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FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

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1. U.S. has 'Lost' India, Russia to China: Trump

1. Background of the Issue

- U.S. President Donald Trump remarked that America has “lost” India and Russia to “deepest, darkest China,” referencing India’s participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit.
- His comments reflect U.S. concerns over India’s increasing engagement with multilateral forums like SCO and BRICS, which include China and Russia.

2. U.S. Tariffs and Trade Miscalculation

- U.S. tariffs on Indian goods were linked by Indian officials to a “miscalculation” of India’s traditional non-aligned position in global affairs.
- Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick demanded that India “stop being a part of BRICS” and align more closely with the U.S. economic bloc.

3. India’s Diplomatic Position

- The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) did not officially respond to Trump’s remarks but clarified that India follows a strategic autonomy approach, balancing relations with major powers.
- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is set to participate in a BRICS virtual summit called by Brazil to address U.S. tariffs.

4. U.S. Domestic Criticism of India

- U.S. trade adviser Peter Navarro accused Indian “Brahmins” of profiteering from oil trade with Russia.
- MEA rejected these comments as misleading and inaccurate, underlining that India’s trade policies are based on national interest.

5. Constitutional & Legal Provisions Relevant to India’s Foreign Policy

- **Article 51 of the Indian Constitution:** Directive Principles encourage promotion of international peace, security, and just relations among nations.
- **Article 73 & 246 (Union List, Entry 10 & 14):** Foreign affairs and relations with foreign states are under the exclusive domain of the Union Government.
- **Panchsheel Principles (1954 Agreement with China):** Remain foundational to India’s independent foreign policy.

6. Key Definitions

- **Strategic Autonomy:** India’s policy of making decisions based on its own national interest rather than aligning permanently with any power bloc.
- **BRICS:** A multilateral grouping of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa aimed at economic and political cooperation.
- **SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation):** Regional security and economic grouping including India, China, Russia, and Central Asian countries.

U.S. has 'lost' India, Russia to 'darkest' China: Trump

Commerce Secretary Lutnick says New Delhi has to decide which side it wants to be on: U.S. tariffs were due to a 'miscalculation' of India's traditional position in world affairs, say Indian officials

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

Continuing his critical remarks about India, U.S. President Donald Trump on Friday said the United States has “lost” India to China, in a reference to Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s presence at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Tianjin earlier this week.

The External Affairs Ministry did not offer any official response to Mr. Trump’s remarks. However, Ministry officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said India’s understanding is that the U.S. tariff attack on India was due to a “miscalculation” of India’s traditional position in world affairs.

“Looks like we’ve lost



Looks like we have lost India and Russia to deepest, darkest, China. May they have a long and prosperous future together

DONALD TRUMP
U.S. President

Jaishankar to join BRICS summit on U.S. tariffs: MEA

NEW DELHI
External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar will represent India at a virtual summit of BRICS nations convened by Brazil to discuss U.S. tariffs on Monday, the Ministry of External Affairs said here on Friday. PAGE 10

India and Russia to deepest, darkest, China. May they have a long and prosperous future together,” Mr. Trump wrote on his social media platform Truth social.

His remarks were amplified later by U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick who appeared on a Bloomberg morning programme and asked India to

“stop being a part of BRICS”, a grouping of emerging nations which also includes Brazil, Russia, China, and South Africa.

“They [India] either need to decide which side they want to be on,” Mr. Lutnick said.

Asked for a response to Mr. Trump’s remarks, Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said he did not

have anything to say on the matter. Mr. Jaiswal, however, responded to Mr. Trump’s trade adviser Peter Navarro’s remarks about “Brahmins” in India “profiteering” from India’s oil trade with Russia and called them misleading and inaccurate.

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PAGE 10



Conclusion & UPSC Relevance

This episode highlights the evolving U.S.–India dynamics, with Washington pressing India to choose sides amidst intensifying U.S.–China rivalry. However, India continues its doctrine of strategic autonomy by balancing ties with the U.S., Russia, and China while safeguarding its economic and geopolitical interests. For UPSC, this topic is crucial under **GS Paper 2 (International Relations)**, particularly in themes of **India’s foreign policy, multilateral groupings, and challenges of non-alignment in a multipolar world.**

2. Meitei Group Rejects Govt.’s SoO Pact with Kuki-Zo Outfits

1. Background of the Issue

- The Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), a major Meitei civil society group, rejected the Centre’s decision to extend the Suspension of Operations (SoO) pact with Kuki-Zo insurgent groups.
- COCOMI termed it an “undemocratic and hegemonic imposition” on Manipur’s indigenous people and their elected representatives.

