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FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

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I. National Conference on Urban Local Bodies & Democratic Strengthening

Key Highlights of the Conference

- **Inauguration & Objective:**
 - Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla inaugurated the *1st National Conference of Chairpersons of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)* in Manesar, Gurugram.
 - Theme: “*Role of Urban Local Bodies in Strengthening Constitutional Democracy and Nation Building.*”
 - Aim: To enhance participatory governance and grassroots democracy through structured urban governance.
- **Enhanced Productivity in Parliament:**
 - Speaker highlighted the **reduction in disruptions** in the 18th Lok Sabha, leading to *more productive, late-night sessions and deeper debates.*
 - Urged that democracy flourishes through **dialogue, patience, and meaningful discussions**, not through protest or placard-waving.
- **Model Practices for Urban Local Bodies (ULBs):**
 - ULBs were advised to adopt **Parliamentary tools** like *Question Hour* and *Zero Hour* to enhance accountability.
 - Emphasis on building **standing committees**, regular sittings, public consultations, and shunning **ad hoc meetings** and disruptions.
 - Speaker urged ULBs to move beyond service delivery and act as **true institutions of self-governance.**
- **Urban Governance and Constitutional Relevance:**
 - Urban local governance is supported by **74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992**, which mandates:
 - Establishment of municipalities as institutions of self-government
 - Regular elections, devolution of powers, and formation of State Finance Commissions
 - Local self-governance reflects India’s **civilizational ethos** and democratic values rooted in *Panchayati Raj* traditions.
- **Women’s Representation & Viksit Bharat 2047 Vision:**
 - Nearly **50% representation of women** in ULBs was appreciated as a sign of inclusive progress.
 - Advocated for leadership development, capacity-building, and exposure for women municipal leaders.
 - ULBs seen as vital engines to achieve the vision of a **Developed India (Viksit Bharat) by 2047.**



Additional Important Points for UPSC

- **Definition:**
 - *Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)* are constitutionally recognized local-level governments in urban areas, including Municipal Corporations, Municipal Councils, and Nagar Panchayats.
 - Their roles include civic planning, sanitation, infrastructure, and service delivery.



- **Legal Provisions & Reforms Suggested:**
 - Institutionalize structured debates and standing committees within ULBs.
 - Create mechanisms for regular citizen interaction, policy forecasting, and democratic decision-making.
 - Strengthen ULB capacity for climate resilience, sustainability, and innovation.
- **Democratic Deepening and Institutional Learning:**
 - The conference encouraged knowledge sharing, transparency, and inclusive development across urban governance structures.
 - Emphasis was placed on building a cadre of *grassroots democratic leaders* with national influence.

Conclusion

The National Conference marked a crucial step toward **urban democratic renewal** and **constitutional empowerment** of ULBs. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla emphasized that **true democracy starts at the grassroots**, and empowered, accountable local bodies will be the foundation of India's journey toward **Viksit Bharat @2047**. The call for **structured governance, gender inclusion, and deliberative democracy** aligns with the constitutional ideals of **Article 40 (Directive Principle on Village Panchayats)** and the **74th Amendment**. Strengthening ULBs is not just an administrative necessity but a democratic imperative.

2. OPCW Asia Regional Meeting in New Delhi (1st–3rd July 2025)

Key Highlights of the Event

- **Event Overview:**
 - India hosted the **23rd Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Asia** under the **Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)** from **1st to 3rd July 2025** in **New Delhi**.
 - Organised jointly by OPCW and **National Authority Chemical Weapons Convention (NACWC)**, Government of India.
 - Attended by **38 delegates from 24 Asian countries**, officials from **UNRCPD, MEA, and Cabinet Secretariat**.





- **OPCW and CWC Context:**
 - The **Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)** came into force in **1997** to eliminate chemical weapons globally.
 - **OPCW**, with **193 member states**, implements the CWC and won the **Nobel Peace Prize (2013)** for its disarmament efforts.
 - India is an **original signatory**, and its nodal agency is **NACWC** under the Cabinet Secretariat.
- **India's Contributions and Recognition:**
 - In **2024**, NACWC mentored Kenya's National Authority under OPCW's **Mentorship/Partnership Programme**.
 - **Indian Chemical Council (ICC)** co-won the prestigious **OPCW–The Hague Award 2024**—first time globally for a chemical industry body—for promoting safety and CWC compliance.
 - Highlights India's **leadership role in chemical safety and international disarmament frameworks**.
- **Discussion Themes at the Meeting:**
 - Focus areas included:
 - National legislative frameworks
 - Chemical safety and security
 - Role of industry and stakeholders
 - Use of **Artificial Intelligence** for compliance and safety
 - Synergies with **UNSC Resolution 1540** (which aims to prevent WMD proliferation to non-state actors)
- **Legal & Institutional Framework (Important for Mains):**
 - The **CWC is a multilateral treaty** prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and their precursors.
 - Article VI of the CWC mandates *international cooperation for peaceful uses of chemicals*.
 - **UNSC Resolution 1540 (2004)**: Obligates States to prevent non-state actors from acquiring WMDs.

Definitions (for Prelims & Mains clarity):

- **OPCW**: An international organisation based in The Hague, Netherlands, responsible for implementing the CWC and conducting inspections of chemical facilities worldwide.
- **NACWC (India)**: The **National Authority for the Chemical Weapons Convention**, responsible for fulfilling India's obligations under the CWC and ensuring compliance domestically.
- **UNSCR 1540**: United Nations Security Council Resolution aimed at preventing the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs), especially to terrorist groups.

