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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

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1. PM-KISAN: Key Highlights

Key Points:

- **PM-KISAN is a Central Sector Scheme (launched 2019)** providing ₹6000 annual income support to eligible farmer families through **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)**, with ₹3.70 lakh crore transferred so far to **11+ crore farmers**, making it one of the **world's largest DBT programmes**.
- **Digital infrastructure & Aadhaar ecosystem:** Mandatory **Aadhaar seeding**, **e-KYC (OTP, biometric, facial authentication)**, and **Aadhaar-enabled payment system (AePS)** ensure transparent and leak-proof fund delivery.
- **Technology-led governance reforms:** PM-KISAN **Mobile App**, **Know Your Status** portal service, **eKYC at home via facial authentication**, **CSC access**, and **IPPB doorstep banking** strengthen inclusivity and ease of service delivery.
- **Grievance redressal modernization:** Multi-layer system via **PM-KISAN portal**, **CPGRAMS**, and the **Kisan-eMitra LLM-powered chatbot** supporting **11 regional languages**, automatic language/scheme detection, and voice interaction.
- **Supporting studies & impact:** IFPRI (2019) study shows PM-KISAN **reduces credit constraints**, **increases agricultural investment**, and improves farmers' **risk-taking capacity**, enabling productive crop choices.
- **Farmer Registry launched:** A nationwide verified database to facilitate **seamless access to all social welfare schemes**, strengthening **last-mile delivery**, inclusion, and targeting accuracy.



Definitions of Key Terms

- **Central Sector Scheme:** A scheme fully funded and implemented by the Union Government.
- **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT):** Transfer of subsidies/welfare benefits directly into beneficiaries' bank accounts, reducing intermediaries.
- **Aadhaar-based e-KYC:** Authentication method using Aadhaar (OTP, biometric, face) to verify beneficiary identity.
- **Digital Public Goods:** Interoperable digital systems/platforms used by government for service delivery (e.g., Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker).
- **Saturation Campaign:** Government initiative to ensure 100% coverage of eligible beneficiaries.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 38:** State to promote welfare of the people and reduce inequalities.
- **Article 39(b) & (c):** Principles ensuring equitable distribution of resources.
- **Article 41:** State to provide public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness—basis for welfare support.
- **Article 48:** State to organize agriculture and animal husbandry on modern lines.
- **Aadhaar Act, 2016:** Provides legal backing for Aadhaar-based authentication used in PM-KISAN.



- **IT Act, 2000:** Enables secure digital and electronic transactions for DBT systems.

Additional Key Features

- **Women beneficiaries:** Over **25% of total transfers** targeted toward women-led households.
- **Facial authentication innovation:** Allows farmers to complete e-KYC for themselves and neighbours—supports aged and disabled beneficiaries.
- **Kisan-eMitra Chatbot:**
 - 24×7 multilingual access
 - Automatic Language Detection (ALD)
 - Automatic Scheme Detection (ASD)
 - Touch-free, voice-based interaction
 - Independent URL (kisanemitra.gov.in)
- **Ease of access:** Farmers can check status, register, update records, and verify payments independently.
- **Village-level saturation drives:** Ensure coverage of all cultivable landowning farmers.

Conclusion

PM-KISAN has emerged as a landmark welfare initiative blending **financial inclusion, digital governance, and agricultural support**. By eliminating intermediaries, enhancing transparency through Aadhaar, and adopting AI-enabled tools like Kisan-eMitra, the scheme strengthens **farmer empowerment**, improves **income stability**, and accelerates **rural economic growth**. The newly launched **Farmer Registry** is a transformative step toward integrated and hassle-free access to welfare schemes across India.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-2:** Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections, governance reforms, Aadhaar & digital delivery mechanisms.
- **GS-3:** Agriculture, inclusive growth, farm sector reforms, rural economy.
- **Essay:** Technology in welfare delivery, rural empowerment, digital India.
- **Prelims:** Scheme features, DBT, Aadhaar-based systems, Farmer Registry, objectives & eligibility.

2. Government e Marketplace (GeM) at IITF 2025

Key Points:

- **GeM's participation at IITF 2025** aims to strengthen **inclusive public procurement** by enabling **on-the-spot onboarding**, ODOP-focused support, and live demonstrations of digital procurement processes.
- Key focus on enhancing market access for **ODOP sellers, women entrepreneurs, SC/ST-led MSEs, SHGs, FPOs, and Divyangjan-led enterprises**, aligning with social inclusion mandates.
- GeM pavilion will offer **full-service facilities:** ODOP pavilion, catalogue-shoot zone, buyer–seller interaction space, query desk, and networking sessions to help under-represented groups navigate e-procurement.



