



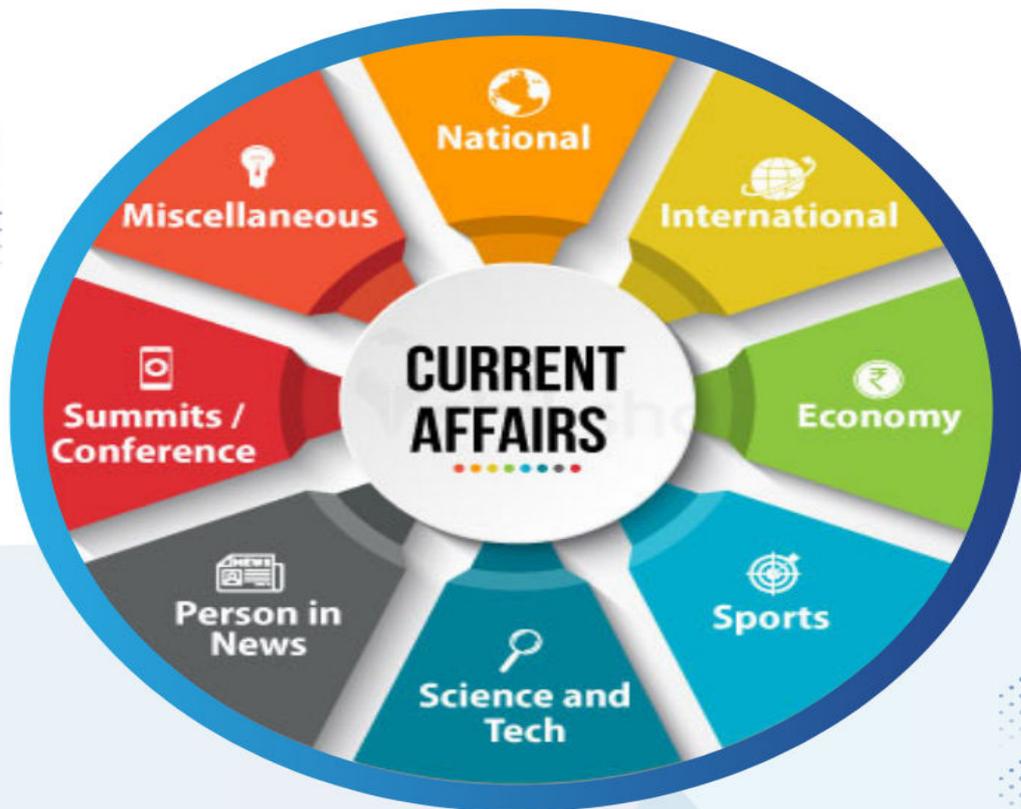
“ We help you reach for the star ”

VIDHVATH IAS KAS ACADEMY & **STUDY CENTRE**

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

DATE: 02/09/2025 (TUESDAY)



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1. SCO Heads Condemn Terrorist Attack in Pahalgam

- **Condemnation of Terrorism:** The 10-member Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), including India, Pakistan, Russia, and China, strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms, specifically the Pahalgam attack in India and terror incidents in Pakistan. The **Tianjin Declaration** reaffirmed the bloc's commitment to combat terrorism, separatism, and extremism.
- **Call Against Cross-Border Terrorism:** The declaration stressed the need to stop cross-border movement of terrorists, an issue of direct relevance to India due to its long-standing concerns over cross-border terrorism from Pakistan.
- **Opposition to Use of Terrorism for Political Gains:** The SCO emphasized that terrorist, separatist, and extremist groups must not be used for “**mercenary purposes**”, highlighting misuse of such groups in proxy wars or state-sponsored activities.
- **Economic & Geopolitical Stand:** The member states opposed “**unilateral coercive measures**” (including economic sanctions) that violate the **UN Charter** and **WTO principles**—implicitly referring to U.S. sanctions and tariffs.
- **China's Stand on Global Order:** Chinese President Xi Jinping criticized global “bullying behavior” and urged nations to oppose **Cold War mentality**, calling for fairness, justice, and multipolar cooperation in the world order.
- **Definition (Key Term):**
 - **Terrorism** – Unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, to pursue political, ideological, or religious objectives.
 - **Separatism** – Advocacy of separation of a certain group of people from a larger political unit based on ethnicity, religion, or ideology.
 - **Unilateral Coercive Measures** – Sanctions or restrictions imposed by one state without UN approval, often seen as violating international law.



Constitutional & Legal Relevance (India)

- **Article 51 of the Constitution:** Directs the State to promote international peace and security, respect international law, and foster relations among nations.
- **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA):** India's main anti-terror law aligning with global efforts against terrorism.
- **National Security Act, 1980:** Provides preventive detention to maintain public order and security.
- **UN Charter & WTO Principles:** India supports multilateralism and opposes unilateral sanctions, aligning with SCO's stand.

