. Terrorism in South Asia:** Afghanistan and Pakistan face internal unrest and growing terror threats. Groups like IS and al-Qaeda are expanding through new affiliates.

**3. Spread of Violence in the Region:** Terrorist attacks have spread to areas like Kashmir, where 26 tourists were killed. Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Nepal also face various forms of internal turmoil.

#### **China's Expanding Influence in Asia**

**1. China's Calculated Moves:** China is avoiding direct conflict over Taiwan and focusing on countering U.S. tariffs. It is also working to expand its economic influence.

**2. Military Expansion and Regional Push:** China is advancing peace efforts while asserting military power. It has moved into the South Pacific and boosted submarine activity in the Indian Ocean.

**3. India-China Rivalry Remains Strong:** Despite recent border adjustments, China-India rivalry continues. Several Asian nations are tilting towards China, widening its regional footprint.

#### Question for practice:

Examine how rising geopolitical tensions and disruptive leadership are reshaping global stability and power dynamics.

### Bonded labour persists in India despite laws against exploitation

**Source:** The post Bonded labour persists in India despite laws against exploitation has been created, based on the article “India’s shame — the trap of bonded labour” published in “The Hindu” on 1st May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.

**Context:** On International Labour Day, India confronts a disturbing reality: bonded and forced labour continue to thrive despite decades-old abolition laws. The article highlights how systemic failures, weak enforcement, and social inequality allow exploitation of millions of workers.

#### Underlying Causes of Labour Exploitation

**1. Economic Triggers:** Sudden hardships such as illness, job loss, or marriage expenses push poor families to seek quick loans. These advances often trap them in exploitative labour arrangements.

**2. Social Disadvantage and Exclusion:** Caste-based discrimination, illiteracy, and lack of access to information increase vulnerability. Many workers do not understand their rights or legal protections.

**3. Power Structures and Dependency:** In many areas, employers control both credit and job access. This monopoly converts basic financial help into long-term dependence and coercion.

#### Scale and Nature of the Problem

**1. Ongoing Prevalence:** Despite legal abolition in 1975, bonded labour remains widespread. Government data estimates 1.84 crore people are still affected by it across the country.

**2. Forms of Abuse:** These workers often face long working hours, withheld wages, physical violence, and confinement. Many lack contracts and freedom of movement.

**3. Overlap with Forced Labour:** Even outside traditional bondage, crores of informal workers, especially migrants, endure similar exploitation, blurring the lines between informal work and forced labour.

#### Policy Commitments and Actual Progress

**1. Official Vision and Targets:** In 2016, the Union Labour Ministry announced a plan to rescue and rehabilitate 1.84 crore bonded labourers by 2030, as part of a long-term national agenda.

**2. Actual Rescues:** Between 2016 and 2021, only 12,760 bonded labourers were officially rescued and rehabilitated. This pace falls drastically short of the goal.

**3. Unrealistic Expectations:** To meet the 2030 target, over 11 lakh rescues per year would now be required — a target that current systems are far from achieving.

#### The Larger Labour Crisis in India

**1. Dominance of Informal Sector:** According to NSSO data, out of 47 crore workers, 39 crore are in the unorganised sector. These jobs often lack safety, fair wages, or legal protections.

**2. ILO's Assessment:** The ILO India Employment Report 2024 confirms that low-quality informal work dominates the labour market, leaving workers insecure and underpaid.

### Legal and Structural Gaps

**1. Weak Unionisation:** Unorganised workers lack unions and collective bargaining power. This isolates them and reduces their ability to fight back against abuse.

**2. Dilution of Rights:** The 2019–20 Labour Codes weakened earlier protections, particularly the right to organise and strike, eroding decades of progress in labour rights.

### Question for practice:

Discuss the reasons why bonded and forced labour continue to persist in India despite legal abolition.

### India faces prolonged slowdown in private sector capital expenditure

**Source:** The post India faces prolonged slowdown in private sector capital expenditure has been created, based on the article “**We have a hazy forecast of a private capex slump**” published in “**Live Mint**” on 1st May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3- Economy- Government Budgeting.

**Context:** India's long wait for a surge in private-sector capital expenditure may continue. A new survey by the National Statistical Office signals a slowdown in investment intent for 2025–26, offering a clearer view of business sentiment and challenges.

For detailed information on **India aims for growth with increased capital expenditure** [read this article here](#)

### Private Investment Trends and Sectoral Variation

**1. Fluctuating Investment Patterns:** Actual private capex rose from ₹4 trillion in 2021–22 to ₹5.7 trillion in 2022–23, then declined to ₹4.2 trillion in 2023–24. These shifts highlight the volatility in private investment.

**2. Expected Decline in Capex Plans:** For 2025–26, the survey projects intended capital expenditure at ₹4.9 trillion—about 25% lower than last year's plans. The fall reflects cautious planning after a strong 2024–25.

**3. Sector-Wise Divergence:** Not all sectors foresee a decline. Manufacturers intend to raise investments to ₹2.1 trillion, 40% higher than last year. The construction sector also shows rising intent, in contrast to the broader slowdown.

### Survey Design and Methodology

**1. Targeting Large Registered Companies:** The survey focused on active firms registered with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. Manufacturers needed a turnover of ₹400 crore, trading firms ₹300 crore, and others ₹100 crore.

**2. Stratified and Balanced Sampling:** Enterprises were grouped into 17 business strata. Small strata (100 firms or fewer) were fully included. In larger strata, selection considered fixed asset size and random sampling to balance representation.

**3. Final Sample Selection:** From 16,025 eligible firms, 5,380 were asked to respond. Large corporations were likely included due to fewer competitors in their fields.

### Data Limitations and Interpretation Cautions

**1. Low Response Rate and Bias Risk:** Only 58.3% of selected firms responded, and just over 40% disclosed future capex plans. This introduces self-selection bias, as results reflect only those willing to share plans.

**2. Indicative, Not Absolute:** The statistics ministry called the findings “indicative.” They should be used to detect broad trends, not as definitive data.

### Implications for Policy and Growth

1. **Signals of Business Uncertainty:** The finance ministry's March bulletin warned that uncertainty may cause businesses to delay capital formation. The survey aligns with this view.
2. **Value in Early Trend Detection:** Despite limitations, the survey helps track sentiment and offers early signals for policymakers to address investment-related challenges.

**Question for practice:**

Examine the key trends and implications of the National Statistical Office's survey on private-sector capital expenditure in India for 2025–26.

**Private Member's Bills need urgent democratic revival**

**Source:** The post Private Member's Bills need urgent democratic revival has been created, based on the article "Reviving a far-sighted but forgotten Bill mechanism" published in "The Hindu" on 2nd May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-Parliament and State legislatures—structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these.

**Context:** Private Member's Bills (PMBs) enable non-Minister MPs to introduce legislation in Parliament. While they offer a platform for individual expression and public interest ideas, procedural neglect and executive dominance have reduced their relevance. This calls for urgent reform to preserve the democratic spirit of legislative participation.

For detailed information on Private Member's Bill [read this article here](#)

**Understanding the Role of PMBs**

1. **An Avenue for Independent Legislation:** PMBs are introduced by MPs who are not part of the government. Unlike official bills, they reflect personal convictions, constituency demands, or emerging social concerns. They provide space for independent thought beyond party lines.
2. **Designated Parliamentary Slot:** Fridays in both Houses are reserved for PMBs. However, this time is increasingly overridden by government business or lost to adjournments, undermining the purpose of this provision.
3. **Declining Legislative Outcomes:** Only 14 PMBs have become law since Independence, and none have passed both Houses since 1970, showing how little attention they now receive in legislative functioning.

**Trends and Performance in Recent Lok Sabhas**

1. **Data from the 17th Lok Sabha:** Between 2019–2024, 729 PMBs were introduced in the Lok Sabha and 705 in the Rajya Sabha. Of these, only 2 in the Lok Sabha and 14 in the Rajya Sabha were taken up for discussion.
2. **Disruption in the 18th Lok Sabha:** In 2024, 64 PMBs were introduced during the inaugural and Budget Sessions of the 18th Lok Sabha, but none were discussed. Fridays were diverted for other debates or lost to disruptions.
3. **Minimal PMB Activity:** In the Rajya Sabha, 49 out of 82 listed PMBs were introduced on a single Friday, but only one was discussed briefly before the House was adjourned.

**PMBs as Catalysts for Policy Discourse**

1. **Triggering National Debate:** Supriya Sule's 'Right to Disconnect' Bill (2019) sparked discussion on digital burnout and mental health. Though it did not advance, it highlighted important labour issues.
2. **Influencing Legislation:** Tiruchi Siva's 2014 Bill on transgender rights passed the Rajya Sabha and influenced the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, later passed by the government.
3. **Empowering Ruling Party MPs:** Even Treasury Bench MPs, like Gopal Chinayya Shetty of BJP, used PMBs to propose legislation for free healthcare for senior citizens, showing PMBs can reflect grassroots feedback.