- Exhibitors at IITF 2025 will receive **fast-track product listing** and increased visibility to **government buyers**, boosting MSME participation in the public procurement ecosystem.
- Initiative reinforces the idea of **Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat**, promoting transparency, efficiency, and equal opportunity in government procurement.
- GeM continues expanding access through digital tools, empowering small sellers and contributing to **transparent, competitive and corruption-free procurement**.

Additional Important Key Points

- GeM is India's **national public procurement portal** providing an online, end-to-end procurement solution for government buyers.
- The platform broadens participation by simplifying digital onboarding and offering training, catalogue standardization, and market access support.
- Live buyer experience at IITF enhances awareness about **reverse auction, bids, BoQ**, and real-time procurement workflows.



Definitions of Key Concepts

- **Government e Marketplace (GeM):** An online procurement platform enabling government departments to procure goods and services transparently and efficiently.
- **One District One Product (ODOP):** Government initiative to promote each district's unique product by providing branding, market linkage, and global visibility.
- **Public Procurement:** The process through which government departments purchase goods, works, and services from private sellers or MSMEs.
- **Digital Procurement:** Use of digital systems, platforms, and tools to conduct end-to-end procurement (tendering, bidding, contracting, payments).

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 14:** Ensures equality before law; GeM strengthens fair and non-discriminatory procurement.
- **Article 38:** State obligation to promote social and economic justice; inclusive procurement provides market access to weaker groups.
- **Article 46:** Promotion of educational and economic interests of SCs, STs and other weaker sections—aligned with GeM's focus on under-represented seller groups.
- **General Financial Rules (GFR) 2017:** Mandate transparent, competitive public procurement and encourage procurement from GeM.
- **MSME Development Act, 2006:** Supports preferential procurement from MSMEs, boosting their participation on GeM.
- **IT Act, 2000:** Provides legal backing for digital transactions and e-procurement processes.



Conclusion

GeM's presence at IITF 2025 reflects India's push toward **transparent, tech-enabled, and inclusive procurement systems**. By supporting ODOP sellers, MSMEs, women-led and marginalized enterprises, GeM strengthens economic empowerment and democratizes access to government markets. The initiative enhances digital literacy, promotes fair competition, and accelerates India's shift toward a modern, efficient public procurement ecosystem.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-2:** Governance, transparency, digital platforms, inclusivity in public procurement, e-governance initiatives.
- **GS-3:** MSME sector, economic development, ODOP, digital economy, entrepreneurship.
- **Prelims:** Features of GeM, GFR 2017 norms, ODOP scheme, public procurement reforms.
- **Essay:** Digital inclusion, MSME empowerment, cooperative federalism through procurement.

3. Drone City & Space City in Andhra Pradesh

Key Points:

- Foundation stone laid for **India's first Drone City** at **Orvakal Industrial Node, Kurnool (300 acres)** and a **Space City near Sriharikota**, aimed at boosting aerospace, drone manufacturing, and space-tech innovation.
- Drone City will promote **self-reliance in high-quality drone production**, support India's expanding drone ecosystem, and strengthen applications in agriculture, disaster management, defence, and operations like **Operation Sindoor**.
- Space City near Sriharikota (India's primary rocket launching hub) will provide an integrated ecosystem for **satellite manufacturing, launch-related services, R&D, startups**, and advanced space technologies.
- Andhra Pradesh Government is offering **investor-friendly incentives** including **100% SGST refund** and **20% capital investment reimbursement** through an **escrow account** to ensure transparency and reduce bureaucratic interference.
- Initiative aligns with national visions like **Viksit Bharat 2047, Swarna Andhra 2047**, and the Prime Minister's goal of **"a drone in every farmer's field and a smartphone for every Indian."**
- Collaboration between Union Government and State Government strengthens India's **aerospace sector**, technological innovation, and regional industrial development.



Additional Important Key Points

- Drone City expected to become a hub for:
 - Drone manufacturing & assembly
 - Pilot training & certification
 - Maintenance, repair & overhaul (MRO) facilities
 - Testing corridors and R&D labs



- Provides opportunities for startups, MSMEs, defence manufacturers, agriculture-tech firms, and private space-tech entrepreneurs.
- Supports national programs such as **Drone Shakti**, **Kisan Drone Initiative**, and **Make in India**.