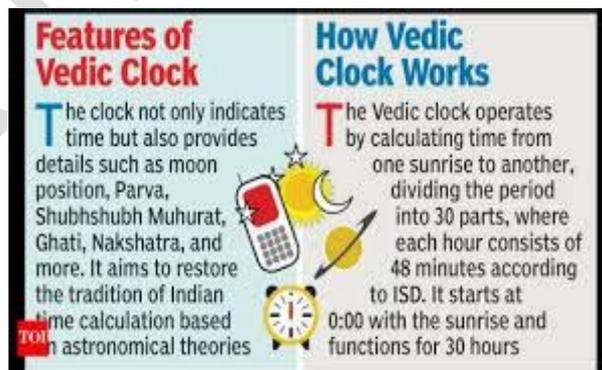
Conclusion & UPSC Relevance

The SCO's Tianjin Declaration strengthens India's diplomatic backing on cross-border terrorism while highlighting divergences on global economic sanctions. For India, it provides a multilateral forum to isolate terrorism supporters, though contradictions remain with Pakistan as a member. The event reflects broader themes of **multipolarity, global governance, and counter-terrorism cooperation**, making it significant for **UPSC GS-II (International Relations)** and **GS-III (Internal Security)**.



2. Launch of 'Vedic Clock' and Mobile App

- **Introduction of Vedic Clock:** Madhya Pradesh CM Mohan Yadav launched the **Vikramaditya Vedic Clock** and its mobile app in Bhopal, linking the traditional Hindu **Panchang** (religious calendar) and time calculation system with modern digital technology.
- **Cultural & Scientific Heritage:** The initiative highlights India's **ancient systems of time calculation**, rooted in astronomy and Vedic knowledge, as a part of the nation's **scientific and cultural heritage**.
- **Digital Accessibility:** A physical digital version of the clock was inaugurated at the CM's residence, and the mobile app—available in **189 languages**—makes traditional Vedic time and Panchang details easily accessible to people globally.
- **Significance of Vikramaditya Calendar:** The project draws upon the **Vikram Samvat** calendar, established by King Vikramaditya, which is still used in various parts of India and Nepal for cultural and religious observances.
- **Definition (Key Terms):**
 - **Panchang:** A traditional Hindu calendar based on astronomical calculations, used to determine festivals, auspicious timings (muhurats), and planetary movements.
 - **Vikram Samvat:** An ancient Hindu lunar-solar calendar system, about 56-57 years ahead of the Gregorian calendar.
 - **Vedic Time System:** A method of measuring time using concepts like ghadi, muhurta, and yuga, derived from ancient Indian astronomy.
- **Constitutional & Legal Relevance:**
 - **Article 29 & 30:** Protect cultural and educational rights of minorities and communities, indirectly supporting preservation of cultural heritage.
 - **Article 51A(f):** Fundamental duty of every citizen to value and preserve India's rich heritage.
 - **Promotion of Indian Knowledge Systems (NEP 2020):** Integration of traditional knowledge into modern education and technology.



Conclusion & UPSC Relevance

The Vedic Clock represents a blend of **traditional Indian knowledge systems with digital innovation**, showcasing India's civilizational continuity. It reinforces cultural pride while promoting accessibility through technology. For UPSC, this is relevant under **GS-I (Indian Heritage & Culture)**, **GS-II (Governance & Policies for Cultural Preservation)**, and **GS-III (Science & Technology with Traditional Knowledge Systems)**.

3. Regulation of Coaching Centres Tabled in Rajasthan Assembly

- **Tabling of Report:** On the first day of the Rajasthan Assembly's Monsoon Session, amid heavy uproar, a **Bill and select committee report on regulation of coaching centres** was tabled, highlighting the growing policy focus on regulating the booming coaching industry in the State.



- **Political Uproar:** Proceedings were disrupted as **Congress MLAs raised slogans against BJP**, alleging “vote theft” in government formation, while BJP members countered with slogans against Congress leaders, resulting in adjournment of the House.
- **Speaker’s Intervention & Vacant Seat:** Speaker Vasudev Devnani urged decorum but noted the **Anta Assembly seat fell vacant** due to disqualification of BJP MLA Kanwar Lal Meena after conviction in a criminal case, reflecting constitutional provisions on disqualification.
- **Importance of Regulation of Coaching Centres:** With coaching hubs like Kota facing concerns over **student suicides, mental health, fee structure, and unregulated practices**, the Bill indicates a move towards structured governance and accountability in the education sector.
- **Definition (Key Terms):**
 - **Coaching Centre Regulation:** Legal and policy framework to oversee functioning, fee structures, infrastructure, teacher qualifications, and mental health support in private coaching institutions.
 - **Disqualification of MLA:** As per **Article 191 & 192 of the Constitution and Representation of the People Act, 1951 (Section 8)**, legislators are disqualified if convicted of certain criminal offenses.
- **Constitutional & Legal Relevance:**
 - **Article 21A:** Right to free and compulsory education, indirectly linked to quality of educational institutions.
 - **Directive Principles (Art. 41, 45):** Stress on education, health, and welfare of youth.
 - **Mental Healthcare Act, 2017:** Ensures students’ mental health concerns are addressed, relevant for coaching regulation.
 - **Judicial Precedent:** Courts have upheld the need to regulate private educational institutions for fairness and transparency.



