

9 PM Current Affairs Weekly Compilation

For UPSC CSE mains examination



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Features :

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Most complete coverage of major
News Papers editorials

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Indian Courts Are Managing Free Speech, Not Defending It

Source: The post Indian Courts Are Managing Free Speech, Not Defending It has been created, based on the article “Judicial sensitivity to sentiments is a sign of regression” published in “The Hindu” on 9th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper2-Constitution of India —historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure And functioning of the Judiciary.

Context: Indian courts are increasingly managing free speech instead of protecting it. They prioritize civility and sentiment over constitutional liberty. This shift marks a retreat from Article 19(1)(a)'s original intent — where speech, even offensive, was a check on power. Courts now treat speech as behavior to regulate, not a right to defend.

From Constitutional Protection to Sentiment Policing

- 1. A Shift in Judicial Role:** Courts, once defenders of provocative speech, now act as guardians of public decorum. They expect deference and politeness, elevating sentiment over liberty. This weakens their counter-majoritarian role.
- 2. Redefining the Citizen-State Relationship:** In recent rulings, citizens are seen less as rights-holders and more as children needing restraint. The Allahabad High Court rejected quashing an FIR over a critical post about the Prime Minister, citing protection of constitutional authorities from disrepute.
- 3. Overriding Constitutional Metrics:** Courts increasingly use emotional impact as a test for speech, rather than constitutional standards like incitement or public disorder. This inverts the design of Article 19.

Judicial Validation of Outrage and Apologies

- 1. Apologies as Precedent:** Courts recommend apologies for lawful speech, treating outrage as justification. This reinforces public anger rather than guarding liberty, setting a precedent where speech must please the majority.
- 2. Taste and Vulgarity as Legal Tests:** In *Ranveer Gautam Allahbadia*, the focus was on “vulgar” podcast language, not legality. Similarly, Kamal Haasan was told to apologize for calling Kannada a daughter of Tamil, despite no incitement or hate.
- 3. Scholarly Critique Under Scrutiny:** Historian Ali Khan Mahmudabad faced court action for critiquing the optics of using a woman soldier to explain war. A mere claim of hurt sentiments was enough to trigger judicial investigation.

Constitutional Misreadings and Incentivized Outrage

- 1. Emotion as Legal Harm:** Speech that provokes emotions is wrongly equated with legal harm. Article 19(2) allows restrictions only for incitement to violence or disruption, not for annoyance or hurt.
- 2. Encouraging Offence-Seeking:** By policing language and encouraging apologies, courts create incentives for mobs and serial litigants. More outrage invites more litigation, creating a market for offence.
- 3. Free Speech and the Armed Forces:** The Allahabad High Court refused relief to Rahul Gandhi over remarks about the Army. It claimed speech doesn't include the freedom to “defame” the military, though defamation standards require stricter scrutiny.

Weaponizing Legal Procedures Against Speech

- 1. Using Legal Tools to Intimidate:** Courts often refuse to quash FIRs, insisting police must investigate. But the legal process itself—summons, charges—becomes punishment. Sarcasm and satire are now targeted under sedition-like laws.

2. **Selective Resistance by Courts:** Occasionally, courts like the Madras High Court have resisted this drift. But such resistance is rare and lacks consistent structural defense of speech.

3. **Sedition and Vagueness:** Laws like sedition and vague “public order” clauses enable arbitrary restrictions. Courts often uphold them instead of interpreting them narrowly to protect liberty.

Eroding the Spirit of Free Speech and Democracy

1. **Freedom as a Test of Strength:** Democracy thrives on dissent, not politeness. Bland speech is not liberty. The strength of a republic lies in tolerating discomfort and disagreement.

2. **Chilling Effect and Silent Regression:** Self-censorship is rising. From YouTubers to professors, fear of legal action silences dissent. The judiciary’s current approach weakens public confidence in constitutional protection.

3. **Role of Judges in a Democracy:** Judges must defend rights, not curate public sentiment. Free speech needs no apology or approval. The Republic was born from protest, not politeness.

Question for practice:

Examine how Indian courts are redefining the constitutional protection of free speech in the context of public sentiment and judicial sensitivity.

RBI lowers rates to support growth and control inflation

Source: The post RBI lowers rates to support growth and control inflation has been created, based on the article “RBI’s stimulus is a bold wager on price stability” published in “Live Mint” on 9th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper3- Economic-growth and development

Context: The article analyses the Reserve Bank of India’s (RBI) latest policy actions aimed at reviving growth while keeping inflation under control. Faced with weak demand and global uncertainty, RBI has lowered its key rate and infused liquidity to support the economy.

RBI’s Transformation Since 1991

1. **Crisis Legacy and Market Reforms:** A new documentary recalls RBI’s 1991 role, including India’s gold pledge. Since then, RBI embraced reforms—floating the rupee, ending ad hoc borrowing, and allowing private banks.

2. **Adoption of Inflation Targeting:** In 2016, RBI adopted a flexible inflation targeting framework. Though seen as ambitious, it has largely worked, aligning RBI with global central banks.

3. **Success in Price Stability:** Retail inflation has stayed below 4% since February. RBI recently revised its 2025–26 forecast from 4% to 3.7%, showing price pressures are easing.

Policy Measures to Boost Growth

1. **Rate Cut for Credit Expansion:** RBI cut the **repo rate by 0.5 percentage points**, now at **5.5%**, returning to a ‘neutral’ stance. This move aims to ease borrowing and support GDP growth.

2. **Enhancing Liquidity:** Since January, RBI has injected **₹9.5 trillion** into the system. It also plans to reduce reserve requirements, enabling banks to lend more.

3. **Focus on Demand and Investment:** RBI wants to revive domestic consumption and investment, seen as “imperative” amid global headwinds and slower-than-expected growth.

Emerging Risks and Market Signals

1. **Bond Yield Reaction:** Surprisingly, **10-year bond yields rose**, suggesting markets may sense increased risk or inflation expectations.
2. **Inflation Risks from Excess Stimulus:** RBI's loose policy could overheat demand and raise prices, especially if global trade costs increase.
3. **External Uncertainty:** Volatile global conditions could amplify domestic inflation and complicate monetary control, despite RBI's efforts.

The Real Test for RBI

1. **Credibility Through Rupee Stability:** The RBI's core aim remains an internally stable rupee. Price stability will define its long-term credibility.
2. **Building Monetary Authority Reputation**
By acting boldly yet responsibly, RBI seeks lasting 'street cred' as a central bank that can balance growth and inflation control.

Question for practice:

Discuss how the Reserve Bank of India is balancing inflation control with the need to boost economic growth through recent monetary policy measures.

India's Apparel Export Ambition Needs Scaled-Up Reforms

Source: The post India's Apparel Export Ambition Needs Scaled-Up Reforms has been created, based on the article "**How to tailor the garment sector for exports**" published in "**Indian Express**" on 9th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper3- Economy- growth, development and employment.

Context: India's textile and apparel sector employs 45 million people and contributes 2.3% to GDP. However, *its share in global trade is just 4.2%*. Apparel exports alone account for only 3% — *\$15.7 billion out of \$529.3 billion* — a figure that has *stagnated for two decades*. This low growth demands urgent reforms.

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

Stagnation in Apparel Exports

1. **Low Share and Declining Growth:** Despite its workforce and legacy, India's *global apparel trade share remains modest*. Apparel exports have declined at an *annual average growth rate (AAGR) of -2%* in recent years.
2. **Unrealised Potential:** If the earlier AAGR of 8.5% (2004–2017) had continued, *exports could have reached \$31 billion by 2030*. Under the 2004–2023 average, they may only reach *\$21 billion*, falling far short of the *\$40 billion target*.
3. **Need for Strategic Rethink:** This data shows that *without bold reforms*, the 2030 goal is unrealistic. India needs *policy and structural transformation* to revive momentum.

Scale as the Central Bottleneck

1. **Highly Fragmented Sector:** Over *80% of India's apparel units are MSMEs*. They are *small, dispersed, and uncoordinated*, limiting their ability to fulfil large global orders or gain economies of scale.
2. **Global Benchmarking:** *China, Vietnam, and Bangladesh* have created *large, integrated, export-focused factories*. These setups attract global buyers, lower costs, and reduce lead times.

3. Scope for Mass Employment: The apparel sector can *generate mass formal jobs* quickly. A worker can be *trained in 60 days* to operate a sewing machine, offering a path to employment for India's youth.

Lessons from Shahi Exports

1. Remarkable Growth Story: Shahi Exports, started in 1974 with *15 women*, now has *50+ factories* across 8 states, employing *over 1,00,000 workers* (70% women) and earning *over \$1 billion annually*.

2. Pillars of Success: Its growth was powered by professional operations, in-house fabric production (80%), women's employment, and environmental sustainability.