2. The SoO Pact and its Terms

- The SoO pact is a ceasefire-like agreement signed between the Government and insurgent groups, halting military operations in exchange for peace talks and disarmament commitments.
- The latest pact, signed by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the Manipur government, included “re-negotiated terms and conditions.”

3. Political and Social Context

- The extension comes ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Manipur on September 13, his first since the ethnic clashes between Kuki-Zo and Meitei communities began on May 3, 2023.
- The Kuki-Zo Council (KZC) agreed to open NH-2 (Imphal-Dimapur) for free movement of people and essential goods, which had been blocked due to tensions.

4. COCOMI’s Objections

- COCOMI argued that continuing SoO with groups allegedly involved in “terrorist and criminal acts” undermines the interests of indigenous people.
- It highlighted that the Manipur Cabinet had unanimously resolved on March 10, 2023, to abrogate the SoO pact, making the extension contrary to the State’s decision.

5. Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 355:** Empowers the Union to protect States against external aggression and internal disturbances.
- **Article 371C:** Provides special provisions for Manipur, including a committee of legislators to safeguard local interests.
- **Seventh Schedule, Union List (Entry 2A, 10, 11, 14):** Places defence, armed forces, and foreign affairs under Union jurisdiction, giving the Centre authority in ceasefire/insurgency agreements.

Meitei group rejects govt.’s SoO pact with Kuki-Zo outfits





- **Federal Concern:** The unilateral extension of SoO raises questions about Centre-State relations and the principle of cooperative federalism.

6. Key Definitions

- **Suspension of Operations (SoO) Agreement:** A ceasefire arrangement under which insurgent groups suspend hostilities in return for safe camps and dialogue with the government.
- **Ethnic Violence in Manipur (2023):** Ongoing conflict between the Kuki-Zo and Meitei communities, involving clashes, displacement, and communal polarisation.
- **Civil Society Groups:** Non-state actors representing community interests, often mediating in peace-building and grassroots governance.

Conclusion & UPSC Relevance

The rejection of the SoO pact by Meitei groups reflects the complex ethnic dynamics of Manipur, highlighting tensions between national security imperatives and local political autonomy. It underscores challenges in Centre-State relations, peace negotiations, and conflict resolution in the Northeast. For UPSC, this is important under **GS Paper 2 (Federalism, Centre-State Relations, Role of Civil Society, Internal Security Challenges)** and **GS Paper 3 (Insurgency, Border Security, Ethnic Conflicts in Northeast India)**.

3. Septuagenarian Army Veteran Completes Arctic Expedition

1. Key Event

- Lt. Col. (retd.) O.P.N. Kalyan, a 76-year-old Army veteran from Bengaluru, successfully completed an Arctic expedition to the North Pole between August 22 and September 1, 2025.
- He undertook a polar plunge in the Arctic Ocean at a temperature of -2°C , having earlier completed a similar plunge in the Southern Ocean (Antarctica) in 2024.

2. Expedition Details

- The journey began from Longyearbyen in Norway on the ship *Polar Quest* with 48 participants.
- Locations visited included Smeerenburg, Virgohamna, Nordre Russoya, and Glacier Island (Burgerbukta).
- The expedition experienced extreme Arctic weather—cold winds, 2°C temperatures, and continuous daylight (midnight sun).



3. Personal and Professional Background

- Lt. Col. Kalyan served in the Army Service Corps (ASC) and later as curator of the ASC Museum in Bengaluru for 15 years.
- His lifelong ambition was to visit both Antarctica and the Arctic, which he achieved post-retirement.

4. Broader Significance of Arctic Expeditions

- Arctic expeditions highlight issues of **climate change, glacial melting, and polar biodiversity**, which are globally significant.



- India has shown growing interest in the Arctic, reflected in its **Arctic Policy (2022)** that emphasizes scientific research, sustainable development, and international cooperation.

5. Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 51(c)**: Calls upon India to foster respect for international law and treaty obligations in dealing with other nations, relevant to global Arctic governance.
- **Antarctic Treaty Act, 2022**: Regulates Indian scientific and exploratory activities in polar regions, indirectly reflecting India's responsibility in fragile ecosystems like the Arctic.
- **Environmental Protection Frameworks**: International agreements such as the Paris Agreement connect polar studies to global climate action.

6. Key Definitions

- **Polar Plunge**: An act of immersing oneself in extremely cold polar waters, symbolizing endurance and resilience.
- **Midnight Sun**: A natural phenomenon in polar regions where the sun remains visible at midnight during summer months.
- **Arctic Council**: A high-level intergovernmental forum promoting cooperation among Arctic states and indigenous communities on sustainable development and environmental protection.