Conclusion & UPSC Relevance

The Rajasthan Assembly’s move to regulate coaching centres reflects a **critical intersection of education policy, youth welfare, and governance** amid political turmoil. For UPSC, it is relevant under **GS-II (Governance, Education Policies, Representation of People Act, State Legislatures)** and **GS-I (Indian Society – issues of youth, education, and mental health)**. It also connects with debates on **education reforms and ethical governance in politics**.

4. Uttarakhand Issues Rules for 10% Job Quota for Agniveers

- **Introduction of Horizontal Reservation:** The Uttarakhand government notified the **Horizontal Reservation Rules, 2025**, providing **10% reservation for retired Agniveers** in State government direct recruitment for **Group C services**.



- **Scope of Reservation:** This quota applies across all categories (General, SC/ST, OBC) and covers uniformed posts like **police constable, fire official, deputy jailer, forest guard, inspector, excise constable, enforcement constable, and Secretariat guard.**
- **Special Relaxations:** Agniveers will receive **age relaxation** and exemption from **physical efficiency tests** during recruitment, recognizing their prior military training and service.
- **Definition (Key Terms):**
 - **Agniveers:** Youth recruited under the **Agnipath Scheme (2022)** to serve in the armed forces for a four-year period, with some eligible for permanent service later.
 - **Horizontal Reservation:** A system of reservation cutting across vertical categories (General, SC, ST, OBC) to provide special benefits to groups like women, ex-servicemen, or persons with disabilities.
- **Constitutional & Legal Relevance:**
 - **Article 16(1) & 16(4):** Equality of opportunity in public employment and provisions for reservation in appointments.
 - **Directive Principles (Art. 39, 41, 46):** Promote social justice, livelihood opportunities, and support for weaker sections and youth.
 - **Ex-servicemen Quota Precedent:** Many States and Union Government already provide reservation for ex-servicemen, aligning with this initiative.

Uttarakhand issues rules for 10% job quota for Agniveers

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Uttarakhand government on Monday issued rules for 10% horizontal reservation for Agniveers in direct recruitment in State services.

According to the Horizontal Reservation Rules, 2025, issued by the Personnel and Vigilance Department, retired Agniveers can now be employed in Group C services, including various uniformed posts such as police constable, fire official, deputy jailer, forest guard, forest inspector, excise constable, enforcement constable, and Secretariat guard.

The horizontal reservation will be applicable across all categories: general, SC/ST, and OBC

This reservation is applicable across all categories, including general, SC/ST, and OBC.

According to the notified rules, Agniveers will be exempted from the physical efficiency test in direct recruitment and given relaxation in the maximum age limit.

The proposal to provide quota for Agniveers in State government jobs was approved by the Cabinet last month.]

Conclusion & UPSC Relevance

The move reflects Uttarakhand's attempt to **integrate Agniveers into civilian life** after their military tenure, ensuring employment security while leveraging their skills in disciplined public service roles. For UPSC, this is relevant under **GS-II (Governance, Welfare Policies, Reservation Systems)**, **GS-III (Security & Defence – Agnipath Scheme)**, and **GS-I (Indian Society – Youth and Employment Challenges)**. It also connects to debates on **reservations, social justice, and reintegration of armed forces veterans into civilian society.**

5. Brain-Eating Amoeba Cases in Kerala

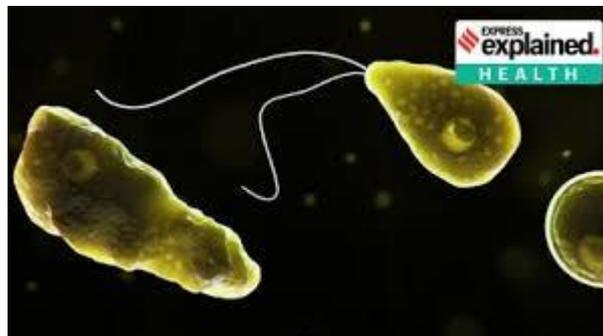
- **Rising Death Toll:** Kerala has reported **three deaths in 2024** due to amoebic meningoencephalitis (a rare but fatal infection caused by the “brain-eating amoeba”), with **42 cases** detected so far. The deceased include a 3-month-old infant, a 52-year-old woman, and a 9-year-old girl.
- **Cause and Transmission:** The infection spreads when the **Naegleria fowleri amoeba** enters the body through the **nose from contaminated water** during bathing or swimming. It does not spread person-to-person.
- **Variants and Mortality:** Two types exist—**Primary Amoebic Meningoencephalitis (PAM)** and **Granulomatous Amoebic Encephalitis (GAE)**, with GAE reported in Kerala. The disease has an extremely high mortality rate of **around 95%**.