Conclusion

The 23rd OPCW Asia Regional Meeting in New Delhi reinforces India's **commitment to global chemical disarmament, capacity-building in the region, and safe industrial practices**. As host and mentor, India has demonstrated diplomatic leadership and technical expertise, furthering cooperation under **multilateral treaties like the CWC**. The emphasis on **AI, stakeholder involvement, and legal harmonization** indicates evolving strategies to strengthen **non-proliferation regimes**. For India's strategic and diplomatic positioning, such platforms enhance its image as a **responsible, peace-oriented, and technologically advanced state** in global disarmament efforts.



3. 'Indian Mango Mania 2025' in Abu Dhabi – Promoting India's Mango Exports

Key Highlights of the Event

- **Promotion of Indian Mangoes Abroad:**
 - APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority), under the **Ministry of Commerce & Industry**, launched '*Indian Mango Mania 2025*' in **Abu Dhabi** in partnership with the **Embassy of India in UAE** and **Lulu Group**.
 - The event was organized to **enhance visibility and exports** of Indian mangoes, especially among the Indian diaspora in the Gulf region.
 - The festival coincided with the **peak mango season** to maximize impact and consumer reach.
- **Showcased Premium & GI-Tagged Varieties:**
 - Over a dozen **premium and Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged mango varieties** were showcased, including:
 - **Banarasi Langda, Dasherri, Chausa, Sunderja, Malda, Amrapali, Mallika, Lakshman Bhog,** and more.
 - Mangoes were sourced from **Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and West Bengal**—regions known for unique mango diversity.
- **APEDA's Export Facilitation & Airlifting:**
 - APEDA ensured **airlifting of mango consignments** from key producing states to the UAE.
 - This supports **mango farmers, FPOs (Farmer Producer Organizations)** and expands **India's global agri-export footprint**.
 - Reinforces India's status as a leading exporter of premium horticultural products.
- **Fusion of Tradition and Innovation in Mango Products:**
 - The festival highlighted both **traditional Indian mango dishes** and **global fusion cuisines**, such as:
 - *Mambazhapayasam, mango pulao, mango chutney* (traditional)
 - *Mango sushi, mango-stuffed chicken, mango chapli kebab* (global fusion)
 - Mango-based **pastries, beverages, pickles, and desserts** showcased value addition in the agri-food chain.
- **Export Figures & Strategic Importance of UAE Market:**
 - In **2024**, India exported **12,000+ metric tonnes** of mangoes to the **UAE**, valued at **USD 20 million**.
 - UAE continues to be India's **top export destination for mangoes**, ensuring sustained market demand and strategic agri-diplomacy.



Definitions & Constitutional/Legal Framework

- **APEDA:** A statutory body established under **APEDA Act, 1985**, responsible for promoting exports of **agricultural and processed food products**, including horticultural produce.



- **GI Tag (Geographical Indication):**
 - Legal protection under the **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999**
 - Indicates a product's **origin-based quality, reputation, or characteristics** (e.g., *Alphonso, Dasher*).
- **FPO/FPC:**
 - **Farmer Producer Organizations/Companies** are groups that enhance farmer bargaining power, market access, and income generation through collective action.

Conclusion

'**Indian Mango Mania 2025**' showcases **India's soft power diplomacy through agriculture**, highlighting the role of premium mangoes as cultural and economic ambassadors. With APEDA's facilitation and industry partnerships like Lulu Group, India strengthens its agri-export presence in strategic markets like the UAE. By promoting **GI-tagged varieties**, encouraging **value addition**, and supporting **FPO participation**, India aligns its agricultural exports with the vision of "**Atmanirbhar Bharat**" and "**Viksit Bharat @2047**". Such initiatives not only boost farmer incomes but also position India as a **global leader in quality agri-produce exports**.

4. DAC Approves ₹ 1.05 Lakh Crore Capital Defence Acquisition Under 'Buy (Indian-IDDMM)' Category

Key Highlights of the Acquisition Approval

- **Massive Indigenous Defence Push:**
 - On **July 3, 2025**, the **Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)** chaired by Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh**, granted **Acceptance of Necessity (AoN)** for **10 capital acquisition proposals** worth **approx. ₹ 1.05 lakh crore**.
 - All acquisitions will be done under the '**Buy (Indian-IDDMM)**' category, prioritizing domestic design, development, and manufacturing.
- **Equipment Approved for Procurement:**
 - Major platforms and systems cleared include:
 - **Armoured Recovery Vehicles** – for increased mobility and operational recovery
 - **Electronic Warfare (EW) Systems** – to strengthen electronic and cyber resilience
 - **Integrated Common Inventory Management System (ICIMS)** – enhancing logistics and supply chain efficiency across the Tri-Services
 - **Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAMs)** – to bolster India's **air defence architecture**
 - For the Navy, clearances include:
 - **Moored Mines, Mine Counter Measure Vessels** – for undersea threat mitigation
 - **Super Rapid Gun Mounts, Submersible Autonomous Vessels** – improving maritime firepower and surveillance capabilities