Conclusion & UPSC Relevance

Lt. Col. Kalyan's Arctic expedition symbolizes not only personal achievement but also India's expanding engagement with polar research, adventure tourism, and environmental awareness. For UPSC, this connects to **GS Paper 1 (Geography – polar regions, climate change)**, **GS Paper 2 (International relations – Arctic governance)**, and **GS Paper 3 (Environment & Disaster Management – impact of melting glaciers on sea levels and ecosystems)**. It demonstrates how individual efforts contribute to broader themes of global environmental consciousness and India's polar policy.

4. 'Alarming Rise' in Cancer Cases in Rajasthan

1. Key Findings of the Study

- Rajasthan has recorded an "alarming increase" in cancer cases, with Jaipur being the worst-affected city (332.24 cases per one lakh population).
- Of the 14,911 registered patients in the State last year, 10,363 were confirmed cancer cases.
- The State's average cancer incidence stands at 134.57 per one lakh population, significantly above the national average of 113.



2. Data Sources and Methodology

- Study based on International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) coded data.
- The Histopathology Department of Bhagwan Mahaveer Cancer Hospital, Jaipur, is the State's designated centre for reporting cases to the **National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research (NCDIR)** under ICMR's Indian Cancer Registry.
- This registry ensures nationwide standardised data collection and reliability.



3. Causes and Risk Factors

- High prevalence of **oral, digestive, and respiratory cancers** linked to tobacco use, alcohol consumption, and pesticide exposure.
- Rising **breast and cervical cancer** cases in women highlight lack of early detection and preventive healthcare infrastructure.

4. Geographic Spread

- Highest cases reported from Jaipur (2,837), followed by Alwar (1,031), Ajmer (855), Sikar (685), and Jhunjhunu (649).
- Concentration of new cancer centres in Jaipur reflects the gravity of the situation in the region.

5. Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 21:** Right to life includes the right to health and access to medical care.
- **Directive Principles of State Policy (Article 47):** Duty of the State to improve public health and reduce consumption of intoxicating substances like tobacco and alcohol.
- **National Health Mission & NPCDCS (National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke):** Framework for screening, awareness, and treatment.
- **Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003:** Legal mechanism to reduce tobacco consumption.

6. Key Definitions

- **Cancer Incidence Rate:** Number of new cancer cases per one lakh population in a given year.
- **Indian Cancer Registry:** A national database maintained by ICMR for systematic recording and analysis of cancer prevalence and trends.
- **Lifestyle Diseases:** Illnesses linked to unhealthy habits such as tobacco use, alcohol, and poor diet, rather than genetic or infectious causes.

Conclusion & UPSC Relevance

The rising cancer incidence in Rajasthan reflects a growing **public health crisis**, exacerbated by lifestyle risks and weak preventive infrastructure. It underscores the urgent need for stronger awareness campaigns, early screening, affordable treatment, and regulation of harmful substances. For UPSC, this is highly relevant under **GS Paper 2 (Health Sector, Government Policies, Centre-State role in public health)** and **GS Paper 3 (Science & Technology, Environment & Pesticide exposure, Lifestyle diseases)**.

5. India's Strategic Autonomy in a Multipolar World

1. Concept and Historical Roots

- **Strategic autonomy** refers to a nation's ability to take sovereign foreign policy and defence decisions without external pressure or binding alliances. It implies flexibility and multi-engagement, not isolationism.
- Rooted in India's colonial past and Nehru's **Non-Alignment Movement (NAM)** during the Cold War, it has evolved into "**multi-alignment**" under the Modi government.



- The principle ensures that India is neither a passive bystander nor a client state in global politics.

2. Changing Global Context

- The decline of U.S. unipolar dominance has led to a fragmented world with China's assertiveness, Russia's revisionism, and Western divisions.
- This environment forces India to balance relations while protecting its **core interests**: territorial integrity, economic growth, technology, and regional stability.
- Strategic autonomy is redefined today as resilience and adaptability, not just distancing from blocs.

3. India's Major Power Equations

- **United States**: Deepening defence, intelligence, and tech ties through Quad, I2U2, IMEC, but tensions remain over trade, tariffs, and pressure to reduce ties with Russia. India engages but resists alignment against its interests.
- **China**: Border clashes (2020) raised tensions, but India continues cautious engagement via BRICS and SCO, while strengthening Indo-Pacific partnerships and defence self-reliance.
- **Russia**: Historical defence partner; India continues oil and weapons imports despite Western criticism. Strategic autonomy here means balancing legacy ties while diversifying partnerships.