- **Symptoms:** Appear within 5–10 days of exposure and include **fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, and neurological deterioration**. The disease progresses rapidly and is often fatal despite treatment.
- **Preventive Measures:** Kerala's Health Department has launched a **statewide water sanitation drive**, including **chlorination of waterbodies**, public awareness campaigns, and surveillance to prevent further outbreaks.

- **Definition (Key Terms):**

- **Amoebic Meningoencephalitis:** A rare infection of the brain caused by free-living amoebae like *Naegleria fowleri*, leading to severe inflammation of brain tissue.
- **Horizontal Transmission (Environmental):** Spread occurs from contaminated natural sources (like water), not from humans.



- **Constitutional & Legal Relevance:**

- **Article 21:** Right to life includes right to health and safe environment.
- **Directive Principles (Art. 47):** Duty of the State to improve public health and prevent epidemics.
- **Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 & Disaster Management Act, 2005:** Provide legal backing for preventive measures during outbreaks.
- **Environment Protection Act, 1986:** Indirectly relevant in ensuring safe and clean water sources.

Conclusion & UPSC Relevance

The brain-eating amoeba outbreak highlights the **public health challenges linked to water sanitation and environmental safety**. It underlines the importance of **clean water management, public awareness, and early detection systems** to prevent high-mortality diseases. For UPSC, this is relevant under **GS-II (Governance & Public Health, Policies & Acts)**, **GS-III (Science & Technology – Microbiology, Diseases, Water Sanitation, Disaster Management)**, and **GS-I (Society – Health Challenges)**.

6. SC Notice on Denial of Samagra Shiksha Funds to Tamil Nadu

- **Background of Dispute:** Tamil Nadu complained that it had to bear over **₹3,000 crore** in reimbursements to private schools for admissions of economically disadvantaged students under the **Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009**, after the Centre denied its share of funds through the Samagra Shiksha scheme.
- **Supreme Court Intervention:** A Bench led by Justice Vikram Nath issued a **formal notice to the Centre**, responding to Tamil Nadu's appeal against the **Madras High Court's June 10 decision** that delinked RTE reimbursements from the Centre's financial obligations under Samagra Shiksha.
- **Centre's Argument:** The Union Government argued that funding issues arose because Tamil Nadu refused to implement the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, especially its **three-language policy** which the State views as a threat to linguistic diversity and Tamil identity.



- **Tamil Nadu's Stand:** The State argued that under **Section 7 of the RTE Act, 2009**, both Centre and States have **concurrent responsibility** to fund education of poor children. The Centre's linking of funds to NEP compliance was termed **arbitrary** and politically motivated.
- **Legal & Constitutional Provisions:**
 - **RTE Act, 2009 (Sections 12(1)(c) & 7):** Mandates 25% reservation in private schools for disadvantaged children with reimbursement responsibilities shared by Centre and States.
 - **Article 21A:** Fundamental Right to free and compulsory education for children (6–14 years).
 - **Concurrent List (Entry 25, Seventh Schedule):** Education is a concurrent subject requiring joint responsibility.
 - **Cooperative Federalism Principle:** Both Union and States must collaborate for effective policy implementation.
- **Definition (Key Terms):**
 - **Samagra Shiksha Scheme:** An integrated scheme for school education (pre-school to class 12), launched in 2018, subsuming SSA, RMSA, and Teacher Education programmes.
 - **Horizontal Federalism:** The need for Centre-State coordination in implementation of welfare schemes.

Centre withholds ₹573cr school fund for TN rejecting NEP

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Chennai: The Union govt has withheld the first instalment of ₹573 crore under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) scheme to Tamil Nadu for not accepting the provisions of National Education Policy (NEP). The state is particularly opposed to the three-language formula in the PM SHRI scheme.

The project approval board has allocated ₹3,586 crore under SSA for 2024-2025 to Tamil Nadu. Of this, the Union govt's share is ₹2,152 crore (60%), while the share of the state govt is ₹1,434 crore (40%). The Union govt is to release its share in four instalments.

The first instalment for 2024-25 should have been received in June. However, Centre is yet to respond to letters and reminders from Tamil Nadu on releasing the funds. This means that around 15,000 teachers may

NEP CONUNDRUM

> TN opposed to 3-language formula in PM SHRI scheme

> TN allocated ₹3,586cr under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan for 2024-25

> Centre's share is ₹2,152cr and share of TN is ₹1,434cr

> Centre yet to release its June share

> 15,000 teachers may not receive their salary in Sept

> Reimbursement of fees for students enrolled under RTE may get affected

not get their salaries next month.