## Reforms to Revive the PMB Mechanism

- 1. Impact of Anti-Defection Law:** The 52nd Amendment introduced the Tenth Schedule, enforcing party loyalty. This restricts MPs—especially from the ruling party—from expressing independent views or proposing alternative policy ideas.
- 2. Protecting PMB Time:** Fridays must be safeguarded through changes to parliamentary rules, allowing uninterrupted time for PMBs, except during national emergencies.
- 3. Screening and Prioritization:** A dedicated committee could review PMBs for quality and relevance, recommending priority Bills for discussion based on bipartisan or public importance.
- 4. Extended Working Hours:** Instead of sacrificing PMB time, Parliament could extend its working hours. A modest increase would allow core business to proceed without undermining PMB slots.
- 5. Adopting International Best Practices:** India could adapt the UK's Ten-Minute Rule, letting MPs briefly present PMBs. This would help more ideas reach the floor without needing lengthy debates.

## Reinforcing the Democratic Value of PMBs

- 1. Voter Expectations and Representation:** Though MPs contest under party symbols, voters also consider their personal merit. PMBs allow MPs to voice local concerns and fulfill constituency expectations.
- 2. Official Recognition:** Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar called PMBs “forward-looking” and a “gold mine,” affirming their potential to enrich India’s legislative landscape.
- 3. Need for Sincere Engagement:** Reviving PMBs requires political will and procedural reform. Their restoration is essential for deepening parliamentary democracy and fostering genuine representation.

### Question for practice:

Examine how Private Member’s Bills contribute to India’s parliamentary democracy and what reforms are needed to enhance their effectiveness.

## Natural hydrogen can transform India’s clean energy future

**Source:** The post Natural hydrogen can transform India’s clean energy future has been created, based on the article “Is natural hydrogen the fuel of the future?” and “Is natural hydrogen the fuel of the future?” published in “The Hindu” on 1st May and 2nd May 2025 respectively.

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3- Infrastructures- Energy

**Context:** Hydrogen is emerging as a clean energy source to combat global warming and decarbonise the global economy. While conventional and green hydrogen face cost and environmental limitations, **naturally occurring hydrogen** offers a promising alternative. With signs of **abundant reserves in India**, its potential could reshape the global and national energy landscape.

For detailed information on **Green Hydrogen Mission** [read this article here](#)

### Understanding Natural Hydrogen and Its Discovery

- 1. Conventional vs Natural Hydrogen:** Hydrogen is mainly produced from natural gas using **energy-intensive and polluting methods**. Green hydrogen, produced with renewable electricity, is cleaner but still **costly** and resource-heavy. Natural hydrogen, if sustainably harvested, may offer a **cleaner and cheaper** alternative.
- 2. Sources and Geological Origins:** Natural hydrogen is formed through **serpentinisation, radiolysis** of water by radioactive rocks, and from **organic matter at depth**. It exists in various geological settings, including **ultramafic rocks**, tectonic regions, and active hydrothermal zones.
- 3. Historical Breakthrough in Mali:** In 1987, a **hydrogen flame** erupted from a well in Mali during a failed water drilling attempt. In 2012, it was confirmed to be **98% pure hydrogen**. Earlier, natural hydrogen was considered a **geological rarity** due to its reactivity and small molecular size.

4. **Expanding Scientific Attention:** Now, scientists identify favourable zones for natural hydrogen worldwide, such as **the Pyrenees, Alps, and Himalayas**. The discovery of **helium with hydrogen** and **hydrogen in coal mines** suggests new geological insights and growing interest in its energy potential.

### Global and Indian Hydrogen Reserves

1. **Worldwide Exploration Trends:** Though **total global reserves remain uncertain**, ongoing research reveals significant promise. Natural hydrogen seeps have been identified in **Australia, the U.S., Spain, France, and others**. The **USGS model (2022)** estimates these reserves could meet global demand for thousands of years.

2. **Major Discoveries and Estimates:** In **France's Lorraine and Moselle regions**, 92 million tonnes of hydrogen were found in 2023–25. Valued at **\$92 billion**, this is **half the current global hydrogen output**. USGS estimates suggest **tens of trillions of tonnes** globally. Even if 2% is usable, it could meet global demand for **200 years**.

3. **India's Geological Advantage:** India holds **untapped natural hydrogen potential**, especially in areas with **ophiolite complexes, greenstone belts, cratonic basins, and hot springs**. A preliminary academic estimate suggests **3,475 million tonnes** may exist, potentially removing the need for manufactured hydrogen.

4. **Strategic Significance for India:** India's hydrogen demand is set to grow from **6 Mt/year in 2020 to over 50 Mt/year by 2070**. Natural hydrogen could support India's **net-zero goal by 2070** and improve **energy security** and **strategic autonomy**.

### Industrial Response and Market Dynamics

1. **Rapid Industry Growth:** The number of companies exploring natural hydrogen rose from **10 in 2020 to 40 in 2023**. They operate in **Australia, U.S., Europe, and Asia**, signaling global momentum.

2. **Low-Cost Advantage:** Producers estimate extraction costs at **\$1/kg or less**, cheaper than green hydrogen or fossil-fuel hydrogen. This cost advantage is a major driver of investor interest.

3. **Major Investments:** U.S. firm **Koloma** secured **\$245 million** in funding from **Amazon and Gates-backed ventures**. Other startups like **Mantle 8** and **Snowfox Discovery** are also attracting support. Even **BP and Rio Tinto** are investing in this space.

4. **Institutional Support:** The **American Association of Petroleum Geologists** formed a dedicated committee. **USGS** has launched its first initiative to identify key hydrogen zones in the U.S.

### Barriers and Technical Challenges

1. **Exploration Complexity:** Unlike oil and gas, **standard techniques** for detecting natural hydrogen are lacking. Accurate **quantification and location** of underground reserves is a key obstacle.

2. **Technical Constraints:** Hydrogen's **small molecular size** and **high diffusivity** make extraction and containment difficult. Efficient drilling and production systems are still being developed.

3. **Material and Safety Risks:** Hydrogen can degrade materials. Solutions include **metal coatings, cement additives, and rubber fillers** that resist hydrogen damage. Safety protocols are critical due to hydrogen's reactivity.

### India's Roadmap for Natural Hydrogen

1. **Need for Strategic Surveys:** India can replicate its **SRRA solar model** through a **public-private partnership** for mapping hydrogen zones. This will help policymakers and investors act quickly.

2. **New Techniques and Use of Existing Infrastructure:** Inspired by U.S. ARPA-E projects, India can test methods like **drilling water into rocks** or **injecting CO<sub>2</sub> into iron-rich rocks** to extract hydrogen while sequestering carbon. The **Oil and Gas industry**, with the **Directorate General of Hydrocarbons**, can analyze existing **rock samples and wells**. Modified **natural gas pipelines** could also transport hydrogen.

3. **Ensuring Commercial Viability:** Though cheaper to extract, actual viability depends on **accessible, concentrated reserves** and **cost-efficient infrastructure**. Exploration grants, extraction R&D, and **regulatory clarity** are vital to attract investment.

#### Question for practice:

Examine the potential of natural hydrogen in addressing India's future energy needs and its role in achieving the country's net-zero targets.

### Trump's Return Threatens US Dollar Global Dominance

**Source:** The post Trump's Return Threatens US Dollar Global Dominance has been created, based on the article "**King Dollar's shaky crown**" published in "**Businessline**" on 1st May and 2nd May 2025 respectively.

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2- International Relations

**Context:** Donald Trump's return to power in **January 2025** has disrupted global financial stability and raised doubts about the **future of the US dollar**. Two recent books — *King Dollar* by Paul Blustein and *Our Dollar, Your Problem* by Kenneth Rogoff — provide important insights into the dollar's role and its emerging challenges.

#### The Dollar's Global Primacy

1. **Key Global Currency Functions:** The **US dollar** remains the top **reserve currency**, **investment vehicle**, and **trade invoicing medium**. It supports global trade due to its **liquidity and reliability**.

2. **Market Presence and Network Effects:** According to the **Bank for International Settlements (BIS)**, daily **foreign exchange turnover** reached **\$7.5 trillion** in **April 2022**, with the **dollar involved in 88%** of trades. In **1989**, the figure was just **\$500 billion**. This vast usage reinforces the dollar's dominance through **powerful network effects**.

3. **Limited Global Competition:** Despite efforts like China's **e-CNY**, the **renminbi** lacks the **exchange-rate flexibility** and **financial reforms** needed to challenge the dollar. **Rogoff** stresses that without these changes, the renminbi will not become a viable alternative.

#### Trump's Disruptive Economic Approach

1. **Departure from Postwar Strategy:** Unlike past US leaders who used **multilateralism** to maintain order, **Trump's grievance-led unilateralism** represents a major shift. His policies go beyond what even **Blustein and Rogoff** had anticipated in **December 2024**.