4. Domestic Dimensions and New Frontiers

- True autonomy depends on **economic resilience, technological strength, and political stability**. Weakness undermines independence in decision-making.
- Autonomy now extends beyond diplomacy to **data sovereignty, supply chains, AI, space, and cyber security**, reflecting the multipolar nature of modern threats.
- India's push for indigenous defence production, critical mineral security, and digital infrastructure reflects this shift.

5. Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 51 (Directive Principles)**: Urges promotion of international peace and just relations.
- **Article 73 & 246 (Union List, Entries 10 & 14)**: Places foreign affairs and defence exclusively under the Union government.
- **Panchsheel Principles (1954)**: Foundation of India's independent foreign policy.
- These legal provisions provide India the framework to pursue independent, interest-based global engagement.

6. Key Definitions

- **Strategic Autonomy**: Freedom to pursue foreign and defence policy decisions in line with national interest without external dominance.
- **Multi-alignment**: India's policy of engaging simultaneously with multiple power centres for maximum benefit.



- **Multipolar World:** A world order where power is distributed among several influential states or blocs, unlike unipolar or bipolar systems.

Conclusion & UPSC Relevance

India's strategic autonomy is not merely rhetoric but a practical necessity in today's multipolar and volatile world. It means engaging with the U.S. without dependency, deterring China without confrontation, and partnering with Russia without inheriting isolation. This policy aligns India with the aspirations of the **Global South** while safeguarding its sovereignty and interests. For UPSC, this theme is directly relevant to **GS Paper 2 (International Relations, Foreign Policy, Non-Alignment to Multi-Alignment, India and Global South)** and **GS Paper 3 (Strategic Technologies, Defence, Cybersecurity, Energy Security)**.

6. Fixing Problems, Unlocking India's Growth Potential – GST 2.0

1. Key Features of GST 2.0 Reforms

- The **56th GST Council meeting (Sept 2025)** introduced major reforms: streamlined tax rates, correction of anomalies, simplified compliance, and stronger dispute resolution.
- A **two-rate structure** was introduced (18% standard, 5% merit, and 40% de-merit for few goods), aligning India with global best practices.
- The reforms are aimed not just at fixing current inefficiencies but at unlocking India's long-term growth potential.

2. Relief for Households and Key Sectors

- Lower GST on **essentials (soap, toothpaste, shampoo, packaged foods, kitchenware)** will ease inflationary pressure on households and spur consumption.
- Reduced GST on **cement and construction materials** supports the "Housing for All" mission and allied industries like steel, tiles, and paints.
- **Life-saving drugs and critical medical devices** moved to nil or 5% GST, enhancing healthcare affordability.
- Labour-intensive sectors (textiles, handicrafts, leather, footwear, toys) and auto sector benefit through demand stimulation and job creation.



3. Boost to MSMEs and Export Competitiveness

- Correction of **inverted duty structures** in textiles, fertilizers, and renewables improves global competitiveness.
- **Export-heavy MSME sectors** like handicrafts, leather, and engineering goods gain from lower duties on capital goods and intermediates, aiding "Make in India."
- **Simplified GST Registration Scheme** with automated approvals within 3 days reduces compliance burden and encourages formalisation of small businesses.

4. Strengthening Institutions and Dispute Resolution

- Operationalisation of the **Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)** ensures faster and fairer resolution of disputes, reducing litigation and case backlogs.



- Clarifications on **intermediary services and post-sale discounts** reduce interpretational ambiguities.
- Removal of refund thresholds for **low-value consignments** supports small exporters and e-commerce players by easing liquidity pressures.

5. Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **101st Constitutional Amendment Act (2016)**: Established GST as a unified indirect tax regime under **Articles 246A & 279A**.
- **Article 279A**: Provides for the GST Council to make recommendations on tax rates, exemptions, and model laws.
- **Cooperative Federalism**: GST Council represents both Centre and States, ensuring collaborative decision-making.

6. Key Definitions

- **Goods and Services Tax (GST)**: A comprehensive indirect tax on manufacture, sale, and consumption of goods and services, replacing multiple cascading taxes.
- **Inverted Duty Structure**: A situation where tax on inputs is higher than tax on final goods, discouraging domestic value addition.
- **MSMEs**: Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, backbone of Indian economy contributing significantly to employment and exports.