The reimbursement of fees for students enrolled in 25% quota under RTE act, transport and escort facilities for children in remote areas, teachers training and self-defence training for girls of Classes VI to XII are also likely to be affected.

► MoUs excluding NEP, P 4

Conclusion & UPSC Relevance

The case highlights tensions between **Centre-State relations in education policy**, issues of **fund-sharing**, and challenges in implementing the **RTE Act**. It underlines the conflict between **federal principles**, **regional identity**, and **national education reforms**. For UPSC, it is significant for **GS-II (Polity – Education, Federalism, Role of Judiciary, RTE Act)** and **GS-I (Society – linguistic diversity, education challenges)**.

7. ISRO Seeks Proposals for Chandrayaan-3 Data Utilisation

- **Mission Achievement:** Chandrayaan-3 successfully achieved a historic soft landing on the lunar south pole region on **23rd August 2023**, making India the first country to land in this difficult high-latitude terrain.
- **Announcement of Opportunity (AO):** ISRO has invited proposals from the Indian scientific community (outside ISRO/Department of Space) for **scientific analysis and utilisation** of data generated by the Chandrayaan-3 lander and rover experiments.
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - Open to researchers, faculty, and scientists from recognised Indian universities, colleges, research institutions, and government organisations.
 - Principal Investigator (PI) must have at least **4 years of service left before retirement**. Multiple Co-PIs are allowed.
 - Proposals must be forwarded through institutional heads with commitment of support.



- **Administrative Provisions:** The deadline for proposal submission is **21 October 2025**, and approved projects must be completed within **three years**.

- **Key Terms:**

- *Announcement of Opportunity (AO)* – A formal call by a scientific agency inviting research proposals for analysis of mission data.
- *Principal Investigator (PI)* – The lead researcher responsible for scientific and administrative coordination of the project.



- **Constitutional & Legal Relevance:**

- Article 51A (h) of the Constitution – Fundamental Duty to develop scientific temper, humanism, and the spirit of inquiry.
- Space research and atomic energy fall under the **Union List (Seventh Schedule)**, giving exclusive powers to the Union Government.
- Strengthens India's **Space Policy 2023** objective of promoting academic-industry collaboration and wider data access.

Conclusion: The initiative democratizes access to Chandrayaan-3 data, encouraging Indian academia and research institutions to contribute to lunar science and planetary exploration. It not only deepens India's space research ecosystem but also strengthens global scientific knowledge about the Moon.

UPSC Relevance: Important for **GS-3 (Science & Technology – Achievements of Indians in S&T, Indigenization of Technology, Space Technology)**, **GS-2 (Government policies for promoting scientific research)**, and **Prelims (ISRO missions, Chandrayaan-3, space governance provisions in India)**.

8. The Rise and Risks of Health Insurance in India

- **Universal Health Care (UHC) Concept:** As per the Bhore Committee Report (1946), UHC means quality health care guaranteed to all, irrespective of ability to pay. Despite progress, India has not achieved this, with public health expenditure at just **1.3% of GDP (2022, World Bank)** compared to the global average of 6.1%.
- **Expansion of Insurance Schemes:** Schemes like **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY, 2018)** and various State Health Insurance Programmes (SHIPs) now cover nearly **80% of the population**, with annual cover of ₹5 lakh per family. In 2023-24, PMJAY's budget was about ₹12,000 crore, SHIPs around ₹16,000 crore, showing rapid growth (8–25% annually in some States).
- **Structural Issues:**
 - *Profit-driven bias:* Around two-thirds of PMJAY funds flow to private hospitals, promoting profit-oriented medicine.
 - *Hospital-centric model:* Insurance focuses on in-patient/tertiary care, while **primary and preventive health care remain underfunded**, risking skewed allocation with ageing population.
 - *Utilisation gap:* Despite high coverage, only **35% of insured hospital patients** used insurance in 2022–23 due to lack of awareness, discrimination by private hospitals, and administrative hurdles.



- **Operational Challenges:** Insurance schemes face **low reimbursement rates, delayed payments** (pending dues under PMJAY exceeded ₹12,000 crore), hospital withdrawals (609 hospitals opted out), and widespread **fraudulent practices** (3,200 hospitals flagged by NHA). Transparency and audits remain weak.
- **Definitions & Key Legal Context:**
 - *Universal Health Care (UHC):* Equitable, affordable, and quality health care for all.
 - *Horizontal vs. Vertical Health Programmes:* Horizontal = comprehensive health services; Vertical = targeted disease/insurance-based interventions.
 - **Constitutional Backing:**
 - *Article 21:* Right to life includes right to health (SC interpretation).
 - *Directive Principles:* Articles 38, 39(e), 41, 42, 47 impose a duty on the State to ensure public health.
 - *Fundamental Duty:* Article 51A(g) urges citizens to protect health and environment.
- **Global Comparison:** Successful UHC models (Canada, Thailand) integrate **public investment with non-profit insurance**, unlike India's profit-driven insurance-based model.