3. Inspiration for Replication: Shahi proves Indian firms *can scale*, but this took *50 years*. To replicate this success faster, *bold and enabling policies* are essential.

Policy Reforms to Enable Scale

1. Access to Affordable Capital: India's *capital cost (9%)* is much higher than *China (3–3.5%)* and *Vietnam (4.5%)*. A *25–30% capital subsidy* for units with *1,000+ machines* and *5–7-year tax holidays* can encourage investment.

2. Labour Law Flexibility: India's *52 central labour laws* create rigidities. Overtime wages are *double the hourly rate* vs. *ILO's 1.25 times*, raising costs. Linking *25–30% of MGNREGA funds* to subsidise garment labour can improve competitiveness.

3. Focus on Skilling: Schemes like SAMARTH should be scaled up for short-cycle, demand-driven skilling, especially for women. India needs job creation, not just income support.

Infrastructure and Incentive Redesign

1. Strategic Garment Hubs: At least two PM MITRA parks should be garment-focused in states like UP and MP to lower migration costs, reduce expenses, and promote inclusive growth.

2. Export-Linked Over Production-Linked Incentives: India must adopt an *Export-Linked Incentive (ELI)* model that *rewards global competitiveness*, not just higher production volumes.

Conclusion:

The garment sector is crucial for both exports and employment. Scaling it up will uplift the entire textile value chain. But time is limited. Creating 10 Shahi-type enterprises in 10 years needs swift and visionary policy execution.

Question for practice:

Discuss how India can scale up its apparel sector to increase global export share and generate mass employment.

The 2027 Census will reshape India's political and social order

Source: The post The 2027 Census will reshape India's political and social order has been created, based on the article "**The Census and the remaking of a people**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 10th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper2-Society- Social justice

Context: The 2027 Census will not just record population data but reshape India's political and social framework. Occurring amid delayed delimitation, caste enumeration, migration shifts, and fiscal realignment, it will redefine the idea of 'the people' in India's democracy.

For detailed information on **Caste census will reshape India's social justice** [read this article here](#)

Census as a Political Instrument

1. Transforming Population into a Political Community: A census is more than counting individuals. It shapes a political community by categorizing people and influencing how governance and resource allocation are perceived. Census 2027 will play a crucial role in this transformation.

2. Enumerating and Influencing Realities: Although the census reflects reality, its categorization alters perception. Known trends like increased Hindi speakers in southern cities or unrecorded migration in Kerala gain political meaning once documented.

3. Political Demography and Its Importance: Demographic elements like migration, language, and fertility have political consequences. However, political demography remains a neglected field, despite its growing relevance globally and in India.

Redefining Parliamentary Representation

1. Delayed Census and Digital Processing: The 2021 Census was delayed by the pandemic, but the 2027 Census will use digital methods, enabling faster data processing and quicker decisions.

2. Accelerated Delimitation Timeline: Article 81 of the Constitution links delimitation to the first census after 2026. Due to the 2021 delay, the next general election in 2029 could be based on a new parliamentary map.

3. Uneven Growth and Power Redistribution: Some States have grown faster in population but slower in economy, while others show the opposite. Migration flows from populous to economically stronger regions. If representation is based only on population, political power may shift from developed southern States to poorer northern regions.

Social Identity and Electoral Dynamics

1. Revival of Caste Census and Quota Debate: For the first time since 1931, all castes will be counted. This could intensify demands to remove the 50% cap on quotas and reshape political alignments.

2. Women's Reservation and Election Reforms: The new delimitation will reserve one-third of seats for women. The Centre also plans to hold simultaneous elections to Parliament and State Assemblies, reshaping electoral timelines.

3. Group Identities and National Unity: The Constitution accommodates religious, caste, and regional identities. The 2027 Census may lead to a renegotiation of national unity built on these three pillars.

Economic Redistribution and Inter-State Tensions

1. Finance Commission's Timing and Impact: The Sixteenth Finance Commission begins work in 2026 and submits its report in 2025. This timing coincides with major political realignments, adding weight to its decisions.

2. Revenue Sharing and Political Representation: Past revenue-sharing models have caused grievances. As delimitation affects political power, it may also influence how funds are allocated between States.

3. Federal Balance in Transition: Changes in representation and revenue sharing may alter the balance of power between regions, creating new alliances or deepening divides.

Strategic Political Implications

- 1. BJP's Demographic Strategy:** The BJP is leveraging census categories to consolidate national identity. Population-based delimitation benefits its northern bases and enables it to integrate caste and gender into broader strategies.
- 2. Congress and the Left's Response:** The Congress is engaging with the caste debate to regain relevance, while the Left must balance national ideals with regional needs.
- 3. Census as a Tool of Nation-building:** Census categories have always shaped Indian politics. The 2027 Census will influence how national identity is reimagined through caste, gender, and region.

Question for practice:

Examine how the 2027 Census may reshape India's political representation and national identity.

Recognising and Empowering Women Farmers for 2026

Source: The post Recognising and Empowering Women Farmers for 2026 has been created, based on the article "Empowering women in agriculture for food security" published in "The Hindu" on 10th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper1-Society-Social empowerment And Agriculture

Context: The United Nations General Assembly has declared 2026 the *International Year of the Woman Farmer*. This move highlights the essential role of women in agriculture and brings global attention to their challenges, particularly in land rights, financial access, and climate resilience.

Critical Role of Women in Agriculture

- 1. Global and Regional Contributions:** Women contribute to nearly half of the global food supply. In developing countries, they account for 60–80% of food production. In South Asia, they form 39% of the agricultural labour force, showing their vital role in the food system.
- 2. Disparities in Land Ownership:** In India, although 80% of economically active women work in agriculture, only 14% own agricultural land. The National Family Health Survey reports even lower female land ownership at 8.3%, reflecting stark inequality.
- 3. Barriers to Finance and Technology:** Without land titles, women struggle to access credit and financial services. Their access to agricultural information is also limited due to lower ownership of mobile phones, affecting planning and technology use. Microfinance and self-help groups help, but loans are often too small for significant investments.
- 4. Government Support Initiatives:** India promotes women farmers through the *Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana*, which enhances skills and resource access. The *Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanisation* offers 50% to 80% machinery subsidies. Additionally, 30% of the *National Food Security Mission* budget is earmarked for women farmers in several States and Union Territories.

Building Climate Resilience Through Empowerment

- 1. Gendered Impact of Climate Change:** Climate change increases domestic burdens and risks for women. Erratic weather threatens yields. For example, farmers in Assam's Nagaon district now grow flood-resistant varieties to reduce losses and ensure harvests.
- 2. Adaptation Through Local Solutions:** Projects like ENACT empower women to build climate-resilient farming systems. Community-level models help develop adaptable, sustainable practices based on local knowledge and needs.

3. Technology-Driven Advisory Systems: ENACT connects women with experts via weekly mobile advisories in 17 villages. Climate Adaptation Information Centres support training and meetings, strengthening knowledge and preparedness.

4. Collaborative Networks for Scale: The initiative involves government bodies such as Agriculture, Rural Livelihoods Missions, Meteorology, and Environment departments. Technology partners include agricultural universities that provide climate-resilient crop varieties and technical advice.

Strategies for Sustainability and Nutrition

1. Smart Seed Production and Crop Diversification: Women's groups manage smart seed systems for flood-resistant and local nutritious crops. This enhances sustainability and food security.

2. Livelihood Diversification and Market Linkages: Market access and income diversification reduce climate-related risks and build financial stability for rural women.

3. Community-Driven Planning: Solutions rooted in community experience ensure better adoption and effective responses to environmental and economic risks.

Recommendations and Future Steps

1. Policy Tailored to Women's Needs: Gender-disaggregated data should guide tools, finance systems, and policies that suit women's specific roles in agriculture.

2. Strengthening Women's Networks and Value Chains: Promoting women-led value chains and self-help groups supports collective strength, financial access, and inclusive growth.

3. Opportunity to Drive Change in 2026: The 2026 declaration offers a unique chance to institutionalise support for women farmers and foster sustainable, gender-equal agriculture.

Question for practice:

Discuss how the 2026 International Year of the Woman Farmer can help address the challenges faced by women in agriculture.

Hydrogen plasma method makes nickel extraction cleaner and faster

Source: The post Hydrogen plasma method makes nickel extraction cleaner and faster has been created, based on the article "How extracting and producing nickel can be made more sustainable" published in "The Hindu" on 10th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper1- Resources And GS Paper3-Environment

Context: Nickel is crucial for clean energy applications, particularly electric vehicles (EVs), but its extraction is highly polluting. A recent study introduces a sustainable, carbon-free method using hydrogen plasma to extract nickel from low-grade ores, offering an efficient solution amid rising demand and environmental challenges.