Conclusion & UPSC Relevance

GST 2.0 represents not just tax simplification but a **structural economic reform** that strengthens consumption, boosts MSMEs, encourages exports, and signals predictability to global investors. While implementation challenges remain, the intent shows a shift towards a fair, transparent, and growth-oriented tax framework. For UPSC, the topic is relevant to **GS Paper 3 (Indian Economy – resource mobilisation, inclusive growth, reforms)**, **GS Paper 2 (Federalism, cooperative institutions like GST Council)**, and **Essay Paper (Economic Reforms, Cooperative Federalism, Inclusive Growth)**.

7. India at Brazil-led BRICS Virtual Summit on U.S. Tariffs

1. Context and Participation

- External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** will represent India at a **Brazil-led BRICS virtual summit** to discuss U.S.-imposed tariffs.
- The summit was convened by **Brazilian President Lula da Silva** following U.S. tariff hikes on August 6, affecting multiple BRICS nations.
- While the summit is at the **leaders' level**, Prime Minister Modi will not attend, raising diplomatic attention, especially as India is the next **Chair of BRICS**.



2. U.S. Tariff Measures and Impact

- The U.S. has imposed steep tariffs: **50% on Indian and Brazilian goods**, **30% on China and South Africa**, **19% on Indonesia**, and **10% on Russia and Iran**.



- Key agricultural exports like palm oil, cocoa, and rubber from Indonesia are exempted.
- These unilateral measures are seen as **protectionist policies**, impacting global trade flows and supply chains.

3. Strategic and Diplomatic Significance

- The summit comes just after **PM Modi's visit to China** for the SCO summit, where he interacted with **Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin**, drawing U.S. criticism.
- Brazil seeks to rally BRICS members towards a **common plan to counter U.S. economic actions**, reflecting growing South-South solidarity.
- Russia's participation has been confirmed, and other members are expected to join, showcasing BRICS' role as a counterbalance to Western-led institutions.

4. Constitutional & Legal Provisions Related

- **Article 246 & Seventh Schedule:** Grants the Union government powers over international trade, treaties, and foreign affairs.
- **Article 51 (Directive Principles of State Policy):** Promotes international peace, security, and multilateral cooperation.
- India's **Foreign Trade Policy (FTP)** and participation in multilateral institutions like **WTO, BRICS, SCO, G20** frame its legal and economic stance on global trade disputes.

5. Key Definitions

- **Tariff:** A tax imposed on imported goods, often used to protect domestic industries or as a trade policy tool.
- **Unilateral Economic Measures:** Trade restrictions or sanctions imposed by one country without multilateral consensus.
- **BRICS:** A grouping of emerging economies (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) recently expanded to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and UAE.

6. Conclusion & UPSC Relevance

The BRICS summit on U.S. tariffs highlights the **emerging multipolarity in global trade** and India's balancing act between Western powers and Global South coalitions. It underscores the importance of **multilateralism, cooperative platforms, and South-South solidarity** in shaping fairer global trade systems. For UPSC, the topic is crucial under **GS Paper 2 (International Relations, India and its neighborhood, global groupings like BRICS)** and **GS Paper 3 (Indian Economy – external trade, globalization, protectionism)**.

8. New Technology and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC) to Replace Indian Science Congress

1. Context and Background

- The **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** will host the first **Emerging Science, Technology and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC)** on **November 3–4, 2025** at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.



- ESTIC is expected to **replace the Indian Science Congress (ISC)**, India's oldest scientific congregation (founded 1914), which has been inactive since 2023 due to disputes between DST and ISCA.
- Unlike the **India International Science Festival (IISF)**, which is aimed at popularising science among students, ESTIC will be a **serious forum for scientific, technological and innovation discourse**.

2. Features of ESTIC

- Involvement of **all science-related ministries** including atomic energy, space, IT, and biotechnology.
- **11 thematic technical sessions** and **75 exhibitions** by deep-tech start-ups.
- Participation of eminent global scientists, including **Nobel Laureate Andre Geim (2010, Physics)**, Jean-Yves Le Gall (French Space Agency), and Prof. Masaru Tomita (Japan).
- **Prime Minister Modi** is expected to inaugurate, restoring high-level political visibility previously associated with ISC.

3. Decline of Indian Science Congress

- ISC was traditionally inaugurated by the **Prime Minister** and hosted global scientific leaders.
- Decline began post-2020:
 - Cancellations during the pandemic.
 - Online-only presence of PM Modi in 2023.
 - Event cancellation in 2024 and 2025 due to disputes between DST and ISCA.
- DST has now **withdrawn funding from ISCA**, signaling an institutional shift.