- **Category Definition – Buy (Indian-IDDMM):**
 - This refers to the **procurement of equipment designed, developed, and manufactured in India**, under the **Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020**.
 - It is the **top priority category** under the **Defence Procurement hierarchy**, aimed at reducing dependence on foreign OEMs and promoting **self-reliance in defence**.
- **Legal and Strategic Framework:**
 - Defence acquisitions are governed by the **Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020**, replacing the earlier DPP.
 - The AoN process is part of the **multi-tier procurement cycle**, which includes SQR formulation, RFP issuance, and contract negotiation.
 - Supports the **Make in India** and **Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan** initiatives as per **Article 73 (Union’s executive power on defence matters)** and **Entry 1, List I (Union List)** of the Constitution.
- **Strategic & Economic Significance:**
 - Enhances **operational preparedness** of Army, Navy, and Air Force through **next-gen indigenous technology**.
 - Promotes **defence MSMEs, startups, and DPSUs** by creating demand for domestically developed subsystems and components.
 - Strengthens India's global positioning as a **defence manufacturing hub** and supports export potential.

Definitions for UPSC

- **Defence Acquisition Council (DAC):** Apex body under Ministry of Defence for capital procurement decisions in defence; chaired by the Raksha Mantri.
- **Acceptance of Necessity (AoN):** First formal step in the defence procurement process, signifying government approval to initiate acquisition.
- **Buy (Indian-IDDMM):** Category under which products must have a minimum of 50% indigenous content and be designed & developed in India.

Conclusion

The DAC’s clearance of ₹ 1.05 lakh crore worth of proposals under the **Buy (Indian-IDDMM)** category reflects India’s **strategic shift towards defence self-reliance**. It marks a significant step toward **reducing import dependency, modernising the armed forces, and promoting indigenous defence technology ecosystems**. This aligns with India’s long-term vision of becoming a **net security provider in the Indo-Pacific** and achieving the goals under **Viksit Bharat @2047** through a strong and self-sufficient defence sector.

5. Strengthening Capacity Building of Civil Servants in Telangana under Mission Karmayogi

Key Highlights of the Meeting



- **High-Level Engagements in Telangana:**
 - On **2nd July 2025**, the **Mission Karmayogi** team met the **Governor of Telangana, Shri Jishnu Dev Varma**, and **Chief Secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao** in Hyderabad.
 - The team included officials from the **Capacity Building Commission (CBC)** and **Karmayogi Bharat**, who reviewed the implementation progress and sought feedback for future initiatives.
- **Mission Karmayogi's Vision Explained:**
 - Aimed at creating a **future-ready, digitally empowered, and citizen-centric civil service**.
 - The programme promotes **competency-based training**, moving away from rule-based and seniority-centric models.
 - It seeks to improve **efficiency, empathy, and accountability** in government service delivery.
- **Focus on iGOTKarmayogi Platform:**
 - The **iGOTKarmayogi digital platform** offers **anytime-anywhere** learning for government officials.
 - Facilitates **customized learning paths** aligned with department-specific governance goals.
 - Telangana has decided to **onboard officials from multiple departments** to the platform, with support from the state's training institutions.
- **Institutional Mechanism & Support:**
 - Discussions highlighted the **role of state training institutions** in identifying local learning needs and facilitating digital onboarding.
 - The **Governor and Chief Secretary** expressed strong support, reflecting **inter-governmental collaboration** for civil services reform.
 - Emphasizes need for **dynamic and localized training modules** rooted in regional administrative priorities.



Definitions & Constitutional/Legal Framework

- **Mission Karmayogi:** A **National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB)** launched in **2020** to reform bureaucratic learning and performance frameworks.
- **Capacity Building Commission (CBC):** A statutory body to oversee, coordinate, and regulate the capacity-building ecosystem in civil services.
- **iGOTKarmayogi:** An **Integrated Government Online Training** platform enabling digital learning and training for civil servants across India.
- **Legal Provision:** Though Mission Karmayogi is an executive initiative, it aligns with **Article 309** of the Constitution (regulation of service conditions of civil servants) and **good governance principles under DPSPs**.



Conclusion

The implementation of **Mission Karmayogi in Telangana** marks a significant step in creating a **modern, responsive, and citizen-focused civil service**. Through tools like the **iGOT platform** and collaborative leadership from the Governor and Chief Secretary, the initiative aims to embed a **culture of continuous learning** and **competency-driven performance**. This aligns with the larger national goal of **transforming governance through digital, accountable, and ethical public administration** under the vision of *Viksit Bharat @2047*.