Definitions of Key Concepts

- **Drone City:** A dedicated industrial and technological cluster for drone manufacturing, R&D, testing, skilling, and service-related activities.
- **Space City:** A specialized space-tech ecosystem that integrates satellite fabrication, launch services, research infrastructure, and private sector participation around major spaceports.
- **Escrow Account:** A financial arrangement where a third party holds funds until pre-defined conditions are met—ensuring transparency, reducing risks for investors.
- **Kisan Drone:** Drones used in agriculture for spraying, soil analysis, crop monitoring, and precision farming.
- **Operation Sindoor:** A recent Indian operation where drones were effectively used, highlighting their strategic importance.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 38:** State to promote welfare and minimize inequalities—technology-driven development supports equitable growth.
- **Article 39(b):** Distribution of material resources for common good—industrial clusters like Drone City enhance national capabilities.
- **Article 51A(h):** Citizen duty to develop scientific temper—supports technology-led development.
- **Article 51:** Promotion of international peace and scientific cooperation—relevant for space sector expansion.
- **Priority Sector Policies:** Align with national aerospace policies, **National Geospatial Policy 2022**, **Drone Rules 2021**, and evolving **Space Policy 2023** that encourages private-sector participation.

Conclusion

The establishment of Drone City and Space City in Andhra Pradesh marks a major milestone in India's journey towards becoming a global leader in **drone technology, aerospace manufacturing, and space innovation**. With strong institutional collaboration, investor-friendly reforms, and alignment with long-term national visions, these hubs will drive job creation, boost technological self-reliance, and accelerate India's transformation into an advanced industrial and digital economy.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-2:** Centre–State coordination, investment promotion, transparency in governance.
- **GS-3:** Science & Technology, space sector reforms, drones, Make in India, innovation ecosystems.
- **Prelims:** Drone City location, Space City near Sriharikota, Drone Rules 2021, Indian space sector initiatives.
- **Essay:** Technology-led development, industrial corridors, digital & aerospace future of India.



4. GeM Welcomes Delegation from 23 ITEC Partner Countries

Key Points:

- A delegation of **24 senior officials from 23 ITEC partner countries** visited **Government e Marketplace (GeM)** under the **AJNIFM–GeM MoU**, strengthening global cooperation in **digital public procurement**.
- The visit showcased India’s transformation in **transparent, efficient, and technology-driven procurement**, positioning GeM as a **global benchmark** in e-governance and public procurement reform.
- Delegates engaged with GeM’s core pillars: **capacity enhancement, thought leadership, Communities of Practice**, and **global advocacy**, aimed at improving procurement performance internationally.
- The programme highlighted GeM’s **digital architecture**, best practices, and demonstrated how technology-led solutions overcome **traditional procurement challenges** such as delays, inefficiencies, and corruption risks.
- The collaboration supports India’s vision of being a leader in **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** and promotes adoption of **scalable and inclusive procurement systems** across partner nations.
- GeM reiterated its commitment to building an **inclusive procurement ecosystem**, ensuring fair buyer–seller participation and enhancing global uptake of India’s digital procurement model.



Additional Important Key Points

- Initiative conducted under the **ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation)** programme, highlighting India’s role in South–South cooperation and capacity building.
- Strengthens India’s soft power by sharing digital governance innovations with developing countries.
- MoU with **Arun Jaitley National Institute of Financial Management (AJNIFM)** focuses on procurement training, global knowledge-sharing, and capacity-building initiatives for officials.
- Contributes to global discussions on digital transformation, procurement governance, and building resilient supply chains.

Definitions of Key Terms

- **GeM (Government e Marketplace):** An end-to-end online procurement platform for government departments ensuring transparency, competition, and efficiency.
- **ITEC Programme:** A flagship capacity-building initiative of the Government of India aimed at training and assisting partner countries, especially Global South nations.
- **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI):** Foundational digital systems (digital ID, payments, platforms) that enable scalable governance solutions.
- **Communities of Practice:** Expert networks that share knowledge, best practices, and innovations to improve procurement systems globally.