4. Constitutional and Policy Dimensions

- **Article 51A(h) of the Constitution:** Fundamental duty “to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform.”
- **Article 246 & Union List:** Union government's competence over science, technology, space, and atomic energy.
- Policies linked: **Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) 2013** and the vision of **Viksit Bharat 2047**.
- ESTIC aligns with national initiatives like **Startup India, Atmanirbhar Bharat, Digital India, and Make in India**.

5. Key Definitions

- **Deep Tech Start-ups:** Ventures based on advanced technological innovation (AI, biotech, quantum computing, space tech).
- **Scientific Temper:** A rational and evidence-based approach to problem-solving and inquiry, mandated as a citizen's duty under Article 51A(h).
- **Innovation Ecosystem:** Network of institutions, start-ups, industries, and policies that enable scientific breakthroughs and commercialization.



6. Conclusion and UPSC Relevance

The launch of ESTIC reflects a **paradigm shift in India's science diplomacy and innovation ecosystem**, moving away from traditional congress-style gatherings to a **global-facing innovation platform**. By focusing on **deep-tech, global collaborations, and policy-driven innovation**, India is aligning its scientific leadership with the goal of **Viksit Bharat 2047**. For UPSC, this is important under **GS Paper 2 (Government policies and interventions in S&T)**, **GS Paper 3 (Indigenization of technology, R&D, innovation)**, and Essay topics on **Science, Technology and National Development**.

9. India's Plan to Strengthen Nuclear Deterrence and Drone Warfare Capabilities

1. Context and Framework

- India has unveiled **Technology Perspective and Capability Roadmap (TPCR-2025)**, a **15-year blueprint** for modernising armed forces.
- The plan focuses on **credible nuclear deterrence, drone warfare, electronic warfare, and CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear) defence**.
- It represents a shift towards **integrated deterrence**, balancing nuclear, conventional, and emerging technologies.



2. Nuclear Deterrence Measures

- Emphasis on survivability through **advanced delivery platforms and command-and-control infrastructure**.
- Plans include **radiation detection tools, mobile decontamination units, and unmanned CBRN reconnaissance vehicles**.
- This sustains India's **No First Use (NFU)** policy by ensuring second-strike capability and resilience.

3. Drone Warfare and Loitering Munitions

- Development of **stealth drones** with 1,500 km range and 60,000 ft altitude to perform reconnaissance, artillery guidance, and electronic warfare.
- Introduction of **AI-enabled loitering munitions** with reusable warhead systems for precision strikes.
- Integrated surveillance drones to enhance **mechanised forces' battlefield efficiency**.

4. Counter-Drone and Electronic Warfare Capabilities

- Preparation against **hostile drone swarms** through **adaptive jamming systems and electronic denial bubbles** extending up to 15 km.
- Signals a growing recognition of **electromagnetic spectrum warfare** in modern conflict.

5. Self-Reliance and Defence Production

- The roadmap aligns with **Atmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India in Defence**, aiming to reduce import dependence.



- Focus on indigenous R&D, private sector participation, and dual-use technologies to build long-term strategic autonomy.

6. Constitutional and Strategic Dimensions

- **Article 51A(d)**: Duty of every citizen to defend India's sovereignty and integrity.
- **Article 73 & 246**: Union's exclusive power over defence and armed forces.
- Linked with **Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP)** and **Defence Acquisition Policy (DAP 2020)** promoting indigenisation.
- Strategic doctrine: Consistent with India's **nuclear triad** under the Nuclear Command Authority.

Key Definitions

- **Nuclear Deterrence**: Strategy to prevent adversaries from attacking by threat of retaliatory nuclear strikes.
- **Loitering Munition**: A drone-weapon hybrid that can hover and strike targets with precision.
- **Integrated Deterrence**: Combining nuclear, cyber, electronic, and conventional forces for layered security.

Conclusion and UPSC Relevance

The TPCR-2025 marks a **strategic leap in India's defence posture**, integrating nuclear resilience with cutting-edge drone and electronic warfare technologies. It enhances India's preparedness against **conventional threats, CBRN risks, and asymmetric challenges** such as drone swarms. For UPSC, this topic is highly relevant for **GS Paper 2 (National Security), GS Paper 3 (Science & Technology, Indigenisation, Defence Technology)** and as a case study for **strategic autonomy in foreign policy and security planning**.