Nickel's Role and Environmental Cost

1. Vital for Green Technologies: Nickel is a key material in lithium-ion batteries used in EVs. Demand is projected to exceed six million tonnes per year by 2040, driven by clean energy transitions.

2. High Emissions from Current Processes: Extracting one tonne of nickel emits over 20 tonnes of carbon dioxide. While EVs are cleaner during use, their production, especially battery components like nickel, has a heavy environmental toll.

3. Pollution Shift Across Sectors: The current mining process shifts emissions from transportation to industrial sectors, undermining the sustainability goals of the green energy movement.

New Hydrogen Plasma-Based Method

1. Carbon-Free One-Step Process: Researchers at the Max Planck Institute developed a one-step extraction using hydrogen plasma in an electric arc furnace. It avoids the use of carbon, producing only water as a byproduct.

2. Faster and Cleaner Reaction: Hydrogen gas is transformed into high-energy plasma, which reacts quickly with nickel oxide. This results in rapid, carbon-free metal extraction using only electricity and hydrogen.

3. Efficiency and Emission Reduction

The new method can reduce carbon emissions by up to 84% and is about 18% more energy-efficient compared to conventional multi-step techniques.

Advantages for Low-Grade Laterite Ores

1. Utilising Abundant Resources: Laterite ores are rich in nickel but difficult to process. Unlike rapidly depleting sulphide ores, laterites are widely available and suitable for the new method.

2. Unlocking India's Reserves: India, especially Odisha's Sukinda region, holds large deposits of laterite ores with 0.4–0.9% nickel. These are often ignored due to traditional method limitations but are viable using the new process.

3. Reducing Import Dependence: Processing low-grade ores domestically reduces reliance on high-grade imports and supports India's push for mineral self-sufficiency.

Wider Sustainability and Policy Implications

1. Alignment with India's Climate Goals: The method supports India's industrialisation while adhering to its net-zero emissions target by 2070. It enhances the value of domestic mineral assets.

2. Avoiding Emission Displacement: Sustainable extraction ensures emissions are not merely shifted across sectors, but actually reduced — a key to true environmental progress.

3. Enabling Green Infrastructure: By ensuring clean raw material supply chains, the method underpins the broader transition to renewable energy, EVs, and eco-friendly infrastructure.

Challenges to Industrial Adoption

1. Scalability Issues: Experts caution that large-scale implementation requires high initial investment, reliable renewable energy, and ore-specific adaptations.

2. Need for Further Study: The process demands additional research into thermodynamic kinetics and continuous oxygen species supply at the furnace interface.

3. Strong Potential Despite Barriers: Though industrial application poses challenges, the method offers a promising, low-emission alternative to conventional nickel extraction.

Question for practice:

Discuss how the hydrogen plasma method offers a sustainable alternative to traditional nickel extraction and its significance for countries like India.

India Pakistan conflict remains unresolved despite global diplomatic efforts

Source: The post India Pakistan conflict remains unresolved despite global diplomatic efforts has been created, based on the article “**The hazards of going global on India-Pakistan issues**” published in “**The Hindu**” on 11th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper2-International Relations-India and its neighbourhood- relations.

Context: Operation Sindoor and the events that followed exposed the failure of both bilateral and multilateral diplomacy in resolving the India-Pakistan conflict over Jammu and Kashmir. The legacy of Cold War politics, UN literature, and Pakistan’s rigid position have complicated any sincere attempt at resolution.

Constraints of International Frameworks

1. Outdated UN References and Misleading Maps: India’s claim over Jammu and Kashmir clashes with outdated UN maps and documents. These maps often show disclaimers like “dotted line” for the Line of Control, suggesting that the final status is unresolved. Such representations make countries hesitant to endorse India’s territorial position.

2. Simla Agreement and Non-committal Responses: While India highlights the Simla Agreement as the basis for a bilateral solution, most countries avoid firm stances. They prefer non-intervention, often stating that a peaceful settlement between India and Pakistan would be ideal.

3. Conceptual Gridlock and Diplomatic Smokescreens: Pakistan uses historical resolutions and ideas—such as self-determination, terrorism, and peaceful dispute resolution—to confuse the global narrative. These longstanding yet outdated concepts make it harder for new approaches to emerge.

India’s Complicated Stand on Terrorism

1. Early Proposal for Global Convention: India had proposed a Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism at the UN over three decades ago. It was dismissed as a move targeting Pakistan. The global difficulty in defining terrorism—due to political considerations—undermined the initiative.

2. Post-9/11 Shift and Lost Momentum: After 9/11, terrorism became a global priority. However, international focus shifted to U.S. military operations in Afghanistan rather than creating a unified legal definition. Though the Taliban was removed initially, they returned after decades of war.

3. Questions Over India’s Surgical Strikes: India’s retaliatory strikes on terror camps raise legal questions. Under Article 51 of the UN Charter, countries can defend themselves. Yet the legality of such actions depends on whether they are proportionate and comply with humanitarian law.

The UN Security Council’s Stance

1. Existing Framework and Monitoring: The Security Council has issued resolutions obliging member states to combat terrorism. The Counter-Terrorism Committee monitors these measures. However, India’s appeals to treat terror attacks as acts of war find limited global support.

2. Legal and Human Rights Considerations: India’s actions must align with international law and human rights. Any disproportionate response could face criticism. The current global consensus is to avoid redefining military responses to terrorism.

3. Emphasis on Broad Cooperation: The Security Council advocates a “whole-of-society” approach to fight extremism. India often raises concerns, but there is no clear endorsement of its strategy.

Legacy of Hyphenation and Its Impact

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1. UN Handling of Kashmir Issue: India's 1947 referral to the UN was treated as a dispute under Article VI instead of aggression under Chapter VII. This led to broad interpretations and "hyphenation" of India with Pakistan on most issues.

2. Nuclear Context and Rising Risks: With both countries now nuclear-armed, Kashmir is seen as a nuclear flashpoint. India maintains a "no first use" policy, while Pakistan adopts a more aggressive stance.

3. Diplomatic Futility and Strategic Necessity: India limits talks to terrorism and PoK, but diplomacy yields little. Pakistan internationalises the issue, while India's efforts get entangled in global narratives. India's best option is to ensure security through appropriate military action.

Question for practice:

Examine why international diplomatic efforts have failed to resolve the India-Pakistan conflict over Jammu and Kashmir despite repeated initiatives.

Türkiye expands regional influence by blending Islamism and pragmatism

Source: The post Türkiye expands regional influence by blending Islamism and pragmatism has been created, based on the article "Erdogan's neo-Ottoman foreign policy" published in "The Hindu" on 11th June 2025

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

Context: Türkiye, under President Erdogan, blends Islamist-leaning policies with NATO commitments. This strategy has expanded its role across West Asia and the Caucasus. However, economic instability and authoritarian trends pose serious domestic challenges.

Historical Backdrop and Policy Shifts

1. From Ataturk to NATO Partnership: The Republic of Türkiye, established in 1923, embraced secularism and peaceful diplomacy. After WWII, Türkiye joined the Western bloc and became a key NATO ally due to its strategic location across the Black Sea, Mediterranean, and West Asia.

2. Erdogan's Initial Focus on Stability: The AKP came to power in 2002 after prolonged political and economic instability. Erdogan prioritized economic reforms and Western integration. He built strong ties with the U.S. and sought EU membership, projecting Türkiye as a loyal ally.

3. Foreign Policy Shift Post-Arab Spring: The Arab Spring in the early 2010s marked a change. Erdogan saw protests as a path to revive regional influence by backing Islamist movements and aligning with popular uprisings in the Arab world.

Ideological Roots and Regional Ambitions

1. Ottoman Legacy of Islamic Unity: Sultan Hamid II's doctrine of Ittihad-i Islam aimed to unite Muslims against Western powers. This legacy influenced Türkiye's modern Islamists, who advocated closer ties with Muslim nations and resistance to Western dominance.

2. Islamist Rise through AKP: Erdogan, a former leader in the Virtue Party, founded the AKP after Islamist parties were banned. His 2002 victory brought Islamists to power and gradually aligned foreign policy with Erbakan's vision of Islamic solidarity.

3. Support for Islamist Movements: Türkiye backed the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, anti-Assad forces in Syria, and Islamist factions in Libya after the fall of Gaddafi, aiming to expand its regional reach through ideological partners.

Blending Islamism with Strategic Caution

1. **Maintaining NATO and Western Ties:** Despite ideological shifts, Türkiye remained a NATO member and host to U.S. military bases. Erdogan avoided rupturing Western ties while asserting regional influence.
2. **Calculated Moves in Conflict Zones:** In Syria, Türkiye protected HTS and created buffer zones, balancing pressure from Russia. In Libya, it supported the Tripoli-based Islamist government while managing competing interests.
3. **Smart Diplomacy and Defense Deals:** Türkiye supported Azerbaijan in the 2023 war against Armenia using Turkish drones. It also sold drones to Ukraine, avoided Russian sanctions, and bought S400s from Russia. Erdogan backed Sweden and Finland's NATO entry to ease U.S. tensions.