6. NITI Aayog Launches Report on Chemical Industry – Roadmap to Global Leadership

Key Highlights of the Report

- **Ambitious Industrial Vision for Viksit Bharat @2047:**
 - NITI Aayog released a comprehensive report titled "**Chemical Industry: Powering India's Participation in Global Value Chains**" on 3rd July 2025.
 - The report aims to **transform India into a \$1 trillion chemical manufacturing hub by 2040**, increasing its **share in Global Value Chains (GVCs)** from **3.5% (2023)** to **5–6% by 2040**.
 - Targets creation of **7 lakh additional skilled jobs** and **\$35–40 billion** in incremental exports by 2030.
- **Current Challenges Identified:**
 - **Trade Deficit:** India had a **chemical trade deficit of USD 31 billion** in 2023 due to import dependence on feedstock and specialty chemicals.
 - **Infrastructure Gaps:** Outdated clusters, poor port infrastructure, and high logistics costs increase production costs.
 - **R&D Deficit:** India's chemical sector invests **only 0.7% in R&D**, below the global average of **2.3%**, hindering innovation in high-value and green chemicals.
 - **Regulatory Delays:** Complex environmental clearances and **30% shortfall in skilled professionals**, especially in green chemistry and process safety, limit industrial agility.
- **Proposed Strategic Interventions:**
 - **Chemical Hubs:** Development of **8 high-potential clusters** with shared infrastructure and special committees under a **Chemical Fund**.
 - **Port Infrastructure:** Strengthening chemical handling capacity at ports through **dedicated chemical committees**.
 - **Opex Subsidies:** New scheme to **incentivize incremental production**, especially for chemicals critical to reducing import dependence.
 - **Tech & R&D Boost:**
 - Creation of an **interface agency (DCPC–DST)** for industry-academia collaboration.
 - Partnership with MNCs for access to global technologies.



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- **Environmental Clearances:** Fast-tracking approvals by empowering the **Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC)** and setting up **audit mechanisms** under DPIIT.
- **Free Trade Agreements (FTAs):**
 - Sector-specific FTA provisions including **tariff quotas and duty exemptions**.
 - Promotion of FTA awareness and simplification of **Rules of Origin**.
- **Skill Development:**
 - Expand **ITIs and training institutes** in chemical-related fields.
 - Strengthen **faculty development and industry-academia partnerships** for curriculum alignment.

Legal & Policy Framework

- **Constitutional Backing:**
 - **Entry 24, List II (State List): Industries; Entry 52, List I (Union List): Regulation of industrial undertakings in public interest.**
 - Aligns with **Article 39(c) and 41** (Directive Principles of State Policy) promoting equitable economic growth and skill development.
- **Institutional Support:**
 - Interventions coordinated through **Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals (DCPC)** and **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**.
 - Environment regulation under **MoEFCC and EIA Notification 2006**—to be streamlined.

Definitions for UPSC

- **Global Value Chain (GVC):** Sequence of production stages across countries adding value to a product.
- **Opex Subsidy:** Operational Expenditure-based subsidy to incentivize production expansion, different from capital subsidies.
- **Chemical Clusters:** Geographically concentrated zones with shared facilities and regulatory support for chemical manufacturing.
- **FTA (Free Trade Agreement):** Pact between two or more countries to reduce barriers for trade in goods and services.

Conclusion

NITI Aayog's strategic roadmap is a **transformative blueprint** for India to become a **global chemical manufacturing powerhouse**. By **revamping industrial infrastructure, enhancing R&D, fast-tracking environmental clearances, and strengthening FTAs and skill training**, the vision aligns with *Viksit Bharat @2047*. These reforms will **reduce the trade deficit**, boost **exports**, generate **large-scale employment**, and elevate India's **competitiveness in global markets**, thereby supporting **inclusive and sustainable economic growth**.



7. Global Poverty & Development Finance Crisis – Insights from 4th UN Conference on Financing for Development

Key Highlights of the Seville UN Conference

- **Massive Development Financing Gap Identified:**
 - The **4th International Conference on Financing for Development** held in **Seville** brought together **100+ countries**, businesses, and NGOs.
 - Developing countries are facing an estimated **\$4 trillion/year shortfall** to achieve the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** by 2030.
 - This includes crucial areas like **poverty eradication, education, healthcare, gender equality, and climate action**.
- **Decline in Global Aid & Donor Commitment:**
 - In **2024**, **Official Development Assistance (ODA)** by **OECD countries** fell by **7.1%**, reaching **\$212.1 billion**.
 - This sharp decline comes amid rising **US isolationism** and a shift in donor priorities towards domestic challenges, undermining global development efforts.
 - The poorest nations, particularly **heavily indebted low-income countries**, are disproportionately affected.
- **Ballooning Debt Crisis in the Global South:**
 - Many developing and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are trapped in a **debt-service crisis**, spending more on repaying loans than on health or education.
 - The conference saw renewed calls to **restructure sovereign debt**, ensure **debt sustainability**, and **reform global financial institutions** like the IMF and World Bank.
- **India's Role and South-South Cooperation:**
 - As a **leading voice of the Global South**, **India** can play a crucial role by:
 - Promoting **South-South cooperation** and **development partnerships** via institutions like **EXIM Bank** and **Development Partnership Administration (DPA)**.
 - Sharing **best practices in digital public infrastructure**, low-cost innovations, and inclusive welfare models.
 - Supporting multilateral reforms that enhance the **voice and agency of developing countries** in global governance structures.



Constitutional & Legal Context (India)

- **Article 51 (Directive Principles of State Policy):**
 - Promotes international peace, justice, and cooperation—aligning with India's participation in global poverty eradication initiatives.
- **SDGs and NITI Aayog:**
 - India has institutionalized SDG monitoring through **NITI Aayog**, linking it to national planning and budgeting frameworks.



- **EXIM Bank Act, 1981:**
 - Governs India's financial assistance and credit support to foreign countries, particularly developing nations.

Definitions for UPSC

- **Official Development Assistance (ODA):**
Financial flows provided by donor countries to promote economic development and welfare in developing countries, typically concessional in nature.
- **SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals):**
A set of **17 global goals** adopted by the UN in **2015** under the **2030 Agenda**, aiming to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all.
- **South-South Cooperation:**
Collaborative efforts among developing countries to share knowledge, skills, and resources without dependency on traditional Western donors.