2. **Erosion of Domestic and Global Trust:** Trump has **withdrawn from international agreements**, **cut foreign aid**, and followed a **transactional foreign policy**. Domestically, he has **pressured the Fed**, **weakened the federal workforce**, and **attacked legal and academic institutions**.

3. **Escalating Trade Conflicts:** Trump's "**Liberation Day**" tariffs caused a **drop in the dollar** and a **spike in Treasury yields**, indicating **investor flight from US bonds**. A brief **tariff delay** calmed markets, but further **attacks on Fed Chair Powell** triggered renewed declines.

#### A Shifting Global Financial Order

1. **Capital Market Fragmentation:** **Falling global trust** in US leadership could lead to **currency fragmentation**. Economic models suggest that **multiple currencies** could share global dominance.

2. **Strategic Misjudgment of Dollar's Role:** Trump's adviser **Stephen Miran** claims the dollar has harmed **US manufacturing** and **worker competitiveness**. However, **Blustein** counters that the "**exorbitant cost**" argument ignores the **dollar's geopolitical benefits**.

3. **Possible Turning Point:** April's events may signal the **start of dollar decline**. While no clear successor exists, continued instability may weaken the **global trade and financial order**.

### Risks to Dollar Dominance

1. **Institutional and Fiscal Instability:** Congressional Republicans, supported by Trump, are expanding deficits by **bypassing reconciliation** and depending on **volatile tariff revenues**. This signals **deepening institutional decay**.

2. **Breakdown of Regulatory Cooperation:** US reluctance to cooperate with the **Basel Committee** and **Financial Stability Board** risks undermining cross-border regulatory coordination and critical tools like **dollar swap lines**.

3. **Technology and Currency Innovation Gaps:** Trump's **CBDC ban** and **crypto deregulation stance** isolate the US from **global payment innovation**, threatening future **efficiency and interoperability**.

### Question for practice:

Evaluate how Donald Trump's return to power in 2025 has affected the global dominance of the US dollar.

### India must reshape strategy in changing world

**Source:** The post India must reshape strategy in changing world has been created, based on the article “A profound shift in the global order” published in “The Hindu” on 3rd May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-International Relations

**Context:** Global power structures are undergoing a major shift, similar to historic turning points like Vasco da Gama's arrival in India. Multilateral institutions are weakening, and Asia is regaining its influence. The article explores how India must respond strategically to shape its global role in this evolving order.

For detailed information on **India could help shape a whole new global consensus** [read this article here](#)

### Collapse of the Post-Colonial Global Order

1. **End of Multilateral Institutions:** The 75-year-old system of multilateralism—built on rule-based globalisation—is eroding. Institutions like the WTO and UN are now seen as irrelevant by those who once backed them. The **U.S. has exited key agreements**, signalling loss of confidence in global norms.

2. **Shifting Donor-Recipient Dynamics:** The old world divided between “donors” and “recipients” has become outdated. **China has overtaken the U.S. in aid, trade, and manufacturing**, disrupting the earlier balance of power. BRICS is gaining momentum, with more countries seeking entry.

3. **Bilateralism Replacing Multilateralism:** U.S.-led bilateral deals now **override national interests**, using tariffs and trade imbalances to reshape domestic laws. **Least Developed Countries have lost trade privileges**, weakening the fairness of the system.

### Rise of an Asian-Centric World

1. **Asia's Reclaimed Dominance:** Asia is set to reclaim **two-thirds of global wealth and power**, its historical norm before colonialism. Since 2020, **India, China, the EU, and the U.S. have driven 75% of global growth**, with the U.S. and China nearly equal in trade, tech, and military reach.

2. **India's Diplomatic Responsibility:** India must now manage ties with both powers. It must **counter U.S. trade pressure**, especially on agriculture and energy, and **expand rapprochement with China**. Diplomats should frame **new principles for global governance** in an equal world.

3. **Asian Market Opportunity:** ASEAN's turmoil offers a chance to form an Asian common market through bilateral ties. India should promote a new trade architecture involving ASEAN and the African Union, whose consumer potential is growing faster than the West's.

### Innovation and Trade: The Missed Link

1. **Tactical, Not Strategic Foreign Policy:** India historically focused on global peace and balancing great powers rather than pursuing economic innovation. Its best diplomats were sent to the United Nations to negotiate resolutions, while trade and technology diplomacy were largely ignored. The Non-Aligned Movement gained international goodwill but contributed little to national wealth creation

2. **Neglect of Technology Partnerships:** India ignored how other powers fostered **tech through academia-industry linkages**. Trade and innovation were seen as separate, unlike in the West and China.

3. **Need for Political Consensus on Technology:** India must form a **national consensus on skill-building and employment**, with collaboration across political lines. This will help rebuild its technological base and strengthen value-chain integration with Asia and Africa.

### Seizing the Technological Frontier

1. **India's Digital Strengths:** India has the potential to lead in **open-source software** and **digital cooperation**. Despite past setbacks, its **digital stack and data strengths** can help regain tech leadership.

2. **Technology Race with China:** While **Huawei now makes 7nm chips**, India lags. China has closed its hardware gap. India, once ahead in software, **must catch up**.

3. **AI as the New Wealth Driver:** **AI is now the foundation of influence and prosperity**. India must set **grand technological missions**, leveraging its talent and digital platforms to build world-class language models.

### Learning from China's Model

1. **Consensus Over Imported Models:** China's rise is rooted in **indigenous consensus**, not Western frameworks. India must **build its own path**, not copy others.

2. **Affordable Energy as Economic Driver:** Lowering the **price of electricity** is a strong incentive for restructuring. **Patents, not just GDP**, should measure progress. Prosperity also helps mitigate climate change.

Question for practice:

**Examine** how India can strategically respond to the collapse of multilateral institutions and the rise of an Asian-centric global order.

### India must strengthen parliamentary oversight for accountable governance

**Source:** The post India must strengthen parliamentary oversight for accountable governance has been created, based on the article "**Strengthening parliamentary oversight in India**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 3rd May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-Polity- Parliament and State Legislatures – structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these.

**Context:** India has a long tradition of parliamentary democracy, but concerns are rising over the weakening of legislative oversight. Frequent disruptions, limited committee influence, and absence of post-legislative review have triggered renewed debate. The article calls for strengthening Parliament's role in ensuring accountability, transparency, and effective governance as envisioned by the Constitution.

For detailed information on **Decline of Indian Parliament** [read this article here](#)

### Foundational Vision for Parliamentary Accountability

1. **Ambedkar's Defence of the Parliamentary System:** Dr. B.R. Ambedkar advocated for parliamentary democracy, stressing that it enables daily accountability through debates and questions, and periodic accountability via elections. He believed this system offered more responsibility even if less stability.

2. **Efficiency Must Not Undermine Accountability:** Governance must be efficient but also transparent. A strong Parliament is essential not just for making laws but for overseeing their implementation and holding the executive accountable.

## Oversight Mechanisms: Potential and Pitfalls

- 1. Formal and Conventional Tools of Scrutiny:** Parliament uses Question Hour, Zero Hour, and Standing Committees to scrutinise the executive. These tools empower MPs to raise questions, seek data, and move motions like no-confidence if necessary.
- 2. Frequent Disruptions Weaken Effectiveness:** Question Hour is often disrupted by protests. In the 17th Lok Sabha, it functioned for only 60% of its scheduled time; in Rajya Sabha, just 52%. Even when it runs, MPs rarely coordinate questions for deeper scrutiny.
- 3. Committees Lack Influence and Continuity:** Standing Committees prepare detailed reports, but their findings are rarely discussed in Parliament. Consultations are limited in scope, and rotating membership hinders the development of expertise and institutional memory.

## Demonstrated Impact of Parliamentary Committees

- 1. Policy Reforms Based on Committee Inputs:** The Railways Committee recommended waiving dividend payments, which was implemented in 2016. The Transport Committee influenced key amendments to the Motor Vehicles Bill in 2017.
- 2. Improved Project Management and Energy Planning:** The Committee on Public Undertakings advised starting highway projects only after 80% land and clearances were secured. The Estimates Committee suggested boosting uranium mining to reduce imports.
- 3. PAC's Role in Exposing Irregularities:** The PAC flagged major issues in the 2010 Commonwealth Games, including delays and corruption. Over eight years, it made 180 annual recommendations, with 80% accepted by the government.

## Leveraging Technology for Stronger Scrutiny

- 1. Use of AI and Data Analytics:** MPs lack support staff to process complex data. Tools like Artificial Intelligence and analytics can help identify trends, spot anomalies, and frame better questions.
- 2. Modernising Parliamentary Capacity:** Technology can reduce dependence on manual document analysis, enhancing the quality of questions and debates.