Expanding Strategic Reach

1. **Stronger Presence in West Asia:** Türkiye's military base in Qatar and its stance near the Israeli border reflect growing presence in the Gulf. HTS's 2024 takeover of Damascus enhanced its profile in Syria.
2. **Role in the Caucasus and South Asia:** Türkiye helped Azerbaijan defeat Armenia, a Russian ally. While Türkiye supports Pakistan, its role in South Asia remains marginal.
3. **Balancing Multiple Rivalries:** Though ties with Saudi Arabia and the UAE have improved, trust is limited. Türkiye continues to balance Russian and Western concerns in the Caucasus and Black Sea.

Internal Pressures and Strategic Risks

1. **Economic Decline and Centralization:** Türkiye faces hyperinflation, currency depreciation, and rising unrest. Erdogan has centralized power, turned the system into an executive presidency, and suppressed opposition.
2. **Growing Authoritarianism:** Key opposition figures like Istanbul's mayor have been arrested. Erdogan cannot run in 2028 under the current Constitution, creating political uncertainty.
3. **Uncertain Strategic Payoff:** Despite tactical wins abroad, instability in Syria and Libya, fragile Gulf ties, and domestic vulnerabilities challenge Türkiye's long-term regional ambitions.

Question for practice:

Discuss how Türkiye balances its Islamist foreign policy with its commitments as a NATO member.

Revenue estimates fall short again raising fiscal concerns

Source: The post Revenue estimates fall short again raising fiscal concerns has been created, based on the article "Perils of overestimates" published in "Business Standard" on 11th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper3- Economic-Government Budgeting.

Context: The provisional actuals for the 2024–25 Union Budget highlight a return to revenue overestimation. This reversal comes after four years of accurate forecasts and raises concerns about fiscal management and potential economic slowdown.

Recurring Challenge of Revenue Overestimation

1. A Troubled First Budget (2019–20): In 2019–20, actual net tax revenue was 13.6% lower than the Revised Estimate (RE). Non-tax revenue also fell by over 5%. With only marginal change in expenditure, the fiscal deficit widened to 4.6% of GDP, against the RE figure of 3.8%.

2. Forecasting Improved (2020–21 to 2023–24): Over the next four years, the finance ministry showed commendable restraint in its estimates. Actual revenues exceeded REs, with net tax collections increasing by 0.13% to over 6%. Expenditure stayed controlled, keeping the actual fiscal deficit lower than the RE.

3. Problem Resurfaces (2024–25): In 2024–25, the provisional actual net tax revenue was 2.3% lower than the RE. This ended the trend of conservative budgeting and brought back the issue of overestimation.

Personal Income-Tax Underperformance

1. Sharpest Decline Observed: The biggest drop was seen in personal income-tax collections, which were about ₹74,000 crore or 6% below the RE.

2. Rising Importance of This Segment: Over six years, personal income-tax has grown from one-fourth to nearly one-third of gross tax collections. This makes its underperformance more significant.

3. Expenditure Cutback in Response: Due to revenue shortfalls, the government reduced revenue expenditure. The Budget Estimate (BE) was ₹37.1 trillion, RE was ₹36.98 trillion, but provisional actuals dropped further to ₹36.03 trillion.

Expenditure Trends and Fiscal Balance

1. Capital Expenditure Increased: While revenue spending dropped, capital expenditure rose, showing a positive shift in spending quality.

2. Deficit Ratio Unchanged: The fiscal deficit remained at 4.8% of GDP, largely because the nominal GDP was revised upwards. This helped maintain the percentage despite lower revenue.

Dangers of Inaccurate Estimates

1. Confusing Economic Signals: Large differences between RE and actuals send misleading messages about the fiscal situation. Ministries may be forced into last-minute spending cuts.

2. Risk of Distorted Budgeting Practices: This can lead to shifting liabilities to public entities or using off-Budget borrowings, which had been phased out earlier.

Revenue Trends and Growth Insights

1. Estimates Reflect Activity Levels: Overestimations in 2019–20 aligned with a slowdown. Underestimations from 2020 to 2024 matched a period of economic recovery.

2. Slower Growth in 2024–25: GDP growth slowed to 6.5%, down from 9.2% in 2023–24. This may explain the weaker revenue performance.

3. Need for Better Projections: With rising global uncertainty, accurate revenue forecasting is vital. Fiscal discipline must include realistic revenue and expenditure projections.

Conclusion

The return of revenue overestimation in 2024–25 must be addressed. The government should investigate the reasons, especially for falling personal income-tax collections, and work toward more accurate and credible fiscal projections.

Question for practice:

Examine the reasons behind the return of revenue overestimation in the Union Budget 2024–25 and its implications for fiscal management and economic growth.

Velpur shows how child labour can be eliminated sustainably

Source: The post Velpur shows how child labour can be eliminated sustainably has been created, based on the article “**Recounting Velpur’s story in ending child labour**” published in “**The Hindu**” on 12th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper2-Governance-Social Justice

Context: Every year, **June 12** is observed as **World Day Against Child Labour**. Despite global commitments under **SDG Target 8.7** to end child labour by 2025, progress remains limited. The transformation of **Velpur Mandal** in India offers a rare example of **community-led success** in eliminating child labour.

Global and National Overview of Child Labour

- 1. Widespread Prevalence:** There are an estimated **160 million children** in child labour worldwide—**one in every ten children**. **Africa, Asia, and the Pacific** together account for nearly 90% of these children. The **COVID-19 pandemic** worsened the crisis, causing school dropouts and forcing children into work due to economic hardship.
- 2. India’s Situation:** As per **Census 2011**, **43.53 lakh children** (ages 5–14) in India were engaged in labour. They are commonly employed in **beedi-making, carpet weaving, and firework factories**. Causes include **poverty, illiteracy, and lack of access** to education.
- 3. Legal and Policy Framework:** The **Child Labour Act (1986)** and its **2016 Amendment** prohibit child labour under 14 and restrict adolescent work in hazardous sectors. The **Right to Education Act** mandates **free and compulsory education** for ages 6–14. However, enforcement is often **short-lived and inconsistent**.

The Velpur Transformation Model

- 1. Starting Conditions and Action Plan:** Velpur Mandal, once infamous for child labour, launched a **community-driven campaign** in **June 2001**. Within **100 days**, by **October 2, 2001**, it was declared a **child labour-free zone**.
- 2. Initial Resistance and Awareness Campaign:** The campaign faced **strong resistance**. Misinformation spread about organ trafficking, and campaigners were denied basic hospitality. Persistent efforts, **public meetings**, and open dialogue shifted public perception and won support.
- 3. Debt Forgiveness and Employer Cooperation:** Children were moved to **bridge schools** under the **National Child Labour Project (NCLP)**. Employers, under social pressure, **wrote off ₹35 lakh in family debt** and distributed **stationery** to students. This marked a turning point in community commitment.

Institutional Support and Agreements

1. **Formal Collaboration:** All sarpanchs signed MoUs with the government under the **Andhra Pradesh Compulsory Primary Education Rules, 1982**, committing to full school enrolment. The government pledged to ensure **infrastructure and teacher availability**.

2. **Sustained Vigilance:** Villages installed boards stating, “There is no child labour in our village.” The achievement has been zealously guarded for over two decades.

3. **Recognition and Endorsement:** In **2021**, the **VVGNI** honoured all contributors. In **2022**, the **Parliamentary Standing Committee** invited the campaign’s lead officer for a presentation and acknowledged its **lasting success**.

Key Lessons and Significance

1. **People-Led Movements Matter:** Velpur proves that **sustainable change** comes from **community ownership**, not just top-down action.

2. **Model for Training and Replication:** The success is now part of **VVGNI training programmes**. It has been lauded by the **ILO, NHRC**, and **President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam**.

3. **Leadership and Participation:** The campaign, led by the then **District Collector**, highlights the power of **local leadership** and **collective responsibility** in solving deep-rooted social problems.

Question for practice:

Evaluate how the Velpur model demonstrates the role of community participation in eliminating child labour sustainably.

Household savings data misses new investment patterns today

Source: The post Household savings data misses new investment patterns today has been created, based on the article “**How households are driving growth**” published in “**Businessline**” on 12th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper3- Indian Economy

Context: The sharp fall in net household financial savings—from 7.8% in 2018–19 to 5.1% in 2023–24—has raised concern. While reasons like rising debt and purchase of physical assets are suggested, the accuracy of RBI’s household savings data is under question due to possible gaps in capturing newer investment patterns.