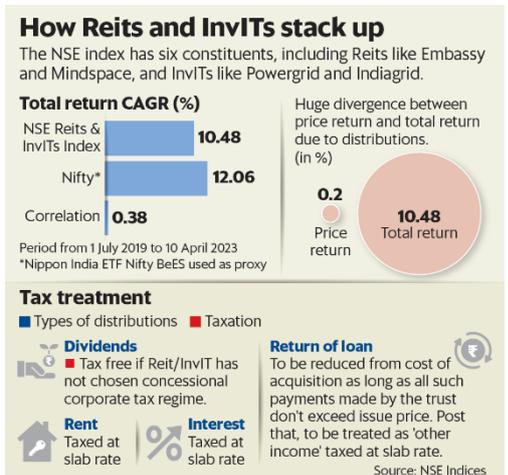
10. Growth of REITs and InvITs in India

1. Rising Popularity and Asset Growth

- Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) and Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs) have achieved combined **Assets Under Management (AUM) of over ₹9 lakh crore** in just nine years.
- Projections by Indian REITs Association (IRA) and Bharat InvITs Association (BIA) suggest AUM may reach **₹25 lakh crore by 2030**, highlighting their increasing importance in India's capital markets.

2. Market Composition

- **REITs in India**: Currently 5 listed entities – Brookfield India REIT, Embassy Office Parks REIT, Mindspace Business Parks REIT, Nexus Select Trust, and Knowledge Realty Trust.
- **InvITs in India**: 27 SEBI-registered InvITs, of which 5 are publicly listed and 23 privately listed.
- **First InvIT** registered in 2016; **first REIT** listed in 2019, reflecting relatively recent but rapid expansion.





3. Economic and Infrastructure Significance

- REITs provide investment in commercial real estate like office spaces and malls, while InvITs allow investment in infrastructure assets such as highways, transmission lines, and pipelines.
- They help channel **long-term capital** from institutional and retail investors into infrastructure and real estate, reducing reliance on bank credit and government borrowing.

4. Regulatory and Legal Framework

- Both instruments are regulated by **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** under SEBI (REITs) Regulations, 2014 and SEBI (InvITs) Regulations, 2014.
- Linked with **Article 268–293 (Finance, Property, Contracts, and Suits)** of the Constitution and fiscal management under Union List (Seventh Schedule) for capital markets.
- Encourage financial deepening and align with **National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP)** and **National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP)** for mobilising private capital.

5. Definitions

- **REIT (Real Estate Investment Trust)**: A company that owns and manages income-generating real estate and allows investors to buy units similar to shares.
- **InvIT (Infrastructure Investment Trust)**: A trust-like structure to pool investments in infrastructure projects, distributing returns to unit holders.
- **AUM (Assets Under Management)**: The total market value of assets managed by a financial institution on behalf of investors.

6. Strategic and Policy Implications

- Boosts **financial inclusion**, allowing retail investors to access large infrastructure and real estate projects.
- Provides **stable returns** through rental income and infrastructure revenues.
- Supports government's vision of **₹111 lakh crore infrastructure investment target under NIP by 2025** and **Viksit Bharat 2047**.

Conclusion and UPSC Relevance

The growth of REITs and InvITs reflects a significant shift in India's financial sector, promoting capital market-based financing of infrastructure and real estate. With their projected expansion to ₹25 lakh crore by 2030, these instruments will be crucial for **infrastructure-led growth, fiscal sustainability, and financial market deepening**. For UPSC, this topic is important for **GS Paper 3 (Economy, Infrastructure, Investment Models, SEBI's role)** and can also feature in **Prelims (capital markets, financial instruments)**.

11. Priority to Pass on GST Tax Cut Gains

1. Government Monitoring of GST Transmission

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced that the **benefits of GST rate cuts (effective from 22 September)** will be closely monitored to ensure they are passed on to consumers.



- Businesses and traders are expected to voluntarily comply, but **parliamentarians and ministries will track sector-wise implementation** to prevent profiteering.

2. Expected Economic Impact

- The tax cut is projected to **boost consumption demand**, especially during the festive season, similar to the post-COVID “revenge buying” trend.
- Sitharaman expressed confidence that higher demand will help the government **meet GST revenue growth targets and fiscal deficit targets** without altering expenditure plans.

3. Challenges in Implementation

- The main challenge is **ensuring rate cut benefits reach consumers** rather than being absorbed by companies.
- Transitional arrangements have been prepared to ensure smooth rollout, and any non-compliance could invite corrective action.

4. Broader Economic and Trade Context

- India is assessing the sectoral impact of **US tariffs on exports**, as different industries have varying exposure to the American market.
- Some **flexibility in cross-border investments with China** (via Press Note 3 relaxations) is being allowed, particularly for ongoing infrastructure projects needing technical expertise.