Conclusion

The **Seville Financing for Development Conference** has highlighted an urgent and growing gap between **developmental needs and available funding**, especially as donor countries retreat and debt burdens mount. The **global pursuit of SDGs is at risk** unless bold, cooperative, and inclusive financial reforms are adopted. **India**, with its emerging leadership in the Global South, has both an opportunity and responsibility to champion new **development finance architectures**, foster **solidarity-based partnerships**, and advocate for a **rebalanced, just, and equitable global order**.

8. Rise of One-Person Companies & LLPs – Boosting Formalization of Indian Economy

Key Highlights of the Trend

- **Growth in One-Person Companies (OPCs):**
 - As per **Ministry of Corporate Affairs** data (Jan–May 2025), **6,281 One-Person Companies** were formed—**26% more** than the same period last year.
 - **April–May 2025** witnessed a sharp **56% and 36% year-on-year increase**, respectively.
 - OPCs offer **limited liability** like a company, but with **simplified compliance**, benefiting **solo entrepreneurs** and start-ups.
- **Rise in LLP Registrations:**
 - **Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs)** saw a **27% jump** in incorporation from Jan–Jun 2025, totaling **43,489 registrations**.
 - Barring February, each month saw an increase between **18% to 62%**, showing robust adoption across sectors, especially in **services and start-ups**.
- **Policy Reforms Boosting Formalization:**
 - **Companies Act, 2013** enabled OPCs; **LLP Act, 2008** governs LLPs.
 - In **2021**, government removed mandatory conversion thresholds for OPCs and reduced the



residency requirement for Indian citizens from **182 to 120 days**.

- NRIs were also allowed to set up OPCs, broadening entrepreneurial participation.
- **Ease of Doing Business and Economic Formalization:**
 - **Simplified compliance, tax incentives, and digital processes** have made OPCs and LLPs attractive for **small businesses and professionals**, especially in the **gig economy**.
 - These forms allow access to **formal credit, better governance, and economic transparency**, supporting India's drive towards formalization.

Definitions & Legal Framework for UPSC

- **One-Person Company (OPC):**
A type of company under **Section 2(62)** of the *Companies Act, 2013*, owned and managed by a **single person with limited liability**.
- **Limited Liability Partnership (LLP):**
Governed by the *LLP Act, 2008*, it combines benefits of a **company (limited liability)** and a **partnership (flexibility in management)**.
- **Formalization of Economy:**
The process by which economic activities and enterprises transition from informal to **legally recognized**, regulated forms—enabling taxation, worker protection, and credit access.

Challenges & Broader Context

- Despite rising OPCs and LLPs, **majority of businesses remain informal**—India has **73.4 million non-farm unincorporated enterprises** (as of Sep 2024), compared to:
 - **18.9 million companies**
 - **4 lakh+ LLPs**
 - **68,000+ OPCs**
- The **informal sector** still plays a significant role in job creation and GDP but lacks formal access to **credit, legal protection, and social security**.

Conclusion

The surge in OPCs and LLPs signals a **positive trend in formalizing India's entrepreneurial ecosystem**, reflecting improved **ease of doing business, digital adoption, and regulatory simplification**. However, the **informal sector remains dominant**, necessitating continued efforts in **financial inclusion, legal support, and capacity building**. By scaling such simplified legal entities, **India can expand its tax base, foster innovation, and empower micro-entrepreneurs**, advancing its journey toward **Viksit Bharat @2047**.

9. India–US to Sign 10-Year Defence Framework – Strategic Cooperation Deepens

Key Developments in India–US Defence Partnership

- **10-Year Defence Framework Agreement Finalized:**
 - India and the United States have agreed to formalize a **new 10-year Defence Framework**, aimed at deepening strategic and military ties.



- This will replace the earlier 2015 agreement and is expected to be signed **later in 2025** during a ministerial-level meeting.
- **Pentagon Statement Highlights Strategic Importance:**
 - US Defence Secretary **Pete Hegseth** and Indian Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** reaffirmed mutual commitment to advancing defence cooperation.
 - The Pentagon termed **India as a “key defence partner in South Asia”**, reflecting Washington’s strategic pivot towards the Indo-Pacific.
- **Defence Industrial Cooperation and Defence Sales:**
 - Both sides discussed **pending major defence sales**, including supply of **GE F404 engines** and proposed **joint production of GE F414 engines** for Tejas Mark 1A fighter jets.
 - Singh urged for **expedited delivery of engines** to avoid further delays in HAL’s production schedule for Indian Air Force.
- **Joint Production and ‘Make in India’ Defence Manufacturing:**
 - The proposed deal between **HAL and GE Aerospace** for **co-producing F414 engines** in India aligns with the **‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’** defence manufacturing goals.
 - This initiative will boost India’s indigenous capacity to produce advanced jet engine technologies and reduce reliance on imports.

Legal, Strategic & Constitutional Context

- **Article 73 (Union Executive Power)** allows the Central Government to enter into international defence agreements.
- **Strategic Partnership Agreements (SPAs):**
 - India is designated as a **“Major Defense Partner”** by the US under the **2016 NDAA**, enabling high-end tech transfer.
- **COMCASA, LEMOA, BECA:**
 - India and US have signed foundational defence agreements enabling **interoperability, secure communication, logistics, and geo-spatial intelligence sharing**.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India Mission):**
 - Aims to indigenize defence production, reduce arms imports, and foster joint ventures under **Buy & Make (Indian)** and **IDDM** categories.