For detailed information on **Issue with Indian household savings** [read this article here](#)

Revisiting Household Bank Deposits

1. **Stable Long-Term Deposit Growth:** Despite reports of falling savings, household bank deposits grew at a 14.5% CAGR from 2005 to 2024, outpacing nominal GDP. This shows households continue to generate surpluses and save significantly.

2. **Major Contributors to Credit Flow:** Indian families hold over 60% of bank deposits—55% of term and 81% of savings deposits. These deposits drive credit growth and support banks’ interest margins.

3. **Surplus Financing by Households:** According to former RBI Deputy Governor Michael Patra, household savings typically exceed investments and fund other sectors. Domestic savings mainly support India’s growth needs, reducing reliance on external funds.

Changing Ownership in Bank Deposits

- 1. Household Share Remains Strong:** In 2005, households held ₹10.8 lakh crore or 60.7% of total deposits. Despite some fluctuations, the share rose to 61.08% in 2024, reaching ₹132 lakh crore.
- 2. Government Deposit Trends:** The Centre's share in bank deposits declined from 2.4% to 1.74%, showing fiscal prudence. In contrast, states increased their share from 2.5% to 5.34%.
- 3. Corporate Sector's Growing Share:** Non-financial corporates expanded their share from 8.7% in 2005 to 17.52% in 2024. This rise reflects higher profits and gains from corporate tax cuts.
- 4. Deposit Growth Slowdown:** From 2007–2012, household deposits grew 24% annually, driven by high repo rates and economic stress. Between 2020–2024, the growth slowed to 10.3%, below the 11.4% overall deposit growth.

Shift Towards New Investment Avenues

- 1. Rise in Market Participation:** Post-pandemic, individuals increased investments in equities, mutual funds, and insurance. These offer better returns than traditional deposits.
- 2. Omissions in RBI Data:** RBI does not include direct equity holdings worth ₹42.8 lakh crore, or ₹18.8 lakh crore in AIFs and PMS. Assets like REITs, InvITs, crypto, and NFTs are also excluded.
- 3. Need for Comprehensive Data:** RBI includes only traditional assets in household savings. A SEBI paper pointed out that several market-linked products are not covered in the current data method.

Understanding the Real Household Surplus

- 1. Broader Impact of Household Investments:** Households support economic growth not only through deposits but also via investments in equity, debt, mutual funds, and pensions.
- 2. True Size of Financial Assets:** RBI estimates household financial assets at ₹254 lakh crore in 2024. Including excluded assets would significantly raise this number.
- 3. Sources of Resilient Income:** While salary growth is slow, business and farm incomes—especially among affluent households—remain strong.
- 4. Policy Support and Cultural Frugality:** Tax cuts and pay revisions are boosting incomes. Household frugality and the habit of saving before spending further support savings growth.

Question for practice:

Examine how changing investment patterns are affecting the measurement of household financial savings in India.

Fertility decline reflects gender roles and social inequality

Source: The post Fertility decline reflects gender roles and social inequality has been created, based on the article “Falling fertility calls for fast gender justice gains” published in “Live Mint” on 12th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper2-Governance-Social Justice

Context: The UN's *State of World Population 2025* report highlights a significant demographic shift: India's total fertility rate (TFR) has fallen below replacement level to 1.9. This trend prompts reflection on social structures, gender norms, and reproductive rights, urging societies to prioritize gender justice and redefine traditional roles.

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For detailed information on **Issue of fertility rate in India** [read this article here](#)

Decline in Fertility Rates and Global Reactions

1. **India's Falling TFR:** India's TFR has dropped to 1.9, below the replacement rate of 2.1. The National Family Health Survey (2019–2021) had earlier estimated it at 2.0, showing a continued decline. However, regional variations remain significant.
2. **Global Fertility Trends:** The 20th-century fertility boom raised fears of population explosion, especially among Western conservatives who backed population control in Asia and Africa. These outdated fears still influence many policy circles.
3. **Shift to Population Implosion Concerns:** Wealthy nations now worry about too few births. Their fear of being outnumbered by non-Western immigrants fuels rising xenophobia and anti-immigrant politics in the US and Europe.

The Real Crisis: Denial of Reproductive Rights

1. **UN's Core Message:** The report reframes the debate: the real fertility crisis is not about population size but about the widespread denial of reproductive rights in both rich and poor countries.
2. **Reproductive Autonomy and Social Norms:** Wealth does not guarantee reproductive freedom. True autonomy involves the ability to choose whether and when to have children, which depends on gender-equitable social systems.
3. **Call for Gender Justice:** The report emphasizes reproductive rights as part of gender justice and social inclusion. Ensuring these rights requires dismantling entrenched patriarchal attitudes.

Gender Norms and Fertility Decisions

1. **Lessons from South Korea:** With a TFR of 0.8, South Korean women are rejecting motherhood and marriage due to unjust gender roles, poor financial security, and lack of childcare support.
2. **The Indian Scenario:** India's fertility patterns vary with income, caste, and empowerment. Many professional women manage careers by outsourcing domestic work, usually to lower-income women.
3. **Unsustainability of Outsourcing:** As poorer sections gain upward mobility, domestic help will become costlier. This threatens the current model and could lead India toward a similar fertility dip as seen in South Korea.

Urgency of Social Reform

1. **Need for Societal Change:** Economic progress alone cannot ensure gender equity. To prevent future fertility collapse, societies must evolve—starting with promoting equality at home.
2. **Redefining Traditions:** Old traditions that perpetuate gender inequality must be questioned. Real change requires discarding oppressive norms in favor of inclusive family structures.

Question for practice:

Examine how gender norms and social structures influence fertility trends in India and other countries.

India needs sustainable transport for urban future

Source: The post India needs sustainable transport for urban future has been created, based on the article “Urbanisation and the challenge of ideal transit solutions” published in “The Hindu” on 13th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper3- infrastructure

Context: India's vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047 relies heavily on urban transformation. With a projected shift of over 60% of the population to urban areas by the 2060s, efficient public transport systems have become essential. This article examines India's current efforts and challenges in building a sustainable urban mobility framework.

For detailed information on **Urban Mobility in India- Challenges and Way Forward** [read this article here](#)

Urban Expansion and Mobility Pressure

- 1. Rising Urban Population and Mobility Needs:** India's urban population is expected to grow rapidly, necessitating large-scale worker mobility. This shift puts pressure on planners to create seamless transport links from homes to workplaces.
- 2. Slow Progress of Smart Cities:** Unlike China, India's new smart cities are not progressing fast. Instead, tier 1 cities are expanding rapidly, increasing the stress on existing transport systems.
- 3. Challenges in Metros and Existing Cities:** Existing metros are witnessing continuous expansion, making it harder to meet urban mobility needs, especially for daily commuters.

Current Policy Measures and Budget Priorities

- 1. Launch of PM e-Bus and e-Drive Initiatives:** The PM e-Bus Sewa and e-Drive schemes aim to add 14,000 e-buses and over 1 lakh other electric vehicles. However, with only 35,000 buses currently operating against a requirement of 2 lakh, the gap remains large.
- 2. Focus on Metro Infrastructure Expansion:** The government has increased funding for metro development in tier 1 cities, though access to public transport remains low at 37% compared to over 50% in Brazil and China.
- 3. Funding and Operational Issues:** Metro systems rely heavily on central funding. Most have not recovered costs due to lower-than-expected ridership and high fare sensitivity among users.

Limitations of the Present Approach

- 1. Economic Unsustainability of Metro Systems:** Cost recovery is challenging unless routes serve dense corridors. Fare increases reduce ridership, making these systems less viable.
- 2. Last-Mile Connectivity Problems:** High costs of travel from metro stations to homes or offices discourage usage, weakening the efficiency of the metro network.
- 3. Limited Subsidy Capacity:** Unlike wealthier countries, India cannot afford high subsidies for public transport, further constraining its affordability and reach.

Alternative Solutions and Financial Viability

- 1. Scope for Road-Based Transit Modes:** Road-based options like e-buses, hydrogen, CNG, and biofuel vehicles are being promoted. However, budget focus on costly e-buses over cheaper modes limits flexibility.
- 2. Undervalued Potential of Trams and Trolleybuses:** Trams and trolleybuses are overlooked, despite trams showing a 45% profit over 70 years, far better than e-buses which incur 82% losses.

3. Need for Lifecycle Cost Analysis: Future policies must include lifecycle profit-and-loss estimates to choose the most viable and sustainable public transit models.

Path Ahead for Sustainable Urban Mobility

1. Rethinking Investment Priorities: India must assess whether current investments serve long-term goals or rely on ongoing subsidies.

2. Kochi's Tram Plan as a Model: Kochi's proposed tram system could be a game-changer, showing the value of reviving older, more sustainable systems.