- **E-Procurement:** Electronic system for buying goods and services digitally, promoting transparency and cost-efficiency.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 14:** Promotes fairness and non-discrimination; GeM ensures equal opportunity in procurement.
- **Article 38/39:** Promote social and economic justice; transparent procurement strengthens equitable distribution of resources.
- **Article 51(c):** Promotes international cooperation—aligned with India’s collaboration with ITEC nations.
- **IT Act 2000:** Provides legal basis for digital governance tools used in GeM.
- **General Financial Rules (GFR) 2017:** Mandate transparent, competitive, and digital public procurement, directly supporting GeM’s functioning.

Conclusion

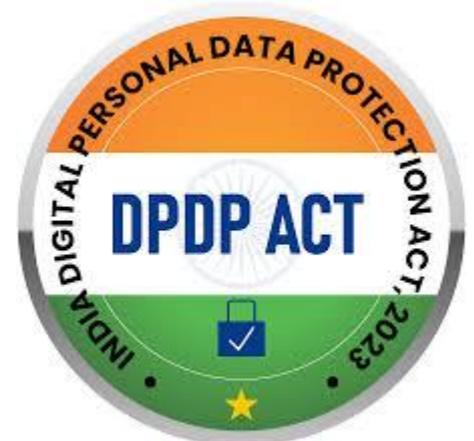
The visit of ITEC partner nations to GeM represents India’s growing global leadership in **digital governance and public procurement reform**. By sharing scalable, transparent, and inclusive procurement models, India is strengthening global capacity-building and contributing to improved governance outcomes in developing nations. The initiative reinforces India’s role as a driver of **Digital Public Infrastructure diplomacy** and an emerging standard-setter in e-procurement excellence.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-2:** E-governance, international cooperation, institutional capacity building, transparency in public procurement.
- **GS-3:** Digital economy, infrastructure, governance reforms, public sector efficiency.
- **Prelims:** Features of GeM, GFR 2017, ITEC programme, AJNIFM, Digital Public Infrastructure.
- **Essay:** India as a global leader in digital governance, South–South cooperation, transparency and accountability in administration.

5. Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023 – Key Provisions

- The Union Government has notified major provisions of the **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023**, bringing India’s first dedicated data protection law closer to full implementation and advancing compliance with the **Supreme Court’s K.S. Puttaswamy (2017)** judgment that affirmed **privacy as a Fundamental Right**.
- The Act mandates that **firms (Data Fiduciaries)** must ensure **security, lawful processing, consent-based collection**, and **protection of digital personal data** of Indian citizens, along with significant penalties for non-compliance.
- The law provides exemptions for the **State and its instrumentalities**, enabling certain data-processing activities for national security, public order, research, and other legitimate state functions.





- Transparency concerns have been raised as the law amends **Section 8(1)(j) of the Right to Information Act, 2005**, restricting access to “personal information” even when larger public interest is involved—effective immediately.
- **Compliance deadlines:** Data Fiduciaries have time until **November 2026** to disclose details of their **Data Protection Officer (DPO)**, and the **Consent Manager Framework**—enabling data removal, correction, and consent management for citizens—will also take effect in November 2026.
- The notification marks a major shift towards a **regulated, rights-based digital ecosystem** but also sparks debate over the balance between **privacy rights** and **transparency in governance**.

Additional Important Key Points

- The Act governs **digital personal data** (online data and offline data later digitized).
- Establishes rights for **Data Principals** (users), including:
 - Right to consent
 - Right to data correction and erasure
 - Right to grievance redressal
 - Right to nominate another person in case of death/incapacity.
- Imposes obligations on **Data Fiduciaries** such as purpose limitation, storage limitation, data security, breach notifications, and grievance mechanisms.
- Penalties can go up to **₹250 crore per violation** depending on severity.
- Introduces special rules for **Significant Data Fiduciaries** (large firms, platforms), including enhanced compliance requirements.

Definitions of Key Terms

- **Data Principal:** The individual whose personal data is being processed (i.e., the user).
- **Data Fiduciary:** Any entity (firm, authority, or person) determining the purpose and means of processing personal data.
- **Significant Data Fiduciary:** A large-scale data processor identified by the government based on risk factors such as volume, sensitivity, and impact.
- **Consent Manager:** A recognized platform enabling users to manage, withdraw, amend, or view consent for data processing.
- **Personal Data:** Any data that can identify an individual either directly or indirectly.
- **Processing:** Any automated operation performed on personal data (collection, storage, retrieval, sharing, etc.).