Conclusion: Health insurance schemes like PMJAY provide short-term relief but are **not a sustainable pathway to Universal Health Care**. Without significant public health investment, stronger regulation of private providers, and expansion of primary care, India risks deepening inequalities in access and affordability.

UPSC Relevance:

- **GS-2:** Welfare schemes, health sector policies, constitutional provisions on health.
- **GS-3:** Inclusive growth, human development indicators, resource allocation.
- **Essay & Ethics:** Public health as social justice, challenges of privatization in essential services.

9. Noise Pollution in Urban India – A Neglected Public Health Crisis

- **Rising Threat of Urban Noise**
 - Noise pollution has emerged as a silent but severe public health issue, especially near schools, hospitals, and residential areas.
 - WHO prescribes safe limits of **50 dB(A) (day) and 40 dB(A) (night)** in silence zones, yet Indian cities often record **65–70 dB(A)**.
 - Health impacts include stress, disturbed sleep, cardiovascular risks, and decline in cognitive performance, especially in children and elderly.
- **Constitutional & Legal Provisions**
 - **Article 21:** Right to life with dignity includes mental health and peaceful environment.
 - **Article 48A:** Directive Principle requiring the State to protect and improve the environment.



- **Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000:** Provide zoning, silence areas, and permissible limits but suffer weak enforcement.
- **Supreme Court Rulings:** In *Noise Pollution (V), In Re (2005)*, reaffirmed in **2024**, Court held that excessive noise violates **Article 21**.
- **Institutional Framework & Challenges**
 - **CPCB's National Ambient Noise Monitoring Network (2011)** intended for real-time monitoring but remains largely passive.
 - Sensors often placed incorrectly, data fragmented, and enforcement weak.
 - Poor inter-agency coordination between municipal bodies, traffic police, and pollution control boards results in fragmented action.
- **Comparative Global Context**
 - **European Environment Agency** estimates annual economic cost of noise at **€100 billion**, leading to policy reforms in speed zones and urban zoning.
 - India lacks a comprehensive **National Acoustic Policy** akin to Air Quality Standards, reflecting governance gaps.
- **Ecological & Social Impact**
 - Studies show urban noise disrupts **avian communication and biodiversity balance** (e.g., myna birds losing song complexity).
 - Noise pollution remains “invisible” compared to smog or waste, causing **civic fatigue** and reduced public outrage.
 - It erodes **social trust, mental well-being, and cultural respect for silence**.
- **Way Forward & Policy Imperatives**
 - **Decentralise NANMN** and empower local bodies with real-time data and enforcement powers.
 - **Link monitoring with penalties**, ensure compliance in silence zones, construction activities, and traffic management.
 - **Introduce a National Acoustic Policy** defining decibel standards, grievance redressal, and inter-agency synergy.
 - **Promote ‘sonic empathy’** through behavioural change campaigns, driver training, “No Honking Days,” and urban design that fosters acoustic resilience.



Key Definitions

- **Noise Pollution:** Unwanted or harmful sound that disrupts environmental quality, health, or well-being.
- **Silence Zones:** Areas around schools, hospitals, and courts where stricter noise limits apply.

Conclusion

Noise pollution in India reflects a case of **constitutional neglect, weak enforcement, and policy inertia**.



While laws exist, institutional silos and lack of accountability hinder progress. Tackling noise requires a **rights-based approach, inter-agency coordination, and cultural change towards sonic empathy.**

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-2 (Polity & Governance):** Fundamental Rights (Art. 21), DPSPs (Art. 48A), environmental governance.
- **GS-3 (Environment & Ecology):** Urban environmental challenges, pollution management, ecological disruption.
- **Essay & Ethics:** “Right to silence and dignity,” “Urbanization and environmental ethics.”

10. Rethinking Carbon Pricing and Taxes – India’s Challenge in Global Trade

- **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and Trade Impact**
 - The U.K. will implement its **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (UK-CBAM)** from January 2027, similar to the EU’s CBAM, covering direct and indirect emissions in hard-to-abate sectors like steel and aluminium.
 - While the India-U.K. FTA eliminates tariffs on these products, CBAM will impose an additional **carbon cost (~\$66/tCO₂)**, raising export costs by **20–40%**, thereby nullifying tariff benefits.
 - CBAM permits deductions for carbon pricing in exporting countries, but India’s current **Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS)** price (\$8–10/tCO₂) is far below the U.K.’s carbon price, creating a competitiveness gap.
- **Constitutional, Legal, and Multilateral Context**
 - **Paris Agreement (2015):** Promotes common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR), but unilateral CBAMs undermine this principle.
 - **UNFCCC framework:** Opposes fragmented unilateral measures, advocating cooperative climate action.
 - India’s **coal cess, renewable purchase obligations, and CCTS** exist but lack recognition under foreign CBAMs, raising constitutional and economic equity concerns.
- **Fragmented Carbon Pricing and Global Proposals**
 - Different carbon pricing regimes across countries risk **supply chain disruptions, compliance costs, and carbon leakage.**
 - The **IMF’s International Carbon Price Floor (ICPF, 2021)** proposed tiered pricing: \$25 (low-income), \$50 (middle-income), \$75 (high-income countries).
 - The **World Economic Forum (2024)** suggested a phased approach: minimum pricing standards, linking regional carbon markets (EU, China, India, Asia), and harmonised monitoring/reporting systems.
- **India’s Domestic Strategy**