5. Next Phase of Reforms

- Government plans to strengthen **non-financial regulators**, including the **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** and the **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)**, to make them more effective and modernized.
- Disinvestment and banking sector reforms (creation of 4–5 SBI-sized banks) remain on the agenda, alongside potential privatization of a general insurance company.

6. Definitions

- **GST (Goods and Services Tax):** An indirect tax introduced in 2017, subsuming multiple indirect taxes into a unified structure under **101st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2016**.
- **Press Note 3 (2020):** A policy requiring prior government approval for foreign direct investments (FDI) from countries sharing land borders with India, aimed at regulating Chinese investments.
- **Non-financial regulators:** Regulatory bodies outside financial markets, ensuring fair practices in areas like competition and food safety.

Conclusion and UPSC Relevance

The GST rate cut monitoring highlights the government’s focus on **consumer welfare, fiscal discipline, and boosting domestic demand** amid global trade uncertainties. Simultaneously, reforms in regulatory frameworks, FDI policies, and disinvestment signal India’s intent to strengthen economic resilience. For UPSC, this is relevant under **GS Paper 3 (Economy, Taxation, Investment Models, Trade Policies)** and **GS Paper 2 (Governance, Regulatory Bodies)**, and can also feature in Prelims under **GST structure, Press Note 3, and non-financial regulators**.



12. Angikaar 2025 Campaign under PMAY-U 2.0

1. Launch and Objective

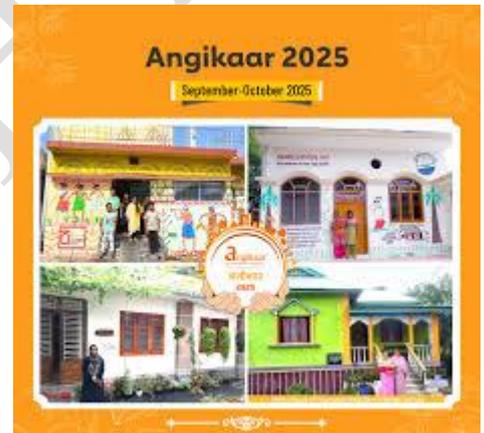
- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched **Angikaar 2025** as a **last-mile outreach campaign** under **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban 2.0 (PMAY-U 2.0)**.
- Its aim is to **accelerate implementation**, ensure **verification of applications**, and **expedite completion** of sanctioned houses.

2. Key Features

- Focus on **community mobilisation** and **door-to-door awareness** across **5,000+ Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)**.
- Special emphasis on informing stakeholders about the **Credit Risk Guarantee Fund Trust for Low Income Housing (CRGFTLIH)** and convergence with other schemes like **PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana**.
- Housing needs of **Special Focus Groups** under PMAY-U 2.0 will be prioritised.

3. Achievements and Targets

- Under PMAY-U, **120 lakh houses sanctioned**, of which **94.11 lakh completed and delivered**.
- PMAY-U 2.0 (revamped in September 2024) aims to cover **1 crore additional urban families** with financial support of up to **₹2.5 lakh per family**.
- Angikaar 2025 will bridge the implementation gap and push for completion of remaining houses.



4. Campaign Activities

- Duration: **4th September – 31st October 2025**.
- Activities include **loan melas**, **cultural events**, **PM Awas Mela – Shehri**, and **PMAY-U Awas Diwas** on **17th September 2025**.
- Events will be organised at **district headquarters** and **municipal corporation levels** for larger cities.

5. Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- Linked to **Article 21 (Right to Life)** and **Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSPs)**, particularly **Article 38 (social welfare)**, **Article 39 (adequate livelihood)**, and **Article 46 (promotion of weaker sections)**.
- Aligns with **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities** by ensuring safe and affordable housing.

6. Definitions

- **PMAY-U 2.0:** Revamped urban housing scheme (2024) targeting pucca houses for all eligible urban families.



- **CRGFTLIH:** A financial mechanism providing **credit guarantee to lenders** for housing loans to low-income groups.
- **Jan Bhagidari:** Citizen participation approach to governance and policy implementation.

Conclusion and UPSC Relevance

Angikaar 2025 reinforces the government's commitment to **"Housing for All"** by bridging the delivery gap and ensuring last-mile connectivity in urban housing schemes. It highlights convergence of schemes, community mobilisation, and financial inclusion for urban poor. For UPSC, it is important under **GS Paper 2 (Governance, Welfare Schemes, Housing for All Mission)**, **GS Paper 3 (Urban Development, Inclusive Growth)**, and Prelims (flagship schemes, CRGFTLIH, SDG 11).