Definitions for UPSC

- **Defence Framework Agreement:**

A long-term strategic pact that outlines goals for bilateral military cooperation including joint production, R&D, logistics, and technology transfer.
- **GE F404 & F414 Jet Engines:**
 - **F404** powers the earlier Tejas variants; **F414** is a more powerful engine proposed for **Tejas Mk 2**, enhancing India’s fighter capabilities.



- **Tejas LCA (Light Combat Aircraft):**

An indigenously developed fighter aircraft by HAL, designed for multi-role capabilities and light air combat.

Conclusion

The decision to ink a **10-year Defence Framework Agreement** signifies a **strategic deepening of India–US defence relations**, reflecting mutual interests in **Indo-Pacific security, indigenous defence manufacturing, and advanced tech cooperation**. Timely delivery and joint production of critical defence equipment like jet engines will not only address India’s immediate operational requirements but also enhance long-term self-reliance in aerospace technologies. The agreement positions India as a **critical security and economic partner** in the evolving global order, especially amid rising geopolitical tensions.

10. New ISRO Satellites to Enhance IMD Forecasting Accuracy

Key Developments: Advanced INSAT Satellites for Weather Forecasting

- **Launch of INSAT-4 Generation Satellites by 2028–29:**
 - The **Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)** has proposed that **ISRO** build and launch **two advanced 4th-generation INSAT satellites** to replace the aging 3rd-generation satellites.
 - These satellites, with an estimated cost of **₹1,800 crore**, will be funded by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences** and are expected to significantly boost IMD’s short- and medium-range weather forecasting accuracy.
- **Enhanced Capabilities of the New Satellites:**
 - Equipped with **state-of-the-art sensors** for **lightning prediction, cloudbursts, humidity, and wind mapping**, the satellites will enable **3D atmospheric observation** over land and ocean.
 - Their **higher spatial and temporal resolution** will fill gaps in current forecasting—especially in **remote areas** like oceans, the Himalayas, and polar regions.
- **Limitations of Current Technology & Need for Upgrade:**
 - Current satellites provide images every 15 minutes at **1 km resolution (visible)** and **4 km resolution (infrared)**, limiting small-scale event detection.
 - **Radars**, while accurate, are limited to 500 km coverage and cannot be deployed in remote terrains or over oceans, making **satellites essential** for all-weather, wide-area observation.
- **IMD’s International Satellite Data Integration:**
 - In addition to Indian satellites, the IMD uses data from **European, Japanese, and Korean satellites**.
 - Despite this, the **absence of high-resolution domestic satellites** restricts the forecasting of **cloudbursts, thunderstorms, and extreme events**.



Constitutional, Legal & Scientific Relevance



- **Constitutional Provision:**
 - **Article 51A(h):** It is the duty of every citizen to develop scientific temper, which includes the application of scientific technologies like satellites in public services such as weather forecasting.
- **Institutional Frameworks Involved:**
 - **ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation):** National space agency responsible for satellite development.
 - **IMD (India Meteorological Department):** Premier agency under the Ministry of Earth Sciences for meteorological observations, forecasting, and disaster warning.
- **Definition – Geostationary Satellite:**

A satellite in orbit over the equator with a 24-hour period, appearing stationary relative to the Earth. Useful for **continuous weather monitoring** of the same region.

Importance for Disaster Preparedness and Climate Resilience

- **Disaster Mitigation:**
 - With increasing **extreme weather events** (e.g., lightning, cyclones, cloudbursts), better satellite-based forecasting can help **reduce fatalities** and **enable timely warnings**.
 - In **March-April 2025**, **162 deaths** were reported due to lightning, underlining the urgency of improved weather tools.
- **Climate Adaptation and Governance:**
 - Improved forecasting aligns with India's **Sendai Framework** commitments for disaster risk reduction.
 - Also supports goals under **SDG 13 (Climate Action)** and **SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities)**.

Conclusion

The development of **next-gen INSAT-4 satellites** marks a crucial step in **strengthening India's meteorological infrastructure**, ensuring **better disaster preparedness, climate resilience, and scientific decision-making**. Leveraging **indigenous space technology** through ISRO and **data assimilation** by IMD, India can enhance its forecasting capabilities, especially for **remote and high-risk areas**, contributing to the broader vision of **Digital India and Atmanirbhar Bharat**.

11. RBI Announces ₹1 Trillion 7-Day Variable Rate Reverse Repo Auction (July 4, 2025)

Key Highlights of the Announcement

- **Auction Type and Date:**
 - The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** will conduct a **7-day Variable Rate Reverse Repo (VRRR)** auction on **4th July 2025** worth **₹1 trillion**.
 - This decision was taken **after reviewing the prevailing liquidity conditions** in the banking system.





- **Change in Monetary Operation Schedule:**
 - The RBI scrapped the earlier planned 14-day main VRRR auction scheduled on 27 June 2025, replacing it with a shorter 7-day operation, signaling a need for shorter-term liquidity adjustment.

Important Definitions for UPSC

- **Reverse Repo Rate:**
The interest rate at which the RBI borrows money from commercial banks, used to absorb excess liquidity from the banking system.
- **Variable Rate Reverse Repo (VRRR):**
A liquidity tool where banks park their surplus funds with RBI through auction, and the rate is determined by market bidding, unlike the fixed reverse repo rate.