## Reforms to Strengthen Legislative Oversight

- 1. Institutionalise Post-Legislative Scrutiny:** India lacks a system to assess law implementation. Subcommittees under Standing Committees or a dedicated body can be created. The UK requires department reviews 3–5 years post-enactment, which are reviewed by Parliament.
- 2. Enhance Committee Visibility and Response:** Key reports should be translated, visually explained, and debated in Parliament with mandatory ministerial replies. This will strengthen accountability and public engagement.
- 3. Oversight as Democratic Fulfilment:** As K.R. Narayanan noted in 1993, committees are meant to support, not weaken, the executive. Strengthening oversight honours the public trust and upholds democratic governance.

## Question for practice:

Evaluate the effectiveness of India's parliamentary oversight mechanisms and suggest how they can be strengthened to ensure greater executive accountability

## Saudi Arabia uses oil policy for diplomacy

**Source:** The post Saudi Arabia uses oil policy for diplomacy has been created, based on the article “Understanding the unlikely Saudi push for lower oil prices” published in “Business Standard” on 3rd May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2- International Relations

**Context:** Saudi Arabia, the leader of Opec, is now pushing oil prices down, despite cartels usually seeking higher prices. This move appears aimed at disciplining Opec+ members violating output targets. But broader strategic objectives may explain Riyadh's shift ahead of the May 5 Opec+ meeting.

### **Unruly Producers and the Need for Discipline**

1. **Cheating by Member States:** Kazakhstan, Iraq, and the UAE are breaching their production quotas. *Riyadh hopes that falling prices will pressure them into compliance.*
2. **Historical Pattern of Enforcement:** Saudi Arabia used this tactic before — *in 1985–86, 1998, and 2020* — to punish Opec rule-breakers. This strategy is not new.

### **A Clear Shift from Saudi First Policy**

1. **Low Prices as a Strategic Signal:** Riyadh has made no effort to raise prices verbally or otherwise. *It appears comfortable with Brent crude staying below \$70*, a shift from its earlier \$100-per-barrel target.
2. **Production Flexibility Over High Prices:** To sustain high prices in 2023, *Saudi output fell to its lowest since 2011*. Continuing that policy would restrict production increases in 2025 and 2026.

### **US Relations and Oil Diplomacy**

1. **Complex Dynamic with US Shale:** Riyadh previously waged a price war against US shale producers in 2014–16. *But renewed action would face domestic political resistance in the US.*
2. **Wider Diplomatic Calculations:** Saudi–US talks cover defence, arms, Iran, and nuclear energy. *Oil policy likely factors into these discussions*, especially with Trump visiting Riyadh in May.

### **Geopolitical Factors Beyond the US**

1. **Anticipating End of Sanctions:** Saudi Arabia benefited from US sanctions on Iran and Venezuela. *If sanctions ease, Riyadh wants higher output beforehand* to influence future Opec+ negotiations.
2. **Strained Ties with Russia:** The long Saudi–Russia oil partnership now seems transactional. *With Putin courting Trump, Riyadh may be hedging against a future split.*

### **Conclusion:**

Though punishing cheaters is a reason, *Saudi Arabia's policy reflects deeper aims*—market flexibility, geopolitical positioning, and diplomatic leverage. Kazakhstan is likely a side effect, not the core target.

### **Question for practice:**

Discuss how Saudi Arabia's current oil pricing strategy reflects broader geopolitical and diplomatic objectives beyond disciplining Opec+ members.

### **India needs a stronger strategy for Arctic**

**Source:** The post India needs a stronger strategy for Arctic has been created, based on the article “**India must rethink its Arctic outlook**” published in “**The Hindu**” on 5th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-International Relations — Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.

**Context:** The Arctic, long viewed as a peaceful zone for science and conservation, is now turning into a stage for military and geopolitical rivalry. Climate change and strategic ambitions of major powers have accelerated this shift. Non-Arctic countries like India must now adapt to these evolving dynamics.

For detailed information on **India's potential in Arctic region** [read this article here](#)

### **Geopolitics Redraw the Arctic Map**

1. **From Margins to the Main Stage:** The Arctic is no longer marginal to global politics. Climate change has unlocked maritime routes and resource access. The Northern Sea Route (NSR), once seasonally open, is now a viable shipping lane with rising traffic that may alter global trade patterns.
2. **Competing Ambitions of Great Powers:** Russia is growing more assertive, China is expanding its Arctic footprint, and the U.S. is renewing interest in Greenland. These moves signal the Arctic's entry into great power rivalry.
3. **The Strategic Value of Greenland:** Donald Trump's 2019 proposal to buy Greenland reflected the Arctic's growing strategic value. It indicated a recognition that the region is now central to global power dynamics.

### Militarisation of the High North

1. **Rising Military Presence:** Arctic states are reviving military bases, deploying submarines, and making visible shows of force. Control over the region is now a high-stakes issue.
2. **Old Patterns, New Intensity:** Militarisation isn't new, but it's now more aggressive and visible. Strategic positioning is becoming more frequent and deliberate.
3. **Strategic Implications for Non-Arctic States:** The militarisation also affects countries like India. Despite being impacted, India remains mostly disengaged from these unfolding strategic changes.

### Strategic Stakes for India

1. **Impact on Maritime Trade Routes:** As the NSR becomes viable, trade may shift northward, affecting India's Indian Ocean sea-lane relevance and its SAGAR and IPOI visions.
2. **Arctic-Indo-Pacific Linkages:** China's Arctic and Indian Ocean presence and its coordination with Russia blur boundaries between the regions, challenging India's maritime focus.
3. **Perception Challenges in the Arctic:** Nordic unease over India's Russia ties adds pressure. India must demonstrate that strategic autonomy can still foster cooperative outcomes.

### India's Arctic Engagement: Present and Gaps

1. **A Climate-Driven Arctic Policy:** India's 2022 Arctic Policy focuses on science, sustainability, and climate parallels with the Himalayan "Third Pole." It links Arctic changes to South Asia's water and weather systems.
2. **Ignoring Strategic Realities:** However, the policy underestimates the Arctic's strategic transformation. India's non-political approach now appears outdated.
3. **Inadequate Strategic Presence:** India maintains a research station in Svalbard and holds observer status in the Arctic Council. These roles were created for a more cooperative era, which is now breaking down.

### Towards a More Purposeful Arctic Strategy

1. **Institutional Strengthening:** India should establish dedicated Arctic units in its ministries, hold regular inter-agency discussions, and involve think tanks.
2. **Partnerships with Like-Minded States:** India can collaborate on dual-use areas like polar logistics, maritime monitoring, and satellite data to build credibility.
3. **Claiming a Governance Role:** India must engage emerging Arctic forums on infrastructure, shipping, and digital standards, while respecting local communities and avoiding extractive approaches.

## Conclusion

India's climate-led Arctic stance has value, but it no longer meets current strategic demands. A passive posture risks exclusion from a new Arctic order defined by power.

## Question for practice:

**Evaluate** how India's current Arctic policy falls short in addressing the region's emerging strategic and geopolitical challenges.

### China's rare earth dominance threatens US security

**Source:** The post China's rare earth dominance threatens US security has been created, based on the article "Rare earth minerals as China's 'trump 'card'" published in "The Hindu" on 5th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-International Relations-Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests.

**Context:** The US-China tariff war may favour China due to its dominance over rare earth minerals. While the US imposed tariffs to pressure China, the real vulnerability lies in China's potential to restrict rare earth exports, which are critical for US defense and technology industries.

For details information on **RARE EARTH MINERALS** [read this article here](#)

#### China's Dominance in Rare Earths

- 1. Near Monopoly Over Processing:** China produces 61% of the world's rare earths but processes over 92% due to its low-cost advantage and large-scale operations. Processing is energy-intensive and expensive, and the US lacks significant domestic refining capabilities.
- 2. Heavy Dependence of the US:** Between 2020 and 2023, 70% of US rare earth imports came from China. Even though the US mines rare earths (e.g., Mountain Pass, California), it relies on China for processing.
- 3. Strategic Use of Export Controls:** In 2023, China restricted exports of seven heavy rare earth elements including samarium, gadolinium, terbium, dysprosium, lutetium, scandium, and yttrium. These materials are vital for electronics, defense, and clean energy technologies.

#### Potential Fallout for the US

- 1. Impact on Critical Sectors:** Rare earths are essential for permanent magnets used in electric vehicles, wind turbines, LED lights, semiconductors, and military equipment like fighter jets and missiles. A Chinese export ban would severely disrupt US production and supply chains.
- 2. Lack of Alternatives:** The US has limited options to shift its sourcing in the short term, making it highly vulnerable to disruptions in rare earth supply.
- 3. Limited WTO Recourse:** Though WTO rules generally discourage export restrictions, China's move may violate these norms. However, the US is also violating WTO's Most Favoured Nation (MFN) principle via reciprocal tariffs, weakening its ability to challenge China legally.

#### Historical Precedents of Export Restrictions

- 1. China-Japan Dispute (2010):** China halted rare earth exports to Japan after a maritime dispute, affecting Japan's auto industry. Japan released the detained Chinese captain under pressure.
- 2. Indonesia's Nickel Ban (2020):** Indonesia banned nickel ore exports to attract investments in domestic processing, successfully enhancing its role in the EV supply chain despite EU complaints.
- 3. Other Examples (2022):** Russia restricted wheat and fertilizer exports to counter Western sanctions. The US imposed semiconductor export controls to slow China's tech growth.