3. Balancing Innovation and Financial Sustainability: A smart transport future must integrate modern technology with financially viable models like trams to ensure inclusive and long-term success.

Question for practice:

Discuss how India can ensure sustainable and financially viable urban mobility in its journey toward Viksit Bharat.

Bangladesh faces uncertainty over democratic political transition

Source: The post Bangladesh faces uncertainty over democratic political transition has been created, based on the article "Is Bangladesh slipping into authoritarianism?" published in "The Hindu" on 13th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper2- India and its neighbourhood- relations.

Context: On June 7, Chief Adviser Dr. Muhammad Yunus addressed Bangladesh on the eve of Eid, promising elections in April 2026. He also announced a controversial *July Proclamation* to reform the Constitution. These developments raised concerns about democratic backsliding and political instability in the country.

For detailed information on **Current political crisis in Bangladesh** [read this article here](#)

Controversy Around the Interim Government

1. Questioning the 'Interim' Nature: Unlike traditional interim governments, Prof. Yunus's administration is engaging in sweeping constitutional changes. In 1990, a caretaker government had a 90-day mandate to conduct elections. In contrast, the current setup lacks electoral legitimacy and is behaving more like a permanent authority.

2. Efforts to Prolong Power: Prof. Yunus had earlier promised elections by December 2025. The new date of April 2026 suggests an attempt to extend the government's tenure. Though the Army chief has pressed for year-end elections, Yunus cites internal and external threats to justify delays.

3. Exclusion of Main Political Forces: The Awami League remains banned. The BNP is dissatisfied with developments. With the main parties sidelined, lesser-known and fringe political actors with questionable agendas are gaining prominence.

Debate on the July Proclamation

1. Objective and Political Impact: The July Proclamation aims to replace the influence of the 1972 Constitution. Though it may not fully supplant it, it is intended as a guiding charter, reflecting student-led political aspirations and aligning with the interim government's vision.

2. Shifting the National Narrative: By promoting July as a new political milestone, the interim government appears to dilute the significance of historical months like December and August, linked to independence and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's assassination.

3. **Uncertainty and Lack of Consensus:** There is no transparency about the authors or contents of the July Proclamation. The claim of political consensus is questionable, as major parties like the BNP remain non-committal or uncomfortable with its direction.

4. **Risk of Political Disruption:** Analysts warn that this charter could create space for radical religious groups. This vacuum, similar to Myanmar's experience, may increase political instability in Bangladesh.

Concerns Over the Humanitarian Corridor

1. **Unclear Implementation:** Prof. Yunus advocated for a humanitarian corridor to Myanmar's Rakhine province. However, it is unclear who will enforce its demilitarized status—Bangladesh or an international body.

2. **Sovereignty Issues:** The Bangladesh Army chief opposed international oversight, citing sovereignty concerns. Bangladesh, which values its independence, sees foreign military involvement as a threat.

3. **Regional Security Threats:** There is fear that aid through the corridor could reach armed groups, not just the Rohingya. This poses risks to regional security, especially for India, due to possible arms smuggling and spillover effects.

The Position and Prospects of BNP

1. **Absence of Leadership:** BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman remains abroad due to unresolved legal cases. Despite his absence for 18 years, he continues to influence party leadership through the standing committee.

2. **Challenges in Capitalizing:** Though the BNP criticized delays in elections, it has not fully leveraged the current political situation. The party remains intact despite multiple attempts to weaken it.

3. **Emergence of the King's Party:** The National Citizens Party (NCP), launched by advisers close to Prof. Yunus, is suspected by the BNP to be backed by the interim government. The BNP fears this group may be favoured in the upcoming elections.

Implications for Bangladesh's Political Future

1. **Democratic Decline:** Sweeping reforms by an unelected government raise concerns about a shift toward authoritarianism.

2. **Uncertain Electoral Path:** With continued delays and controversial policy moves, the electoral future remains unclear.

3. **Regional Repercussions:** India and others are closely monitoring the developments due to the political and security consequences in the region.

Question for practice:

Evaluate the implications of Bangladesh's interim government's actions on the country's democratic process and political stability.

Israel attacks Iran and escalates regional conflict

Source: The post Israel attacks Iran and escalates regional conflict has been created, based on the article "Endgame of a 2,611-year-old Jewish-Persian enmity" published in "The Hindu" on 14th June 2025

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UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper2-International Relations

Context: The June 13, 2025 Israeli military operation, “Rising Lion,” targeting Iran’s nuclear and missile capabilities, marks a turning point in the long-standing Jewish-Persian conflict. Both Israeli and Iranian leaders acknowledge its historical weight, sparking fears of prolonged regional instability and global economic repercussions.

For detailed information on **Iran-Israel Conflict and India’s stake** [read this article here](#)

Historical and Strategic Background

1. **A Deep-Rooted Rivalry:** The conflict draws from centuries-old tensions, beginning in 586 BCE. The latest phase escalates a legacy of hostility, now centered around Iran’s nuclear ambitions and Israel’s determination to counter them.
2. **The “Rising Lion” Offensive:** Israel’s operation was swift and massive. Over 200 jets struck more than 100 strategic Iranian targets. Among them were key nuclear sites and the assassinations of high-ranking Iranian officials and scientists.
3. **Preparedness and Proxy Wars:** This strike followed 21 months of conflict with Iranian proxies. Israel’s efforts included weakening Hezbollah and Hamas, engineering regime change in Syria, and upgrading its air and ground offensive capabilities.

Global and Regional Diplomacy

1. **Western Endorsements and Legal Cover:** The IAEA condemned Iran just a day before the Israeli assault, possibly legitimizing it. The U.S., under Trump’s renewed leadership, intensified pressure on Iran through sanctions and military actions, particularly against Houthis.
2. **Saudi and Oil Politics:** Saudi Arabia was pushed to break with OPEC+ curbs, aiming to financially strangle Iran. A global oil surplus was intended to block Iran’s covert oil exports.
3. **Outreach to Pakistan:** Sudden U.S. diplomatic overtures to Pakistan, Iran’s largest neighbor, suggest strategic alignment to contain Iran’s influence from multiple directions.

Arab World and Regional Fallout

1. **Uneasy Arab Neutrality:** The Sunni Arab states remain skeptical of both Israel and Iran. Their main concern is avoiding Iranian retaliation that could disrupt oil flow through the Strait of Hormuz or trigger unrest among Shia minorities.
2. **Terrorism Resurgence Threat:** Instability from this conflict could enable a resurgence of terrorist networks like ISIS and al-Qaeda, further destabilizing the Middle East.
3. **Risk of Broader Backlash:** Even though the Israeli attack focused on strategic targets, blowback or collateral damage could inflame regional tensions or invite retaliatory strikes against Arab allies of the West.

Uncertain Outcomes and Global Risks

1. **Possible Scenarios:** If Israel achieves a quick, clean victory, Iran could be left weakened. But if Iran survives and responds, the war could escalate beyond the initial scope, undermining Israeli strategy.
2. **Iranian Nationalism and Resistance:** A prolonged assault may consolidate domestic support around the Iranian regime, rallying a previously uncommitted population under the banner of national defence.

3. **Economic Ramifications:** Widening conflict could worsen inflation, destabilize global markets, disrupt supply chains, and intensify geopolitical uncertainties—countering Trump's claims of ending “endless wars.”

Future Prospects and Strategic Lessons

1. **Complex Endgame:** Initial goals may not be realized. Like Iraq post-Desert Storm, Iran might not collapse as expected but adapt and retaliate.
2. **Risk of Escalation and Regime Change:** A prolonged war could compel U.S. involvement and lead to regime change in Iran or a redrawing of regional power dynamics.
3. **Strategic Miscalculations:** Iran's costly pursuit of nuclear deterrence, estimated at \$100 billion, may have undermined its own security. The current conflict could be proof of that unintended consequence.

Question for practice:

Examine the regional and global consequences of Israel's “Rising Lion” operation against Iran's nuclear and missile infrastructure.

India must fix deep flaws in aviation safety system

Source: The post India must fix deep flaws in aviation safety system has been created, based on the article “**The rot starts at the top of the aviation ladder**” published in “**The Hindu**” on 14th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper3-Infrastructure

Context: The crash of Air India flight AI171 in Ahmedabad on June 12, 2025, highlights longstanding failures in India's aviation safety system. Despite repeated warnings and previous fatal accidents, systemic issues like poor accountability, political interference, and disregard for safety standards persist across aviation institutions, endangering countless lives.