Constitutional & Regulatory Provisions

- **Article 312:** Empowers creation of All India Services like the Indian Economic Service, which plays a role in monetary policy advisory.
- **RBI Act, 1934:**
 - Empowers RBI to manage **monetary stability**, including **liquidity operations**.
 - **Section 45U and 45W** specifically deal with **repo and reverse repo operations** as part of the **Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF)**.

Context and Importance for Economy

- **Liquidity Management:**
 - This move aims to **absorb excess liquidity** from the banking system, ensuring **price stability** and **monetary discipline**.
 - It aligns with the RBI's inflation targeting and broader **monetary policy stance**.
- **Banking System Efficiency:**
 - Shorter tenor operations like 7-day VRRR allow **greater flexibility** in managing **day-to-day liquidity mismatches**.
 - Helps banks optimize their balance sheets while also **earning interest** on parked funds.

Conclusion

The RBI's ₹1 trillion 7-day VRRR auction reflects its **proactive stance on liquidity calibration** amid evolving economic conditions. By fine-tuning the maturity profile of its liquidity operations, the RBI seeks to **balance inflation control with economic growth**. Such short-term monetary operations are essential tools under the **Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF)**, reinforcing the **transparency and dynamism of India's monetary framework**, and are critical in the backdrop of fluctuating **money market conditions**.



12. India's First Weather Derivatives Planned: A Step Towards Climate-Resilient Agriculture

Key Highlights

- **MoU Signed:**
 - The **National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX)** and the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** on **26 June 2025**.
 - The MoU will lay the **foundational framework** for launching **India's first weather derivatives**, a financial instrument designed to mitigate weather-related risks.
- **Purpose of Weather Derivatives:**
 - Aim to protect **farmers, agribusinesses, and allied sectors** from **climate-related uncertainties** like **erratic rainfall, heatwaves, and unseasonal weather** events.
 - Will offer **seasonal and location-specific derivative contracts**, allowing stakeholders to hedge risks effectively.



Definition and Relevance of Weather Derivatives

- **Weather Derivative:**

A financial contract that allows the holder to **hedge or speculate on the risk of weather fluctuations**. Unlike crop insurance, payouts are **based on a weather index (like temperature or rainfall)** rather than actual losses.

 - Example: A farmer in Maharashtra can hedge against rainfall falling below a specified threshold during the Kharif season.
- **Global Practice:**

Already used in **developed countries** like the USA and EU to **protect businesses from weather volatility** in agriculture, energy, and transportation sectors.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Entry 33, Concurrent List – Seventh Schedule:** Empowers both Centre and States to legislate on trade and commerce in agricultural produce and commodities.
- **Forward Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1952** (now repealed, replaced under SEBI): Governs **commodity derivatives trading**, regulated now by **SEBI**.
- **IMD under Ministry of Earth Sciences** provides the **data backbone** necessary for weather-based financial products.

Significance for UPSC & Governance

- **Agricultural Risk Management:**

Weather derivatives will complement **existing crop insurance schemes** like PMFBY by offering **market-based climate risk hedging**.



- **Economic Impact:**
 - Will enhance **economic resilience** in rural India.
 - Potential to boost **investor confidence** in agri-derivatives markets.
- **Climate Adaptation Tool:**
 - Vital for **disaster risk reduction** and **climate change adaptation** strategies under India's **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)**.

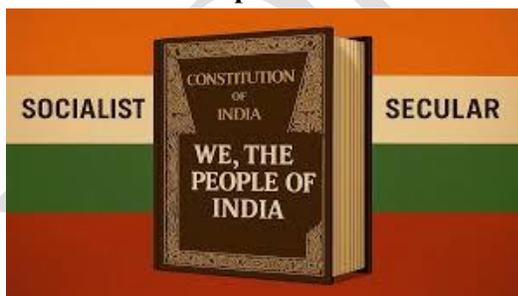
Conclusion

The launch of **India's first weather derivatives** signifies a transformative step in **climate-risk management**, particularly in the **agriculture and allied sectors**. By integrating **financial innovation with meteorological science**, it empowers farmers and agri-businesses to better cope with **climatic unpredictability**. Going forward, this initiative can play a crucial role in **enhancing economic security, stabilizing rural incomes, and supporting the government's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat** in agriculture.

13. Socialism and Secularism – The Spirit of the Indian Constitution

Core Highlights

- **Foundational Ideals – Socialism & Secularism:**
 - Though added to the **Preamble by the 42nd Amendment (1976)** during the Emergency, both values were **inherent in the Constitution** from inception.
 - These are deeply embedded in **Fundamental Rights (Part III)** and **Directive Principles of State Policy (Part IV)**, not just limited to words in the Preamble.
- **Definition and Constitutional Interpretation:**
 - **Socialism** in the Indian context refers to **social and economic justice, elimination of inequality, and creation of a welfare state**.
 - **Secularism** ensures that the State maintains **equidistance from all religions**, providing **equal treatment and protection** to all faiths. It is **not anti-religion**, but **non-theocratic and pluralistic**.



Allowed the state to regulate secular activities related to religion – indicating **pre-existing secular intent**.