#### Strategic and Economic Impact on China

1. **Minimal Domestic Disruption:** Rare earth exports to the US form a small part of China's trade portfolio. Thus, banning them won't create major surpluses or hurt domestic industries.
2. **Redirection to Other Markets:** China can redirect exports to other countries to offset US losses, further neutralizing the impact of US-imposed tariffs.

### Conclusion

If the trade war continues, **US tech and defense sectors will suffer more** from rare earth shortages than from tariffs. China's control over processing and its strategic use of export bans give it a strong advantage. The US faces a critical vulnerability with few short-term remedies.

### Question for practice:

Examine how China's dominance in rare earth processing creates a strategic advantage in the US-China tariff war.

### Declining foreign aid threatens India's NGOs and democratic health

**Source:** The post Declining foreign aid threatens India's NGOs and democratic health has been created, based on the article "**Demise of foreign aid in India**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 5th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-Governance- the role of NGOs, SHGs, various groups and associations, donors, charities, institutional and other stakeholders.

**Context:** India's relationship with foreign aid has long been inconsistent—sometimes welcoming, at other times cautious. With **official aid declining globally**—especially after **U.S. cuts under Donald Trump**—India faces a new challenge. The impact is sharpest on **NGOs**, threatening development work and civil society's role.

#### From Aid Recipient to Global Aspirant

1. **Early Dependence on International Aid:** After Independence, India actively sought foreign aid. Between **1955 and 1965**, most support came from **Western countries** and went to the **government**, seen as the key driver of change.
2. **Declining Relevance of Official Aid:** From the **1970s**, aid declined steadily. By the **1990s**, it had become **insignificant** due to **India's rapid economic growth** and **rising global standing**.
3. **Shift in Focus to Investment and Cooperation:** India now seeks **FDI** and global partnerships in **trade, technology, and climate action**. The fall in **official aid** is less worrying than the **decline in private foreign aid** to NGOs.

#### Mounting Pressures on the NGO Sector

1. **Critical Role of NGOs:** NGOs **fill governance gaps** and **hold authorities accountable**. They are more exposed to shrinking aid than government agencies.
2. **Changing Funding Landscape:** NGOs initially relied on **public donations**, but from the **1960s**, they became dependent on **government grants and foreign aid**. **CSR funds** only became notable after **2013**.
3. **Significant Decline in Aid:** From **2017-18 to 2021-22**, NGOs received **₹88,882 million**. But **accurate FCRA figures are unavailable**, and **estimates show a steep decline**.

#### Government Control and Regulation of Aid

1. **Tightening of FCRA Rules:** The **FCRA (1976)** set tough terms for receiving foreign funds. Amendments in **2010, 2011, 2020, 2023, and 2024** made rules **increasingly stringent**, causing many NGOs to **lose registrations**.
2. **Growing Official Distrust:** Even before the **1975 Emergency**, the phrase "**foreign hand**" was used to discredit dissent. Allegations included **religious conversions** and **anti-government protests**. Major donors like the **Soros Foundation** were discouraged.

3. **Restrictive but Permissive Stance:** While NGOs are technically allowed to accept aid, **stringent conditions and mistrust** have made the space increasingly restrictive.

### Consequences of Aid Withdrawal

1. **Erosion of Innovation and Oversight:** Foreign aid provided **flexibility**, encouraged **experimentation**, and opened doors to **global ideas**. It allowed NGOs to act as **watchdogs** against excesses of state and market.

2. **Risks to Development and Governance:** Cuts in aid may cause **job losses**, **halted projects**, and **slower social progress**. More importantly, it reduces **independent scrutiny** of public policy.

3. **A Strategic Miscalculation:** While **self-reliance** is admirable, undermining foreign-funded NGOs may **hurt India's long-term development and democratic health**.

### Question for practice:

**Discuss** how the decline in foreign aid, especially to NGOs, affects India's development and democratic governance.

### How Small Modular Reactors Reduce Environmental Cost of AI

**Source:** The post How Small Modular Reactors Reduce Environmental Cost of AI has been created, based on the article "**Redrawing the not-so-pretty energy footprint of AI**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 6th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

**Context:** Generative AI tools like ChatGPT provide rapid access to creative content. However, they consume vast energy from data centres powered mostly by fossil fuels. Their increasing use strains global power supplies. This article examines the environmental cost of AI and investigates whether Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) can offer a sustainable energy alternative.

For detailed information on **Small Modular Reactors (SMRs): Potential and Challenges** [read this article here](#)  
**The Energy Footprint of AI**

1. **Rising Electricity Consumption:** Every AI use requires energy from data centres. Most are powered by fossil fuels. **By 2030, data centres may consume 10% of global electricity**. While India currently meets AI energy needs, growing demand calls for future planning.

2. **High Carbon Emissions from Training:** Training AI models like ChatGPT or Midjourney produces **CO<sub>2</sub> emissions equal to five cars running over their lifetimes**. Even after deployment, these tools need continuous power, worsening the environmental impact.

3. **Need for Transparency:** AI companies must **disclose energy usage, sources, and reduction measures**. Like data privacy rules, such transparency can identify major consumption points and guide efforts to build sustainable AI infrastructure.

### Small Modular Reactors as an Energy Solution

1. **Stable, Zero-Carbon Power Supply:** SMRs offer **24×7 zero-carbon electricity**. Unlike large nuclear plants, they are compact and scalable. Unlike solar or wind, they can function regardless of weather and be located near data centres.

2. **Faster and Safer Deployment:** SMRs are **quicker and cheaper to construct** due to their modular design. They feature **passive safety systems** that cool the core naturally and reduce accident risks. This improves public acceptance.

3. **Decentralised and Reliable Energy:** SMRs can be placed **close to high-demand areas**, reducing transmission losses. Their flexibility suits both urban and remote locations, **supporting grid resilience** and decentralised energy production.

### Challenges to SMR Adoption

1. **Policy and Public Perception:** Governments must develop **regulations for safety, waste management, and public trust**. Without a strong framework, scaling SMRs will remain difficult.
2. **High Initial Costs:** SMRs require large upfront investments. However, in India, **costs could fall from ₹10.3 to ₹5 per kWh**, lower than the average cost, once functional.
3. **Integration with Renewables:** SMRs must align with **existing solar and wind strategies**. Careful planning is needed to avoid duplication and optimise resources.

#### Way forward

1. **Collaborative Support for Innovation:** A public-private partnership model can combine government oversight with private innovation. This joint effort can accelerate the deployment of SMRs and other renewable energy sources to meet AI's rising power demands.
2. **Aligning Energy Goals with AI Needs:** Through collaboration, both sectors can align sustainable energy practices with the rapid growth of AI. This synergy ensures that energy supplies keep pace with technological advances.
3. **Ensuring Long-Term Sustainability:** Public-private models offer a realistic path for long-term, sustainable AI development. They can drive efficient research and development, making sustainable energy for AI a future-ready solution.

#### Question for practice:

What are the potential benefits and challenges of using Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) to power AI data centres?

### India needs monetary easing to sustain cyclical growth recovery

**Source:** The post India needs monetary easing to sustain cyclical growth recovery has been created, based on the article "**Reaching real equilibrium policy rates**" published in "**Businessline**" on 6th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3-Economy- growth and development

**Context:** India's growth slowdown was cyclical, not structural. Growth is reviving due to higher government spending and changing global conditions. This article urges sharper monetary easing, effective liquidity management, and stable exchange rate policy to support growth and manage global spillovers.

For detailed information on **India's Economic Challenges and Policy Adjustments** [read this article here](#)

#### Growth Recovery and Monetary Policy Response

1. **Signs of a Cyclical Recovery:** Growth improved from 5.6% in Q2 FY25 to 6.2% in Q3, supported by public expenditure. This, along with the reversal of the Trump trade, helped strengthen the rupee and equity markets.
2. **MPC's Delayed Action:** The MPC failed to cut rates earlier, contributing to the slowdown. Since policy acts with lags, it must anticipate inflation. Inflation fell below target in February, and FY26 projections are at the 4% target.
3. **Need for Sharper Rate Cuts:** The February cut was timely but too small. A 50bps cut in April was needed to bring real repo rates closer to equilibrium. Market rates have started adjusting, but a bigger cut would improve the pace.

#### Arguments Against Aggressive Rate Cuts

1. **Gradualism in Uncertainty:** Some resist sharp cuts, fearing global shocks. But India must recognise its capacity to absorb shocks and respond decisively.
2. **Food Inflation and Climate Worries:** Fears of heatwaves and food shocks often delay action. However, many States have liberalised agricultural markets, and startups are improving supply chains. Food is also a smaller part of the consumption basket now.