Closer to compliance

With key parts of the DPDP Act now notified, the government edges closer to enforcing the 2017 Supreme Court privacy judgment and strengthening protections for Indians' personal data



Aug. 2017: The Supreme Court rules that privacy is a **fundamental right**

July 2018: Retd. Justice **B.N. Srikrishna-led committee** submits its

report and a draft data protection Bill

Dec. 2022: A fresh **draft Bill** prepared by the IT Ministry

Aug. 2023: Parliament passes the **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023**

Jan. 2025: Draft rules to enforce the Act are put out for **public consultation**

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 21:** Right to life includes the **Right to Privacy**, as held in **K.S. Puttaswamy (2017)**.



- **Articles 14 & 19:** Data protection reinforces equality and freedom by ensuring informational autonomy.
- **RTI Act, 2005 Amendment:** Section 8(1)(j) modified to restrict disclosure of personal information, reducing public-interest override.
- **IT Act, 2000:** Continues to provide framework for cyber governance alongside DPDP.
- **Doctrine of Proportionality:** Applied in evaluating data restrictions and state exemptions.

Conclusion

The notification of key provisions of the DPDP Act, 2023 marks a significant milestone in establishing a structured data protection regime in India. While the Act strengthens privacy protection, ensures accountability from data-handling entities, and promotes user empowerment through consent-based mechanisms, it also raises legitimate concerns regarding transparency and potential dilution of the RTI framework. Effective implementation, institutional capacity, and balancing privacy with public interest will be crucial in the coming years.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-2:** Fundamental Rights, e-governance, legal reforms, RTI, accountability, privacy.
- **GS-3:** Cybersecurity, digital economy, data protection framework, emerging technologies.
- **Polity & Governance (Prelims):** DPDP Act features, Data Fiduciary, Data Principal, penalties, exemptions, consent manager.
- **Essay:** Privacy vs. Transparency, Digital India, Regulatory frameworks for emerging technologies.

6. India's Pursuit of New Free Trade Agreements

Key Points:

- India is actively negotiating **Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)** with several nations and regions, including the **European Union, United States, Oman, New Zealand, Chile, and Peru**, aiming to boost the **free flow of capital, goods, and services**.
- The push for FTAs comes at a time of **global economic volatility and shifting geopolitical order**, where India is positioning itself as a **trusted and resilient economic partner**.
- At the **30th CII Partnership Summit 2025**, the Union Commerce & Industry Minister emphasized that Indian industries must enhance **resilience, competitiveness, and technological adoption** to fully benefit from emerging global opportunities.
- FTAs are being strategically aligned with India's broader vision of strengthening **global trade ties**, increasing export competitiveness, and securing stable supply chains.
- Minister Goyal highlighted India's growing **global credibility**, describing it as an "oasis amid global churning," which enhances its negotiating capacity in international trade forums.
- Technology adoption and ethical, transparent trade practices were underscored as essential pillars for sustaining prosperity and strengthening global economic partnerships.





Additional Important Key Points

- FTAs under negotiation cover areas such as **tariff reduction, market access, services liberalization, investment rules, digital trade, and standards harmonization**.
- India is diversifying trade partners to reduce dependence on any single region, while promoting **export-oriented manufacturing** under initiatives like **Make in India, PLI schemes, and Atmanirbhar Bharat**.
- Strengthening trade ties helps integrate Indian industries into **global value chains (GVCs)** and boosts MSME participation.
- FTAs with Latin American and Indo-Pacific nations reflect India's broader strategy of expanding influence across emerging markets.

Definitions of Key Concepts

- **Free Trade Agreement (FTA):** A treaty between two or more countries to reduce or eliminate trade barriers such as tariffs, quotas, and import duties.
- **Global Value Chains (GVCs):** International production networks where different stages of production occur in different countries.
- **Tariff Liberalization:** Gradual removal or reduction of customs duties on imported goods.
- **Market Access:** The ability of firms to sell goods and services across borders without undue restrictions.
- **Geostrategic Trade Realignment:** Changes in global trade patterns due to geopolitical shifts, wars, or economic transitions.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 246 & Seventh Schedule:** Union List empowers Parliament to legislate on foreign trade and treaties.
- **Article 253:** Parliament has authority to implement treaties, agreements, and international conventions.
- **Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992:** Empowers government to regulate and promote foreign trade.
- **Customs Act, 1962:** Governs tariffs, duties, and border trade rules relevant to FTA implementation.
- **FTAs must align with WTO commitments**, especially under GATT Article XXIV and GATS Article V.