- **Judicial Affirmation – Basic Structure Doctrine:**
 - In **Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973)**, the **Basic Structure Doctrine** was laid down.
 - Later SC judgments reaffirmed that **secularism and socialism form part of this basic structure**, which Parliament **cannot amend or dilute**.

- **Key Constitutional Provisions:**

- **Articles 14–16:** Equality before law, non-discrimination, and equal opportunity.
- **Articles 25–28:** Right to freedom of religion.
- **Articles 38–43:** Directive Principles reflecting socialist orientation (e.g., reducing inequalities, ensuring living wages).
- **Article 25(2)(a)** (even before the 42nd Amendment):



- **Objective Resolution & Freedom Struggle Roots:**
 - The **Objective Resolution (1946)** moved by Jawaharlal Nehru and debates in the **Constituent Assembly** show the **clear vision of a socialist and secular state** even before formal codification.
 - These values are products of India's **anti-colonial, inclusive, and democratic freedom struggle**.

Political and Ideological Context

- **RSS Controversy:**
 - Recent comments by **RSS leaders** to remove these words under the guise of opposing the Emergency period have **political and ideological undertones**.
 - Critics argue this is an attempt to **undermine the inclusive and pluralistic fabric** of the Constitution and **push for a majoritarian narrative**.
- **Historical Irony:**
 - The RSS was **not part of the freedom struggle**, and during the Emergency, it allegedly **compromised with the ruling regime** for survival.
 - Using that same period now to challenge constitutional principles is seen as **hypocritical** by many constitutional scholars and political observers.

Conclusion

Socialism and secularism are **not foreign insertions**, but **core ideals** of India's Constitution. They are essential to the **idea of India as a sovereign, democratic republic**, and form part of its **unchangeable basic structure**. Attempts to remove them are **not merely legal alterations**, but **existential threats** to India's **constitutional morality, democratic pluralism, and social justice ethos**. It is imperative for all institutions and citizens to defend these values in order to **preserve the soul of the Indian Republic**.

14. Is U.S. Imperialism a Threat to the World?

Core Issues and Geopolitical Relevance

- **U.S. Military Interventions & International Law Violation:**
 - The **U.S. attack on Iranian nuclear facilities** during the Israel-Iran conflict is a **violation of international law**, similar to its earlier unilateral military actions in **Iraq and Afghanistan**.
 - These acts are perceived as part of a **pattern of U.S. imperialism**, undermining global norms and the **UN Charter** which prohibits the use of force except in self-defense or with Security Council approval (Article 2(4), UN Charter).
- **Decline of U.S. Hegemony & Rise of China:**
 - U.S. power is in **structural decline**—economically, diplomatically, and ideologically—while **China's rise** in trade, renewables, and electronics is challenging U.S. global dominance.
 - The **trade war, Asia-Pacific pivot, and strategic containment** policies show the U.S.'s anxiety toward China's expanding influence.
- **India's Foreign Policy Dilemma – Autonomy vs Alignment:**
 - India's increasing alignment with the **U.S. (e.g., Quad, defence deals)** reduces its room for **strategic autonomy** in a multipolar world.
 - Refusal to condemn U.S. actions in Iran or distancing from **SCO and BRICS** positions risks **undermining India's claim to Global South leadership and non-aligned tradition**.



- **Multipolar vs Bipolar World Order:**
 - A **bipolar world (U.S.–China)** restricts agency for regional powers like **India, Brazil, and South Africa**.
 - A **multipolar global order** with strong multilateral institutions is ideal for balanced diplomacy, especially for **Global South** nations facing the brunt of imperial economic and military policies.

Constitutional & Legal Perspectives

- **India's Strategic Autonomy Principle:**
 - Rooted in **Panchsheel Principles** and the **Non-Aligned Movement**, India's foreign policy has historically been independent.
 - Alignments without legislative or parliamentary oversight may **contradict the spirit of democratic accountability** embedded in India's foreign relations approach (Article 75 – collective responsibility of the Council of Ministers).
- **Violation of International Law by Hegemons:**
 - **UN Charter, Geneva Conventions**, and principles of **sovereignty** and **non-intervention** are often ignored by hegemonic powers.
 - The U.S.'s selective application of international law undermines the **international rule-based order**, affecting global peace and security.

Role and Potential of Global South

- **Need for Collective Voice:**
 - The **Global South** must resist economic coercion, trade imbalances, and climate injustice aggravated by U.S.-led policies.
 - Forums like **BRICS, SCO, and G77** can be instrumental, but India's inconsistent stances limit its leadership potential.
- **Alternatives to Failed Multilateralism:**
 - With the weakening of global institutions like **WTO** and **UN**, the Global South must adopt **minilateral mechanisms** to promote shared interests and resist neocolonial agendas.

Definitions & Key Concepts for UPSC

- **Imperialism:** A policy of extending a country's power through military force or diplomacy over other territories.
- **Strategic Autonomy:** The ability of a state to pursue its national interests and make decisions independently in foreign policy.
- **Multipolarity:** A global system where multiple nations hold significant power, allowing for more balanced international relations.

Conclusion

U.S. imperialism poses a serious challenge to international law, sovereignty, and balanced global governance. For India, **strategic autonomy and principled non-alignment** are key to maintaining credibility as a **leader of the Global South**. Aligning too closely with hegemonic powers may restrict India's role in shaping a **just, multipolar world order**. The future lies in **coalition-building, diplomatic consistency, and norm-based multilateralism**, not in strategic opportunism.