**3. Bank Concerns Over Margins:** Banks are cautious due to slow deposit growth. They prefer surplus liquidity before cutting lending rates. Yet their profits remain strong as borrowing costs fall and treasury gains rise.

**4. Market Focus vs Real Sector Needs:** Markets obsess over nominal rates, but the MPC must prioritise real rates that drive consumption and investment. Banks ultimately benefit as the economy grows, regardless of rate direction.

### Liquidity Management and Banking Reforms

**1. New Liquidity Perspective:** The RBI has injected significant liquidity recently. The approach is shifting from 'liquidity first' to 'liquidity fast,' showing readiness to respond to shocks.

**2. Maintaining Surplus Liquidity:** Durable surplus liquidity suits India's conditions of external shocks and weak inter-bank lending. The RBI's accommodative stance restricts it to pausing or cutting rates.

**3. Avoiding Overreaction:** Rate cuts and liquidity injections must be measured. Over-stimulation leads to future tightening and volatility. A low, positive real repo rate supports demand while balancing saver and investor interests.

### Exchange Rate Trends and Policy Response

**1. Reversal of Rupee Outflows:** After initial FPI outflows in Jan–Feb 2025, inflows resumed in March. Debt inflows also returned, despite narrowing US-India rate gaps. The rupee appreciated above 85 as reserves were rebuilt.

**2. Strategic RBI Intervention:** The RBI intervened only to prevent excess volatility, using reserve buffers strategically. This policy restored rupee stability.

**3. Balancing Volatility and Stability:** Some volatility helps markets and hedging, but excess volatility hurts exporters and widens rate spreads. The RBI must ensure real alignment, not cater to market demands for volatility.

### Exchange Rate Management and Structural Factors

**1. Real Exchange Rate Alignment:** A real effective exchange rate near 100 supports trade. Sustained misalignment must be avoided. Adjustments also reflect Renminbi's weight in trade indices.

**2. Limits of Global Models:** Standard theories often misjudge India's structure. For instance, interest rate links with the US hold only in economies with open capital accounts.

**3. Policy Coordination Over Conflict:** A central bank–government conflict arises only if fiscal deficits fuel inflation. India is cutting deficits and spending wisely. Hence, monetary policy must quickly use available space to reduce growth volatility.

### Question for practice:

Evaluate how India's monetary and exchange rate policies are being adjusted to support its cyclical growth recovery amid global and domestic challenges.

### Caste census will reshape India's social justice

**Source:** The post Caste census will reshape India's social justice has been created, based on the article "Caste census announcement is an opportunity to fine-tune reservation policy" published in "Indian Express" on 6th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper1- Society- Social justice

**Context:** The caste census announcement marks a turning point in India's social justice policy. It ends the long neglect of counting OBCs officially. With a shift in the government's stance, the focus now moves to how it will be conducted and what changes it may trigger in affirmative action.

For detailed information on **Caste Census – Significance and Challenges** [read this article here](#)  
**Political Shift and Historical Oversight**

1. **Motivation Behind the Move:** This is a political decision. It aims to counter Rahul Gandhi's push for caste enumeration, which challenges the BJP's non-savarna voter base.
2. **Shared Responsibility for Delay:** Delays are due to both major parties. The Vajpayee government dropped the caste census in 2000. Congress separated caste from the 2011 Census. The BJP government later withheld SECC data.
3. **Who Deserves Credit:** Historically, credit goes to leaders like **Lohia, Karpoori Thakur, Madhu Limaye, and Sharad Yadav**. Politically, **Rahul Gandhi's insistence** made caste census a national issue and led to this policy shift. This is his first major success as Leader of the Opposition.

### Ensuring Timely and Transparent Implementation

1. **Integrating with the Main Census:** The caste enumeration must be conducted as part of the regular **decennial Census**, not as a parallel or isolated survey. This prevents bureaucratic delays and ensures legitimacy.
2. **Counting All Castes Without Exception:** The exercise should include **every caste**, not just SCs, STs, and OBCs. Enumerating castes from the so-called "general" category is essential to understand the **full landscape of caste-based privileges**.
3. **Keeping It Free from Political Interference:** There should be no link between caste enumeration and the **National Population Register (NPR)**. Tying the two together may derail the process through controversy or public resistance.

### Expanding the Scope of Data Collection

1. **Capturing Detailed Caste Identity:** The new Census must record the **exact jati** of every person, not just their broad category (SC, ST, OBC, General). This is essential to uncover internal disparities within each category.
2. **Including Socio-Economic Indicators:** Key data points from the 2011 **Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC)**—such as land ownership, enterprise, government job, and occupation—should be included in the upcoming Census. These variables provide a more accurate socio-economic profile of each caste.
3. **Filling the Data Gaps Through Other Surveys:** Some high-value data cannot be captured in the Census alone. This includes caste-wise details of **ownership of top businesses, senior government positions, private sector leadership, elite educational access, and political roles**. These gaps must be addressed through existing national surveys like the **Economic Census, Agricultural Census, Labour Force Survey, and educational and company data**.

### Pushing Boundaries of Social Justice

1. **Raising the Quota Limit:** If OBCs are over 45% of the population, this may justify increasing the 27% quota. It would challenge the **50% ceiling**, which was overlooked for EWS.
2. **Including the Private Sector:** If disparities are seen in private jobs and education, **affirmative action must extend to the private sector and private institutions**.

### Using Data to Reform Affirmative Action

1. **Refining OBC List and Quotas:** Census data should help **revise the OBC list**, removing or adding jatis as required.
2. **Sub-Quotas Within Categories:** It will allow for **sub-quotas within SC, ST, and OBC** categories. Courts demand such evidence-based reform.

3. **Revisiting EWS Quota:** Data may question the **basis for the 10% EWS quota**, based on actual deprivation levels.

**Question for practice:**

**Examine** how the proposed caste census marks a shift in India's social justice approach and its potential impact on affirmative action policies.

### **Global unity against terrorism is falling apart**

**Source:** The post Global unity against terrorism is falling apart has been created, based on the article "**The fragmentation in the global fight against terror**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 7th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3- Security-Security challenges and their management in border areas – linkages of organized crime with terrorism.

**Context:** The April 22 Pahalgam terror attack exposed the weakening of global unity against terrorism. While many countries condemned the attack, most urged restraint from both India and Pakistan, showing a lack of resolve to confront the real perpetrators.

### **Global Response Highlights Divisions**

1. **Calls for Restraint, Not Action:** Nations like the **U.S., Russia, and the EU avoided directly holding Pakistan accountable**. They focused on urging both India and Pakistan to maintain peace and solve disputes politically.
2. **Evasion of Terror Label:** Many leaders avoided using the term "**terror attack**" for the **Pahalgam incident**. The EU did not even label it as such, showing a clear shift from earlier "zero tolerance" postures.
3. **Shielding the Perpetrator:** Despite clear patterns from past incidents like Pulwama and 26/11, global players still **demand "proof" from India**, asking the victim to show restraint while ignoring the aggressor.

### **India Faces a Unique Bias**

1. **Stability Over Justice:** India is advised to avoid escalation, as Pakistan promotes the "nuclear threat" narrative. The West, though bold with Russia, hesitates with Pakistan.
2. **Religious Targeting Overlooked:** The Pahalgam attackers identified and shot tourists based on religion. A Muslim pony operator was shot trying to save them. Yet the global response avoided **acknowledging Hinduphobia**.
3. **Silence on Anti-Hindu Hate:** The world reacts strongly to Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. But it remains silent on anti-Hindu attacks. Even U.S. candidate Vivek Ramaswamy faced religious slurs, with little concern shown.
4. **Rare Acknowledgement:** **Tulsi Gabbard, U.S. Director of National Intelligence**, was among the few who called it a "**horrific Islamist terrorist attack**" and recognised the religious motive. This was a rare moment of honesty.

### **Collapse of a Collective Global Fight**

1. **End of Post-9/11 Consensus:** The unified global response post-9/11 is now gone. Countries are handling terrorism selectively, prioritizing threats based on internal interests.
2. **Region-Specific Priorities:** The U.S. under Biden focused on racially motivated extremism. Europe is concerned with right-wing threats. These shifts ignore cross-border terrorism in Asia.
3. **Global Inconsistencies:** The OIC uses Islamophobia to justify silence. Canada denies any responsibility for threats originating from its soil. China blocked India's proposals to blacklist Pakistan-based terrorists at the UN.

4. **Neglect of African Terrorism:** Terror in Africa has surged. The Sahel now accounts for over half of global terrorism deaths, as per the Global Terrorism Index 2025. Yet the global response remains indifferent.

### Pakistan's UNSC Tactics and India's Pushback

1. **Reviving the Kashmir Narrative:** Pakistan used its UNSC seat to push for a closed-door session, as it did in 2019. But it produced no result, with most P-5 nations treating Kashmir as a bilateral issue.

2. **Strategic Pressure by India:** India opposed any UNSC statement, as it did in 2021 during the Ethiopia-Egypt water dispute. It also put the Indus Waters Treaty on hold as leverage.