- Instead of fragmented taxes (coal cess, excise, renewable obligations), India must **streamline into a unified carbon tax framework under CCTS**.
- A single explicit carbon tax would improve price discovery, reduce compliance complexity, and enhance competitiveness.
- Revenues from carbon taxes should be reinvested into **industrial decarbonisation and clean tech adoption**, aligning climate goals with trade competitiveness.
- India must collaborate with **developing countries** to resist inequitable CBAMs and advocate coordinated global carbon pricing mechanisms.
- **Key Definitions**
 - **Carbon Pricing**: A market-based tool that assigns a monetary cost to carbon emissions to incentivise emission reduction.
 - **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)**: A trade policy imposing tariffs on imports based on their carbon footprint to level the playing field with domestic producers subject to carbon costs.
 - **Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS)**: India's domestic market mechanism allowing entities to trade carbon credits earned through emission reduction.
- **Conclusion**

CBAMs threaten to erode tariff benefits from FTAs, creating a **new wave of non-tariff barriers** under the guise of climate action. India must urgently **unify its domestic carbon pricing framework, strengthen clean technology adoption, and push for multilateral carbon market coordination**. Only a **rights-based, equitable, and globally harmonised carbon pricing system** can balance trade competitiveness with climate goals.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-2 (Polity & Governance)**: International trade negotiations, climate justice, India-U.K./EU relations.
- **GS-3 (Economy & Environment)**: Carbon markets, trade barriers, climate finance, industrial decarbonisation.
- **Essay & Ethics**: Equity in global climate governance, balancing development with environmental justice.

11. India–U.S. Relationship: Trust Beyond Tariffs

- **Trade Tensions and Tariff Impact**
 - In 2025, the U.S. sharply raised tariffs on Indian exports, doubling duties to **50%** on key products worth nearly **\$48–55 billion**.
 - Labour-intensive sectors most affected: **gems & jewellery (\$10 bn)**, **textiles & apparel (\$8 bn)**, **agriculture (\$6 bn)**, **leather & footwear (\$3 bn)**.
 - Short-term export surge before tariff implementation highlights exporters' anxiety and adaptability.
- **Resilient Trade Sectors Unaffected by Tariffs**

- **Pharmaceuticals:** India supplies **40% of U.S. generic drug demand**, worth \$3.7 bn in H1 2025.
- **IT & Services:** Valued at **\$33.2 bn exports to the U.S.**, forming the backbone of corporate America’s digital operations.
- **Energy, aviation, defence, and space** sectors continue to expand, showing **strategic depth beyond goods trade**.
- These resilient sectors offset losses from tariffs and strengthen long-term cooperation.
- **People-to-People Ties: The True Anchor**
 - **Indian Diaspora:** 4.8 million strong, with 150+ CEOs of Indian origin leading global firms.
 - **Education & Innovation:** Over **200,000 Indian students** in U.S. universities fueling bilateral knowledge economies.
 - **Cultural Bonds:** Indian Americans active in U.S. politics, with cultural festivals celebrated at the national level, symbolising integration and mutual respect.
 - These social and cultural ties ensure that the partnership remains **structural, resilient, and trust-driven**.
- **Strategic Collaborations Beyond Trade**
 - **Defence:** Strengthened by 2+2 dialogues, co-production, technology transfer, and joint exercises.
 - **Climate & Clean Energy:** Cooperation on renewables, green hydrogen, and decarbonisation strategies.
 - **Healthcare & Pharma:** Joint R&D and clinical trials extend collaboration beyond generics.
 - **Space Exploration:** NASA–ISRO projects reflect **next-generation strategic convergence**.
- **Key Constitutional & Policy Aspects**
 - **Article 51(c):** Directs India to respect international law and treaties, relevant for trade and strategic diplomacy.
 - **WTO Rules:** Tariff hikes challenge multilateral trade norms; India must balance WTO-compatible retaliations with long-term diplomacy.
 - **Strategic Autonomy Principle:** India’s foreign policy prioritises multi-alignment, ensuring resilience despite trade frictions.
- **Key Definitions**
 - **Tariff:** A tax imposed on imports/exports, often used as a trade policy tool for protectionism or bargaining.