Conclusion

India's accelerated engagement in FTA negotiations reflects its ambition to become a key driver of **global trade, investment, and technology integration**. These agreements aim to enhance India's export competitiveness, secure diversified market access, and strengthen India's role in global supply chains. While FTAs offer opportunities, success will depend on domestic industry preparedness, regulatory reforms, and technological upgrading.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-2:** International relations, global economic diplomacy, treaty-making power.

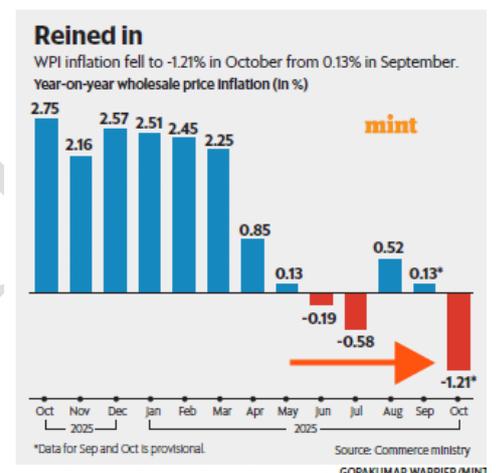


- **GS-3:** Indian economy, trade agreements, export competitiveness, global value chains, industrial policy.
- **Prelims:** FTA definitions, countries under negotiation, Article 253, trade bodies.
- **Essay:** Globalization, emerging trade order, India's economic diplomacy.

7. Wholesale Price Index (WPI) Falls to 27-Month Low

Key Points:

- India's **WPI-based inflation fell to -1.21% in October 2025**, a **27-month low**, driven primarily by steep deflation in food prices; WPI was **0.13% in September 2025** and **2.75% a year earlier**.
- **Food inflation turned sharply negative at -5.04%**, led by declines in prices of **vegetables, cereals, pulses, wheat, fruits, and oilseeds**; overall food articles saw an **8.31% price fall**.
- **Fuel and power** segment continued to show deflation at **-2.55%**, marking the **7th consecutive month of decline**, while **manufactured products inflation softened to 1.54%** from **2.33%**.
- **Core inflation** (WPI excluding food & fuel) dropped to a **three-month low of 1.5%**, reflecting moderation in **base metals, jewellery, and other manufactured items**; 13 of 21 core components showed lower inflation.
- Economists warn that **persistent food deflation**, while easing consumer burden, may hurt **farm incomes**, potentially weakening rural demand and impacting consumption-led growth.
- Global factors, including **weak commodity demand**, are contributing to downward pressure on prices, indicating a **benign inflationary environment** but with risks to agricultural income stability.



Additional Important Key Points

- Food deflation touched **record lows in the 2011–12 WPI series**, with pulses at **-16.5%**, vegetables at **-35%**, cereals at **-1.1%**, and fruits at **-7%**.
- Lower global commodity prices (except lead) contributed to India's reduced import cost pressures.
- Domestic supply improvements, good harvest arrivals, and easing logistics may have aided price declines.
- Divergence between **WPI and CPI** inflation remains relevant for policymaking: WPI deflation does not necessarily translate into lower consumer inflation.

Definitions of Key Terms

- **Wholesale Price Index (WPI):** Measures price changes at the wholesale level for a basket of commodities; compiled by the Office of Economic Adviser, Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
- **Core Inflation:** Inflation excluding the volatile items—food and fuel—to reflect underlying price pressures.
- **Deflation:** A sustained decline in the general price level of goods and services (negative inflation).



- **Food Inflation:** Measures price changes in food items; highly sensitive to seasonality, monsoon impact, and global supply trends.
- **Commodity Prices:** Prices of raw materials such as metals, oil, and agricultural goods that influence domestic inflation.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 38:** Directs the State to minimize inequalities—important when deflation hurts farmers while benefiting consumers.
- **Article 39(b):** Ensures equitable distribution of material resources; relevant in balancing price stability and farm incomes.
- **Essential Commodities Act, 1955:** Regulates production & supply of essential goods; can influence inflation indirectly.
- **Agricultural Price Policies (MSP & procurement laws):** Linked to farm income protection amid food deflation.
- **RBI's inflation mandate under the RBI Act (amended 2016):** Uses CPI, but WPI trends can influence overall monetary-policy assessment.