### The Way Forward for India

1. **Need for Real Accountability:** India's partners must pressure Pakistan meaningfully, not just issue generic statements. Episodic condemnation is not enough.

2. **India May Act Alone:** If global partners do not act, India must act alone. Strategic autonomy must be used where needed.

3. **Globalising the Fight Against Religiophobia:** India should raise the issue of non-Abrahamic religiophobia at bilateral and global forums beyond the UN.

4. **Reviving Anti-Terror Commitments:** The world must not retreat from the frameworks it built. India should lead efforts to counter state-sponsored terror and its new methods.

### Question for practice:

**Examine** how the global response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack reveals a weakening of international consensus against terrorism and its implications for India.

### New Security Challenges Force India to Rethink Defence

**Source:** The post New Security Challenges Force India to Rethink Defence has been created, based on the article "Our defence policy must gear up for a 3.5-front security challenge" published in "Live Mints" on 7th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3-Security challenges & Science and technology-indigenization of technology

**Context:** The Pahalgam attack and increasing tensions with Pakistan, China, and Bangladesh highlight growing security threats. Simultaneously, global instability—driven by the Russia-Ukraine war and Israel-Hamas conflict—necessitates a fresh review of India's defence strategy and spending priorities.

For detailed information on **Challenges faced by India's defense – India's defense budgeting and the point of deterrence** [read this article here](#)

#### 1. Escalating Geopolitical Tensions

- **Multi-Front Security Concerns:** India now faces a 3.5-front challenge—from Pakistan, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, China, and rising instability in Bangladesh. China's assertive border posturing over the last decade adds to the pressure.

- **Global Rearmament Trends:** The international security environment is shifting. Germany is restarting tank production in a 176-year-old factory, while Japan is considering changes to its pacifist constitution. These changes signal a return to hard-power politics.

- **Conflict as a Global Risk:** 'State-based Armed Conflict' topped the list of global risks for 2025 in a recent survey. Countries are asserting sovereignty and carving out zones of influence, heightening the threat of confrontations.

#### 2. Need for Defence Spending Reform

- **Spending Not Keeping Pace:** India spends around 2% of its GDP on defence. Yet, defence outlays rose only 6.3% in 2023–24, 5.2% in 2024–25, and are budgeted to grow by 6.2% in 2025–26—well below India's nominal GDP growth of 10–12%.

- **China's Military Advantage:** China's military budget exceeds \$300 billion and has grown faster than its GDP, unlike India's sub-\$90 billion defence spending. This widening gap poses strategic risks.

- **Poor Capital Allocation:** Of India's ₹6.8 trillion defence budget for 2025–26, only 26% is for capital expenditure. The rest covers routine costs—salaries, pensions, maintenance. Pension costs alone exceed 20% of revenue expenditure. The upcoming 8th Pay Commission may further tilt spending toward salaries.

### 3. Advancing Strategic and Technological Capabilities

- **Digital and AI-Based Defence Tools:** India must develop digital defence systems, including AI and cryptographic technologies. Defence R&D should be prioritized, just as physical border infrastructure was earlier strengthened.

- **Emerging Space Threats:** Space may become a future battlefield. Though nuclear weapons are banned under the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, conventional militarization by countries like China is advancing rapidly.

- **Urgent Investment in Space Security:** India must strengthen satellite protection, surveillance, and ground-based systems. Space strategy must align with military needs and prepare for future conflict theatres.

### 4. Public-Private Collaboration

- **Use India's Startup Ecosystem:** India should involve its private sector and startups in defence production. This can accelerate indigenization and reduce external dependence.

- **Enhance Strategic Autonomy:** Leveraging private innovation will boost national security and help build a self-reliant defence system.

#### Question for practice:

Discuss how rising regional and global security threats are reshaping India's defence strategy and spending priorities.

### India struggles to control rising digital misinformation

**Source:** The post India struggles to control rising digital misinformation has been created, based on the article "**Power and pitfalls of digital influence**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 7th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3-Security

**Context:** India's rapid digital growth has boosted access to information but also intensified the spread of misinformation. The rise of de-influencing and unchecked social media content has raised serious concerns about regulation, ethics, and public safety.

For detailed information on **Disinformation poses serious short-term threat to India** [read this article here](#)

#### The Rising Wave of Misinformation in India

1. **Influencers and Sensationalism:** De-influencing, which discourages purchases, may support mindful consumerism. But often, it relies on shock value and clickbait. Health reels and weight-loss videos blur the distinction between organic advice and paid promotion.

2. **Platforms Over Experts:** People now prefer digital platforms over expert advice. This enables quick spread of half-truths. Fact-based information often fails to match the reach of viral, misleading content.

3. **Global Risk Assessment:** India has been identified as highly exposed to misinformation in the World Economic Forum's 2024 Global Risks Report. The rise of AI-generated content and influence-driven social media activity fuels this risk.

**4. Impact on Public Perception:** Misinformation, especially in health, shapes public opinion using emotional hooks and misleading data. Influencers craft content using selective facts and ambiguity to drive engagement.

### Legal and Regulatory Framework to Control Misinformation in India

**1. Limits of Free Speech:** Article 19(1)(a) guarantees free speech, but Article 19(2) imposes limits for defamation, morality, and public order. Courts confirm that spreading harmful content is not protected.

**2. Content Regulation Laws:** The Consumer Protection Act, 2019, bans deceptive ads and makes influencers liable. IT Act provisions, Intermediary Guidelines, and SEBI rules regulate harmful content. SEBI has restricted real-time stock tips by financial influencers.

**3. ASCI and Voluntary Codes:** ASCI guidelines, though not legally binding, set marketing ethics. Non-compliance can lead to blacklisting and public shaming, encouraging influencer responsibility.

### Ethical Responsibilities and Legal Accountability

**1. Blurred Boundaries:** Influencer content often mixes facts with manipulation. Selective data and vague claims mislead viewers, especially in health-related content.

**2. Commercial Intent vs Honest Opinion:** Genuine reviews help consumers, but exaggerated negativity for clicks or sponsorships damages trust. Indian defamation laws aim to prevent this misuse.

**3. Judicial Actions:** The Delhi High Court recently barred an influencer from defaming a brand and stressed that health content must be backed by expert credentials.

### Way forward

**1. Need for Monitoring:** A registration system for health influencers is vital. It would ensure accountability, especially for health-related claims.

**2. Balancing Law with Ethics:** Legal safeguards must be backed by ethical communication. Misuse of public trust in health advice can have serious consequences.

**3. Platform and Brand Responsibility:** Brands should educate users, and platforms must enforce strong rules to stop misinformation and unchecked promotional activities.

### Question for practice:

Discuss how India is addressing the challenge of rising digital misinformation.

### India and US cooperation strengthens energy security and resilience

**Source:** The post India and US cooperation strengthens energy security and resilience has been created, based on the article “**The building blocks of an India-U.S. energy future**” published in “**The Hindu**” on 8th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2- International Relations-Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting

**Context:** India and the U.S. are reviving strategic cooperation in energy, defence, technology, and mobility. Recent statements by U.S. Vice-President J.D. Vance and India's foreign policy establishment signal a shift toward structured, long-term collaboration.

For detailed information on **Trump's Re-election and India US Relations** [read this article here](#)

### Strengthening India's Energy Security

**1. Three Pillars of Energy Strategy:** Stable and affordable resource access, Resilient global supply chains, and A clean energy transition that ensures sustainability and growth.

**2. Role of Nuclear and Critical Minerals:** Both nuclear energy and critical minerals are essential. They underpin India's energy transition and industrial resilience, making them central to India-U.S. cooperation.

## Securing Critical Mineral Supply Chains

### 1. Strategic Importance Across Sectors:

- Critical minerals are foundational not just for mining but for clean energy, defence, semiconductors, and electronics. Recognising them as a cross-sectoral strategic asset supports long-term policy and tech collaboration.
- China currently controls around 90% of global rare earth processing capacity and has imposed export restrictions for strategic purposes. This makes global supply chains fragile and reinforces the need for India-U.S. cooperation.

**2. Bilateral and Global Diversification Efforts:** India and the U.S. signed an MoU in 2024 to secure and diversify supply chains. This includes:

- Forming a consortium for joint exploration and processing,
- Investing in mineral-rich countries in Africa, South America, and Southeast Asia, and
- Promoting demand-led policies through bilateral and plurilateral channels.

**3. Infrastructure, Transparency, and Technology:** To ensure traceability and real-time collaboration, India and the U.S. should:

- Establish a secure digital Mineral Exchange,
- Develop blockchain-based traceability standards (inspired by the EU Battery Passport), and
- Support sensitive industries like EVs and aerospace with mineral access.

### 4. Stockpiling and Long-Term Planning:

- Strategic reserves should be jointly built using Indian and U.S. storage facilities. A 20-year roadmap with interim targets must be aligned with India's Critical Minerals Mission. Support systems like workforce development and data-sharing should be built through iCET.
- India is the first non-G-7 member of the Mineral Security Partnership and will host the upcoming Quad summit, offering a platform to formalise these strategies.