Systemic Rot in Aviation Safety Oversight

1. **Neglect by Regulatory Authorities:** India's Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Airports Authority of India (AAI), and airlines have repeatedly ignored calls to improve training and safety. These institutions function amid corruption and political manipulation, prioritizing image over actual safety.
2. **Pattern of Zero Accountability:** Historically, pilots are solely blamed for accidents while higher authorities escape scrutiny. Successive fatal accidents—including those in 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2020—have not led to structural reform. The same officials retain positions, enabling continued safety lapses.
3. **Judicial Apathy and Institutional Failure:** Legal interventions have failed to hold officials accountable. After the 2010 Mangaluru crash, a Supreme Court Bench dismissed a petition with safety violation evidence by routing it back to MoCA, eroding public confidence in legal redress.

Failures Highlighted in the Ahmedabad Crash

1. **Violation of ICAO Norms:** The DGCA violated global aviation protocol by publicly naming pilots involved in the crash. This move disregards International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards, which protect crew identities until official investigation findings are released.
2. **Bureaucratic Appointments in Critical Roles:** Appointments of bureaucrats instead of aviation professionals to head DGCA and AAI continue to undermine institutional credibility and technical competency.

3. **Weak Investigative Standards:** Accident investigations are often compromised. Officials known to align with political narratives are selected, ensuring pilots are blamed regardless of underlying causes.

Technical Clues from Visual Evidence

1. **Bird Ingestion as a Likely Trigger:** Videos and survivor accounts suggest that birds near the runway could have been sucked into both engines, leading to a compressor stall. This could explain the low climb rate, high nose angle, and eventual stall before impact.

2. **Runway and Surrounding Hazards:** Poor monsoon preparedness is evident. Overgrown grass near the runway may have attracted birds. Additionally, a tall building near the take-off path, which the aircraft struck, raises concerns over obstacle clearance and urban encroachment.

3. **Possible Human Factor Errors:** The aircraft's landing gear was not retracted during flight. Investigators speculate a possible "startle effect" or inexperience during a training flight scenario, compounded by partial thrust loss, may have prevented standard post-takeoff actions.

Need for Deeper Investigative Focus

1. **Foreign Object Damage as a Cause:** The article suggests exploring whether debris on the runway caused damage, similar to the Air France Concorde crash in 2000, which was triggered by a metallic strip puncturing the aircraft's tyre and fuel tank.

2. **Global Oversight in Ongoing Probe:** With U.S. and U.K. investigation teams involved, the scope of the inquiry includes structural hazards like the building's proximity to the flight path, stressing the need to scrutinize construction clearances.

3. **A Chance to Reform or Repeat:** The crash should act as a final warning to overhaul India's aviation safety regime. However, given past patterns, it remains uncertain whether meaningful lessons will be drawn from this tragedy.

Question for practice:

Evaluate the systemic failures in India's aviation oversight that contributed to the Air India AI171 crash in Ahmedabad.

Monetary easing alone cannot boost growth

Source: The post Monetary easing alone cannot boost growth has been created, based on the article "**Rate cuts alone won't revive growth**" published in "**Businessline**" on 14th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper3- Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilisation, of resources, growth, development and employment.

Context: The RBI reduced the repo rate by 50 basis points to 5.5% on June 6 to stimulate growth. This move comes amid falling inflation and global uncertainties. However, the key concern is the continued weakness in consumer demand despite earlier liquidity measures.

For detailed information on **India needs monetary easing to sustain cyclical growth recovery** [read this article here](#)

RBI's Policy Shift and Limited Impact

1. **Rate Cut and Policy Stance:** The RBI's 50 basis point rate cut is the largest since March 2020. Its stance shifted from 'accommodative' to 'neutral', indicating limited future cuts.

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2. **Liquidity Injection and Credit Uptake:** Despite injecting ₹9.5 lakh crore into the system, credit growth has remained sluggish. Liquidity moved from a deficit to a ₹2.9 lakh crore surplus, but credit demand is still weak.

3. **Demand as a Structural Issue:** Weak consumer demand remains the central problem. Liquidity alone is insufficient to boost economic activity without reviving demand.

Aggregate Demand Trends and Limitations

1. **Stable Consumption and Investment Ratios:** Private consumption stands at 57% of GDP, while government consumption is around 10%. Investment levels—GCF at 35% and GFCF at 33%—show long-term stability with little dynamism.

2. **Capacity Utilisation Signals Caution:** OBICUS data shows capacity utilisation around 74%, pointing to limited expansion. Businesses remain cautious due to uncertain demand and slow capital spending.

3. **Key Variations in Demand Components:** Government and investment expenditures show higher variability than private consumption. These are more autonomous and can be used to raise demand in the short to medium term.

Challenges to Private Investment

1. **Demand Uncertainty and ROCE Concerns:** Investment hesitancy is driven by uncertain demand. Firms are unwilling to reduce their ROCE, which has risen from 27% in 2010 to 31% in 2024 and may go higher in 2025.

2. **Trends in Capex Intentions:** MoSPI data shows Capex rose 7% between 2021-22 and 2023-24. But it may decline 25% in 2025-26. Many firms plan to strengthen core assets (40.3%) or upgrade existing ones (28.4%).

3. **Sectoral Divergences:** Sectors like healthcare and manufacturing are investing more due to visible demand. Real estate and trade show reduced investment due to falling demand and structural issues.

Policy Focus for Demand Revival

1. **Boosting Spending and Confidence:** Policies like tax relief, infrastructure investment, and SME support can enhance consumer confidence and demand.

2. **Addressing Structural Gaps:** Solving unemployment and inequality can raise disposable income. Improving ease of doing business can encourage private investment and job growth.

Way forward

1. **Beyond Monetary Tools:** The repo rate cut is positive but insufficient alone. Structural and demand-side measures are essential to make monetary easing effective.

2. **Boosting Long-Term Capacity:** A focus on investment, especially in infrastructure, can unlock multiplier effects and foster sustainable growth.

3. **Consumer Demand at the Core:** True recovery hinges on boosting demand through coordinated monetary, fiscal, and structural reforms.

Question for practice:

Discuss how weak consumer demand and investment uncertainty limit the effectiveness of monetary policy in reviving economic growth.

India must fix its broken aviation investigations

Source: The post India must fix its broken aviation investigations has been created, based on the article “**India needs a sincere aircraft accident investigation**” published in “**The Hindu**” on 16th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper3-Infrastructure

Context: The June 12, 2025 Ahmedabad crash has reignited debate on India’s aviation safety and investigation framework. Despite rapid sectoral growth, investigations remain opaque and compromised. The article questions the independence of the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) and demands reform for transparent, accountable, and preventive aviation safety mechanisms.

For detailed information on **Aviation Safety** [read this article here](#)

Structural Flaws in India’s Aviation Oversight

- 1. Lack of Independent Investigation Authority:** The AAIB, though presented as autonomous, is effectively a wing of the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA). This setup causes a conflict of interest, as MoCA oversees both operations and investigations, unlike the railway sector where independent authorities investigate accidents.
- 2. Oversight Mechanism Is Misaligned:** MoCA controls policy, airline regulation, and investigative appointments. This consolidation limits the independence required for unbiased accident assessments. Such integration erodes public trust in investigation outcomes.
- 3. Firefighting Instead of Prevention:** Recent incidents—including helicopter crashes, flying school accidents, weather-related turbulence, and security lapses—highlight systemic issues. The current approach reacts to events rather than preemptively addressing risk, revealing a broken safety management culture.

Lessons Ignored and Reports Buried

- 1. 1997 Seth Committee Warnings Unheeded:** The J.K. Seth Report exposed flaws such as fragmented oversight, lack of training, and regulatory capture. Though comprehensive, it was sidelined, revealing the system’s unwillingness to confront uncomfortable truths.
- 2. Contradictory and Sanitised Reports:** Past accident investigations show internal contradictions or suppressed facts. The 1993 IC491 crash, 2001 cloud-cover misreporting, and the 2018 IX611 suspected overloading case all demonstrate selective truth-telling and data withholding.
- 3. Convenient Blame on Pilots:** Investigations often conclude pilot error to simplify liability. This serves legal and insurance interests by deflecting blame from other responsible actors—airlines, maintenance units, and ATC—making pilots scapegoats, even posthumously.

Misuse of AAIB Reports and Legal Overreach

- 1. Safety Reports Treated as Legal Evidence:** AAIB findings, meant to aid safety learning, are used in law enforcement without technical validation. Police and courts misinterpret “probable cause” as conclusive guilt, despite lacking aviation expertise.
- 2. Judiciary and Police Overstep Boundaries:** Instead of deeper investigation, blame is often assigned based on visible errors. This focus on fast closure bypasses systemic analysis and obstructs real safety improvements.
- 3. Rule 19(3) Penalises Pilots Unfairly:** The Aircraft Rules allow pilot punishment for errors, contradicting the global norm of a “no-blame” culture. Without proving gross negligence, such provisions erode morale and transparency.