Conclusion

India's WPI deflation in October 2025 highlights a significant softening in wholesale prices due to record-low food inflation and weak global commodity trends. While the decline improves affordability for consumers and industries, it raises concerns about **farm income stress** and **slowing rural demand**. Monitoring the persistence of deflation is crucial for maintaining balanced and inclusive economic growth.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-3:** Inflation trends, price stability, agricultural economy, global commodity cycles, monetary policy.
- **GS-1:** Impact on rural economy and livelihoods.
- **Prelims:** WPI components, base year (2011–12), difference between WPI & CPI, core inflation, deflation.
- **Essay:** Inflation vs. deflation, rural distress, global economic volatility.

7. International Tipiṭaka Chanting Ceremony & Commemorative Walk

5–6 Core Bullet Points (Most Important for UPSC)

- India will host the largest **International Buddhist event in Southeast Asia and India**—the **International Tipiṭaka Chanting Ceremony in Bodhgaya**, along with a **Commemorative Walk from Jethian Valley to Venuvana (Rajgir)**, reaffirming India's central role as the **cradle of Buddha Dhamma**.
- The 12-day event is organized by the **International Buddhist Confederation (IBC)** in partnership with the **Ministry of Culture** and the **Light of Buddha Dharma Foundation International (LBDFI), USA**, reflecting India's commitment to global Buddhist diplomacy.



- Participation expected from **20,000+ Sangha members and devotees**, including monastic delegations from **10+ countries** (Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia, Nepal, Bangladesh, USA), strengthening international cultural ties.
- Key activities include **daily Pali scripture recitation under the Bodhi Tree**, discourses by Dhamma masters, interactive sessions, cultural performances, and an art gallery showcasing India's Buddhist heritage.
- A major highlight is the consecration and nationwide distribution of **220 four-foot golden Buddha statues**, handmade in Odisha, intended for **temples, meditation centres, and community spaces**, supporting the revival of Buddha Dhamma in India.
- The event reinforces India's soft power, heritage diplomacy, and its responsibility as the custodian of major Buddhist sites such as **Bodhgaya, Nalanda, and Rajgir**.



Additional Important Key Points

- Bodhgaya is the **Seat of Enlightenment**, where Siddhartha Gautama attained Buddhahood under the sacred Bodhi Tree.
- The commemorative walk retraces the Buddha's historical movement between key sites of early Sangha formation.
- Over 1,000 volunteers from across India will support the event, reflecting widespread reverence for the Buddha's teachings.
- Such events support **religious tourism, cultural revival**, and international engagement under **India's Buddhist Diplomacy**.
- Enhances India's image as a promoter of peace, compassion, and inter-civilizational dialogue.

Definitions of Key Terms

- **Tipiṭaka:** The foundational scripture of Theravāda Buddhism, comprising Vinaya Piṭaka, Sutta Piṭaka, and Abhidhamma Piṭaka.
- **Sangha:** The monastic community of Buddhist monks and nuns.
- **Bodhi Tree:** The sacred fig tree under which Buddha attained Enlightenment; central pilgrimage site.
- **Dhamma (Dharma):** The teachings of the Buddha that guide moral and spiritual development.
- **Commemorative Walk:** A culturally symbolic act retracing the physical paths associated with the Buddha's journey.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 49:** Obliges the State to protect monuments and sites of national heritage—relevant for Bodhgaya and Rajgir.
- **Article 51(c):** Promotes international peace and cooperation, supported through Buddhist diplomacy.
- **Article 51A(f):** Fundamental duty to value and preserve rich heritage of India's composite culture.



- **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958:** Legal protection for key Buddhist heritage sites.
- **Ministry of Culture initiatives:** Promotion of cultural heritage, intangible heritage, and international cultural cooperation.

Conclusion

India's hosting of the International Tipiṭaka Chanting Ceremony and Commemorative Walk reasserts its role as the **spiritual homeland of Buddhism** and a global hub of Buddhist heritage. The event fosters international unity, cultural diplomacy, soft power projection, and revival of Buddhist traditions within India. It reinforces the message of peace, compassion, and shared civilizational values across nations, strengthening India's cultural leadership.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-1:** Indian culture, Buddhism, heritage sites, cultural revival.
- **GS-2:** International relations, cultural diplomacy, soft power, global engagement.
- **GS-4:** Buddhist ethics—compassion, peace, mindfulness.
- **Prelims:** Bodhgaya, Tipiṭaka, Venuvana, Jethian Valley, Buddhist councils, IBC, LBDFI.
- **Essay:** India's civilizational diplomacy, Buddhism as soft power, culture as a tool of foreign policy.