## Scaling Nuclear Energy for Future Demands

**1. India's Nuclear Ambition:** India aims to reach 100 GW of nuclear power by 2047, up from just 8 GW today. To meet this goal, it must commission 5–6 GW per year from the early 2030s. Some net-zero scenarios suggest the need for over 200 GW by 2070.

**2. Policy Reforms to Attract Private Capital:** Reforming the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010 is vital for private entry. India's modular designs and Holtec's SMR tech transfer to Indian firms illustrate the potential of international partnerships.

**3. Financing and Bankability:** Achieving 100 GW by 2047 requires \$180 billion. With India's financial institutions already exposed to \$200 billion in the power sector, de-risked models, credible offtake guarantees, and predictable returns are essential.

**4. Safety, SMRs, and Industrial Use:** SMRs offer flexibility, low land use, and cooling solutions for water-scarce areas. Their use in AI and green steel sectors adds industrial value, but long-term safety requires robust waste and decommissioning strategies from the outset.

## Building a Resilient Strategic Partnership

1. **Shared Stability in Uncertain Times:** The IMF's April 2025 report shows rising global instability. India's economic growth and U.S. capital and innovation are naturally aligned to build a stable, future-ready partnership.
2. **Reducing the build time of nuclear projects** from nine to six years could cut the levelised cost of electricity by 8%, improving financial viability.
3. **Institutional Vision Beyond Short-Term Gains:** India-U.S. energy cooperation needs enduring institutions, clear policy frameworks, and consistent investment. A resilient energy future will be shaped not by rhetoric, but by execution and shared architecture.

### Question for practice:

Evaluate how India-U.S. cooperation in critical minerals and nuclear energy can strengthen India's long-term energy security and industrial resilience.

## India needs regulatory reforms to boost growth

**Source:** The post India needs regulatory reforms to boost growth has been created, based on the article "The road to regulatory reform" published in "The Hindu" on 8th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3- Growth and Development

**Context:** India's services-led growth contrasts with the manufacturing-driven path of most emerging economies. Regulatory pressure has historically targeted manufacturing, but services are now increasingly affected. The 2025 Budget's focus on deregulation highlights the need to ease business operations and unlock higher, sustained economic growth in the face of global headwinds.

For detailed information on **Regulatory Reforms in India** [read this article here](#)

### India's Growth Paradox

1. **Uneven Sectoral Contributions:** From 1980 to now, manufacturing's share in gross value added rose marginally from 16% to 17.5%. Meanwhile, services surged from 33% to 55%.
2. **Regulatory Disparity:** Manufacturing faced heavier compliance burdens, while services remained lightly regulated. Factories attracted inspection and licensing, unlike software or call centre firms.
3. **Increasing Scrutiny of Services:** Services now face similar issues. Incidents show how obscure regulations are misused for extortion. Even routine office work triggered police threats under outdated compliance norms.

### Urgency for Regulatory Reform

1. **Budget Signals a Shift:** The Finance Minister proposed a high-level committee to cut red tape. This aligns with broader efforts to enhance ease of doing business.
2. **Reducing Regulatory Burden:** Self-certification for low-risk activities can replace inspections. States can extend licence validity using India and Southeast Asia's best practices. Third-party certification can fast-track approvals.
3. **Digital Approvals and Transparency:** Online systems should list required documents and allow automated approvals. For example, buildings not in flight paths or below a certain height can receive an automatic NOC from the Airports Authority of India **based on geotagged location**.

### Accommodating the Gig Economy

1. **Recognising Gig Work's Role:** Gig work is integral to India's workforce. Labour laws must adapt to this shift without enforcing rigid norms.
2. **Balanced Regulation:** Efforts to treat gig workers as full-time staff may backfire. Laws should protect dignity while supporting business growth.

3. **From Distrust to Trust:** Current regulatory attitudes hinder enterprise. A trust-based approach is essential for inclusive economic progress.

#### Improving Factor Markets and Labour Laws

1. **Land and Labour Flexibility:** Industrial land use should be eased by revising acquisition laws, zoning, and byelaws. Labour laws and the Factories Act need a detailed review to eliminate outdated clauses.

2. **Checks Against Harassment:** A time-bound appeals process should be mandated. Overreach by departments must carry consequences. All inspections should follow a standard checklist with prior notice.

3. **Shift in Bureaucratic Culture:** Growth-enabling performance should become part of departmental evaluations to reduce obstructionist attitudes.

#### Toward a Developed India by 2047

1. **Repeating the 1991 Reform Success:** India's 1991 macroeconomic reforms proved transformative. Now, the country must pursue microeconomic reforms to meet the goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047.

2. **Domestic Reforms Amid Global Headwinds:** While global trade wars pose external challenges, India can strengthen its domestic economy by removing regulatory bottlenecks — an internal lever firmly within its grasp.

#### Question for practice:

Examine how India's regulatory framework affects its services-led growth and what reforms are necessary to support sustained economic expansion.

### India responds to terror with strategic precision

**Source:** The post India responds to terror with strategic precision has been created, based on the article "Operation Sindoor and beyond: Think about the Pakistan challenge, long-term" published in "Indian Express" on 8th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3- Security-Security challenges and their management in border areas – linkages of organized crime with terrorism.

**Context:** The recent Pahalgam attack by Pakistan-linked terrorists marked a serious escalation, prompting India to launch Operation Sindoor. This article analyzes the operation's rationale, broader national strategy, and the continuing challenges posed by Pakistan's proxy war and regional hostility.

#### Operation Sindoor and Strategic Objectives

1. **Targeted Action Backed by Political Will:** India's response was calibrated to avoid civilian harm while punishing terror outfits. **PM Modi gave operational freedom** to the military. The action was in line with the nation's right to self-defence.

2. **Unprecedented Scale and Planning:** The strike hit **nine sites simultaneously**, including long-standing terror hubs like **Muridke and Bahawalpur**. The action showed deep planning and high risk-taking, designed to achieve objectives with limited escalation or global backlash.

3. **Managing Narrative and Cyber Threats:** India **won the perception battle** early. However, future escalation may require not just military dominance but **communications leadership**. Attention must also be paid to **cybersecurity**, as threats may come from multiple sources.

#### Diplomatic Challenges and Global Response

1. **Weak Global Pressure on Pakistan:** While India's case was acknowledged, global powers **avoided strong action**. **Western aid to Pakistan rarely enforced terrorism clauses**. US and Europe focus more on preventing conflict than punishing sponsors of terror.

2. **Tactical Blindness and Strategic Bias:** Pakistan's army is seen as essential to regional stability. This leads to tolerance for its **nuclear threats** and **proxy war strategy**. India also faces resistance from **China** and indifference from parts of the **Global South**.

3. **Water Conflicts and Perception Wars:** Pakistan may use the **Indus Water Treaty** to provoke tensions. Similar issues, like **Nepal's resentment post-2015 blockade** or **Bangladesh's Teesta grievances**, show how water can be weaponized against India in public perception.

### **Terrorism's Persistent Asymmetry**

1. **Psychological and Strategic Impact:** Terror attacks deepen Partition-era trauma and weaken social unity. Retaliations **drain military, diplomatic, and economic resources**, even though they are often necessary.

2. **State-Sponsored and Sustainable Proxy War:** Terror groups in Pakistan operate under military protection. With **millions of unemployed, radicalized youth**, Pakistan can sustain low-cost proxy war indefinitely.

3. **Misplaced Coercion Risks:** Forceful steps can either change outcomes or harden hostility. **India must balance pressure with sensitivity**, especially on issues that can trigger long-term resentment in the region.

### **Strengthening India's Counter-Terror Strategy**

1. **Reinforcing the Five Ps Approach:** India must enhance its strategy to **predict, prevent, pre-empt, protect, and punish**. Terrorists need to succeed once, while security forces must succeed every day.

2. **Military Upgradation and Civil Oversight:** India must invest in mobile forces, **terrain-specific unmanned systems**, and asymmetric reach. But secrecy should not prevent **public and parliamentary accountability**.

3. **Inclusive National Security:** **All Kashmiris must not be seen as complicit**. Broader trust and vigilance within society are essential to prevent radicalization and maintain unity.

### **A Long-Term Vision for South Asia**

1. **Strategic Engagement over Dismissal:** India should not ignore Pakistan. Instead, it must **push global recognition of Pakistan's role in terrorism** and work to alter its **internal political dynamics**.

2. **Using Global Standing Wisely:** India must **leverage its rising influence** to gain global endorsement on Jammu & Kashmir and isolate Pakistan diplomatically.

3. **Balancing Global and Regional Focus:** While eyeing global leadership, India must also **secure its neighbourhood**. A safe Bharat is key to building a **Viksit Bharat**.

### **Question for practice:**

Examine how Operation Sindoor reflects India's evolving counter-terrorism strategy in response to Pakistan's proxy war.