Relationship beyond tariffs

The data for the charts were sourced from Reuters; the U.S. Trade Representative; the Indian Ministries of Commerce, Education, and Defence; the U.S. Census, and pharma industry reports



Chart 1: Key export sectors that will be impacted by tariffs

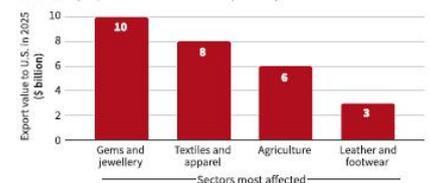


Chart 2: Value of key sectors not directly affected by tariffs

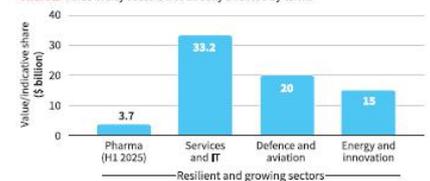


Table 3: Tariff versus trust

Parameter	Values
Export at risk (tariff)	\$48B
Indian diaspora in the U.S.	4.8M
Indian students in the U.S.	200K

Tariffs may disrupt markets, unsettle industries, and dominate headlines, but they do not define destiny. The U.S.-India relationship has survived Cold War suspicion, sanctions, and past trade disputes before — and every time, it has emerged stronger



- **Strategic Partnership:** A long-term bilateral framework based on shared values, defence cooperation, and economic convergence beyond transactional trade.
- **Conclusion**

Tariff hikes pose short-term challenges for India's export sectors but cannot derail the **structural, trust-based Indo-U.S. partnership**. People-to-people connections, resilient services trade, and strategic cooperation in defence, clean energy, and space ensure that ties remain future-oriented. India must respond with **strategic diversification, value-chain innovation, and diplomacy**, keeping trust as the cornerstone of this global partnership.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-2 (International Relations):** India-U.S. strategic partnership, diaspora diplomacy, WTO rules.
- **GS-3 (Economy):** Impact of tariff and non-tariff barriers on trade, resilience through services exports.
- **Essay & Ethics:** "Trust as the foundation of global partnerships," "Balancing trade disputes with strategic convergence."

12. Dissent in Supreme Court Collegium: Justice B.V. Nagarathna's Objections

- **Judicial Appointments and Independence**
 - Justice B.V. Nagarathna dissented against the elevation of Justice Vipul M. Pancholi to the Supreme Court, cautioning that decisions today will have **long-term ramifications on the credibility of the judiciary**.
 - She highlighted the principle from the **NJAC judgment (2015)** that judicial appointments must remain free from executive influence since the government is the largest litigant.
- **Collegium Criteria for Elevation**
 - Collegium guidelines (Resolution, July 11, 2024) list **merit, integrity, diversity (region, gender, community), and inclusion of marginalised sections** as key criteria.
 - Justice Nagarathna questioned whether these criteria were met in Justice Pancholi's case, stressing that standards must be "really high" for judges in line to become **Chief Justice of India (CJI)**.
- **Concerns on Seniority and Representation**
 - Justice Pancholi ranked **57th in all-India seniority**, and other senior, meritorious judges (including women) were overlooked.
 - She objected to adding a **third judge from Gujarat High Court** when several High Courts like J&K, Odisha, Jharkhand, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Uttarakhand had no representation in the Supreme Court.
- **Past Transfer and Credibility Issues**





- Justice Nagarathna recalled the **2023 transfer of Justice Pancholi** from Gujarat to Patna High Court, which was decided after deliberations on “serious and grave concerns.”
- She urged the Collegium to revisit records and reasons for that transfer before considering his elevation.
- **Procedural Lapses in Collegium Consultation**
 - She noted that **Justice Pardiwala’s views were not sought** before Justice Pancholi’s appointment as Patna Chief Justice, despite rules requiring the CJI to consult judges familiar with the concerned High Court’s affairs.
 - Ignoring such procedures, according to her, could be **counter-productive to the administration of justice**.
- **Implications for Future Chief Justiceship**
 - Justice Pancholi is in line to be **CJI (2031–2033)**. Nagarathna questioned whether this would be in the judiciary’s institutional interest.
 - She emphasized that the **credibility of the Collegium system** depends on transparency, fairness, and maintaining public trust.

Key Definitions

- **Collegium System:** A judicial system where appointments and transfers of judges are decided by a group of senior Supreme Court judges, led by the CJI.
- **NJAC (National Judicial Appointments Commission):** A mechanism struck down by the Supreme Court in 2015 for violating judicial independence.

Conclusion and UPSC Relevance

Justice Nagarathna’s dissent highlights the **delicate balance between judicial independence, transparency, and accountability in appointments**. It underscores the challenges of ensuring **regional, gender, and social diversity** in the higher judiciary while protecting institutional credibility. For UPSC, this issue is relevant under **Indian Polity (Judiciary, Separation of Powers, Collegium System, NJAC judgment)**, **Current Affairs (judicial reforms)**, and **GS-II (Polity & Governance)**.