Truth Suppressed for Institutional Protection

1. Systemic Evasion of Accountability: The MoCA's centralised control shields institutions and blocks reform. Families receive incomplete or contradictory reports, and public trust is eroded by the lack of transparency and delayed justice.

2. Global Image vs. Ground Reality: While international reports cite zero fatal accidents, the 2020 Kozhikode crash, with 21 deaths, remains a glaring contradiction. Investigative recommendations remain unimplemented, indicating that safety data is being used to mask inaction.

3. Failure to Learn from Tragedy: Despite repeated failures, structural reform remains elusive. The silence after each crash speaks louder than the recommendations that follow. Institutional courage to admit and correct errors is lacking.

Roadmap for Reform and Accountability

1. Reorganise Regulatory Bodies: Move AAIB and DGCA out of MoCA control and make them report to Parliament. This ensures true autonomy and credible investigations.

2. Restrict Misuse of Findings: Legally bar the use of AAIB reports in criminal cases unless independently vetted. This will restore the original preventive purpose of investigations.

3. Revise Legal Provisions and Create Oversight: Amend Rule 19(3) to safeguard honest pilots. Appoint an independent ombudsman to audit past investigations and ensure fair handling.

4. Reclaiming Truth and Trust: India must prioritise truth over image. Honest investigation is not just a technical need—it is a moral obligation. That, and not managed silence, should be India's tribute to lives lost.

Question for practice:

Examine how the lack of independence in India's aviation investigation system affects the credibility and effectiveness of aircraft accident inquiries.

Madhya Pradesh High Court addresses FIR standards and procedures

Source: The post Madhya Pradesh High Court addresses FIR standards and procedures has been created, based on the article "An FIR and an angry High Court" published in "The Hindu" on 16th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper2- Judiciary

Context: On May 14, the Madhya Pradesh High Court directed the police to file an FIR against Minister Vijay Shah for allegedly inflammatory remarks against Army officer Colonel Sofiya Qureshi. The Court criticized the FIR's lack of detail and decided to monitor the investigation for fairness.

Judicial Action and FIR Order

1. FIR Against Cabinet Minister: The High Court directed registration of an FIR against Shah under Sections 152, 196(1)(b), and 197(1)(c) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. These sections deal with threats to national unity and group enmity.

2. Court's Concern About FIR Quality: Though the FIR was filed at Manpur police station in Indore (Rural), the Court found it deficient in describing actions linked to the listed offences. It warned that such an FIR could be quashed later.

3. Monitoring to Ensure Legal Process: The Court instructed that its May 14 order be read as part of the FIR and decided to oversee the investigation to prevent external influence and ensure lawful conduct.

Legal Standards for FIR Drafting

1. **FIR Must Capture Offence Details:** Section 171(1) of the BNS mandates that information about a cognisable offence, whether oral or electronic, must be recorded. Essential details of the offence must be included in the FIR.
2. **Common Practice of Reproducing Complaints:** Police often copy the written complaint into the FIR. Even when the initial complaint lacks elements of a cognisable offence, the FIR typically includes the complaint and any inquiry results.
3. **Legal Basis for Bail and Protection:** Listing clear elements of the offence helps the accused seek bail and claim other legal safeguards. This transparency supports due process.
4. **Consequences of Incomplete FIRs:** Courts have quashed FIRs that lacked required offence elements. In *Vinod Dua v. Union of India* (2021), the FIR was dismissed for failing to show any offence. In *Arnab Goswami v. Maharashtra* (2020), bail was granted due to lack of prima facie evidence.

Limits and Grounds for FIR Quashing

1. **Inherent Powers of High Courts:** Under Section 528 of the BNS, High Courts may quash FIRs to prevent misuse of judicial process or ensure justice. These powers must be used cautiously.
2. **Guidelines from Bhajan Lal Case:** As per *State of Haryana v. Bhajan Lal* (1992), FIRs can be quashed if they lack essential offence ingredients or relate to non-cognisable offences without proper judicial order.
3. **Other Grounds for Dismissal:** Courts may quash FIRs if evidence disproves allegations, if claims are improbable, or if legal bars apply. Maliciously filed FIRs also qualify.

Case Evaluation and Material Sufficiency

1. **FIR with Court Order Attached:** The FIR includes the Court's May 14 order and video links. If challenged, the order forms part of the evidence.
2. **Assessment of FIR Completeness:** Though it lacks direct quotes from the speech, the FIR is not deficient when read with the attached order.
3. **Prematurity of Harsh Criticism:** The High Court's remarks on police conduct may be premature, as the FIR, combined with the court order, broadly meets legal standards.

Question for practice:

Examine how the Madhya Pradesh High Court addressed the deficiencies in the FIR against Minister Vijay Shah and the legal standards it applied to ensure proper investigation.

India navigates crisis as Israel Iran conflict escalates

Source: The post India navigates crisis as Israel Iran conflict escalates has been created, based on the article "**West Asia's upheaval intensifies India's challenges of geopolitics**" published in "**Live Mints**" on 16th June 2025

UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper2- International Relations

Context: On June 13, Israel launched a large-scale attack on Iran, targeting nuclear facilities, military sites, and residential zones. Iran retaliated with over 200 missiles. This escalation has shifted a fragile diplomatic standoff into a full-scale regional crisis, affecting global security and India's economic interests.

For detailed information on **Israel attacks Iran and escalates regional conflict** [read this article here](#)

Escalation of Israel-Iran Conflict

1. Israel's Aggressive Action: Israel launched a direct attack targeting Iranian nuclear facilities, military bases, and residential areas. It aimed to eliminate military leaders and nuclear scientists. Israel cited the threat of Iran acquiring nuclear weapons, though US experts said Iran's enrichment was not yet weapons-grade.

2. Iran's Missile Response: Iran responded with over 200 ballistic missiles, striking more than 150 Israeli targets, including nuclear and residential zones. This marked a significant escalation from previous proxy methods of conflict.

3. Widespread Damage and Fear: The conflict has already claimed 130 lives, damaged critical infrastructure, and caused widespread fear. What was once a tense diplomatic situation has become an outright military confrontation, raising global alarm.

Global Reactions and Alignments

1. United States 'Position: President Donald Trump's statement made clear the US gave tacit support to Israel. The US, with its military power, now faces a difficult choice between backing Israel and advocating peace.

2. Gulf and Regional Responses: Gulf states condemned Israel's strike. However, rivals like Saudi Arabia and the UAE may find Iran's weakened position advantageous in their own regional rivalry with Tehran.

3. China and Russia's Calculations: China stayed silent, balancing energy ties with Iran and tech cooperation with Israel. Russia called for a UN resolution but knew the US would veto it. Its condemnation lacked strength.

4. Mixed Multilateral Reactions: The SCO, where India is a member, condemned Israel. India, however, distanced itself from the SCO's statement, indicating a deliberate attempt to avoid taking sides.

India's Strategic Dilemma

1. Energy and People at Risk: About 60% of India's crude oil flows through the Strait of Hormuz. Eight million Indian citizens live in the Gulf. A threat to the strait puts India's energy and diaspora at risk.

2. Rising Economic Pressures: A spike in oil prices above \$100 can worsen inflation, increase the current account and fiscal deficits, and pressure the rupee. Weak FDI inflows, already low last year, may decline further.

3. Balancing Competing Interests: India must juggle its Chabahar and energy ties with Iran and its defence and tech partnership with Israel. Staying silent on Israeli aggression risks undermining India's moral and diplomatic credibility.

Economic and Diplomatic Navigation

1. Preserving Strategic Autonomy: India, caught in past global conflicts like Ukraine and Gaza, continues to follow a path of quiet diplomacy to maintain its strategic autonomy and global image.

2. Timely Economic Interventions: The RBI's recent big rate cut and liquidity injection, though surprising earlier, now appear prescient. These moves may help cushion the domestic economy from external shocks.

3. Investment Concerns: Private sector investment-to-GDP ratio has remained at 10% for a decade. A new survey suggests a fall in capex intent, increasing reliance on public capital expenditure for growth support.

Long-Term Strategic Responses

1. **Revamping FDI Strategy:** To reach 2% of GDP in net FDI, India needs fresh thinking. The article suggests allowing Chinese investment in non-sensitive areas like EVs, infrastructure, and renewables. Indian supply chains can benefit.

2. **Diversifying Energy and Exports:** India must reduce its energy dependence on West Asia and broaden its export markets beyond the West. Services exports need a wider global base.

3. **Focus on Human Capital:** India must invest heavily in skilling, research, and human capital development to support economic resilience and global competitiveness in an uncertain world.

Conclusion

The Middle East crisis poses serious threats to India's economy and diplomacy. Yet, it may also open space for India to assert itself as a stronger, balanced, and independent global power.

Question for practice:

Discuss how the Israel-Iran conflict affects India's strategic and economic interests.