8. DRDO Develops New-Generation Man-Portable Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (MP-AUVs)

Key Points:

- DRDO's **Naval Science & Technological Laboratory (NSTL), Visakhapatnam** has developed **Man-Portable Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (MP-AUVs)** designed specifically for **mine countermeasure (MCM) missions**, enhancing India's underwater warfare capabilities.
- MP-AUVs are equipped with **Side Scan Sonar (SSS)** and **underwater cameras** for real-time detection and classification of **Mine-Like Objects (MLOs)**, using **deep-learning-based target recognition algorithms** to reduce operator workload and mission time.
- The AUVs support **inter-AUV underwater acoustic communication**, enabling data exchange, coordinated operations, and improved situational awareness—a step toward **network-centric naval warfare**.
- Successful **field trials at NSTL Harbour** have validated system performance; multiple industry partners are involved, and production readiness is expected within months.
- The system offers **rapid deployment, reduced operational risk**, and low **logistic footprint**, making it suitable for modern naval mine warfare and coastal security operations.
- DRDO leadership called it a major milestone in developing **intelligent, autonomous, and deployable underwater systems**, strengthening India's maritime defence self-reliance.





Additional Important Key Points

- MP-AUVs increase safety by reducing the need for manned mine-hunting operations.
- Deep-learning algorithms allow automated classification, minimizing false alarms and improving mission efficiency.
- Interoperability with future unmanned platforms enhances India's Unmanned Maritime Systems (UMS) roadmap.
- Indigenous development supports the **Atmanirbhar Bharat** initiative in defence manufacturing.

Definitions of Key Terms

- **AUV (Autonomous Underwater Vehicle):** An unmanned, self-propelled underwater robot capable of independent navigation without real-time human control.
- **Mine Countermeasure (MCM):** Naval operations undertaken to detect, classify, identify, and neutralize underwater mines.
- **Side Scan Sonar (SSS):** Sonar system that emits sound waves sideways to create detailed images of the sea floor—crucial for locating mines.
- **Deep Learning Algorithms:** Advanced AI models that enable autonomous target detection and classification based on large datasets.
- **Underwater Acoustic Communication:** Method of transmitting data underwater using sound waves, essential where radio signals do not work.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 51A(d):** Duty to defend the nation—linked to strengthening maritime security.
- **Article 245/246 (Union List):** Defence, naval forces, and national security lie under Union jurisdiction.
- **DRDO Mandate:** Works under the Ministry of Defence for indigenous defence technologies.
- **Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020:** Encourages indigenous R&D, industry participation, and procurement of locally developed systems.

Conclusion

The development of MP-AUVs marks a crucial advancement in India's underwater defence capabilities, enabling **autonomous mine detection**, reducing risk to personnel, and enhancing rapid-response readiness. As India strengthens its maritime posture amid evolving regional security challenges, such indigenous, AI-enabled systems underpin strategic autonomy and technological superiority.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-3:** Defence technology, DRDO advancements, robotics, AI in security, underwater warfare systems.
- **GS-2:** Strategic security, maritime cooperation, national security architecture.
- **Prelims:** AUV, Side Scan Sonar, mine countermeasure systems, NSTL, DRDO, underwater acoustics.
- **Essay:** Technology in national security, automation in warfare, Atmanirbhar defence ecosystem.



9. CBFC Launches Multilingual Module on E-Cinepramaan Portal

Key Points:

- The **Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)** has launched a **Multilingual Module** on the **E-Cinepramaan portal**, enabling applicants to submit films in multiple Indian languages through **one unified application**, reducing duplication and streamlining certification.
- Each multilingual submission will receive a **single Multilingual Certificate**, listing all approved languages, aligning with the rising trend of **Pan-India cinema and multilingual releases**.
- The module enhances efficiency by allowing the entire multilingual application to be processed by **one Regional Office**, ensuring uniformity, quicker approvals, and reduced administrative burden.
- The initiative is part of CBFC's broader vision to **digitize, simplify, and modernize** the film certification process, improving transparency and ease of doing business for the film industry.
- This feature is **optional** and exists alongside the existing certification process, offering flexibility to filmmakers while promoting broader accessibility for diverse linguistic audiences.
- The reform reflects government efforts to adapt regulatory processes to the evolving national film ecosystem and to support inclusive dissemination of cultural content across India's linguistic diversity.



Additional Important Key Points

- E-Cinepramaan portal already provides digital services such as online applications, status tracking, and certificate downloads.
- Multilingual certification reduces repetitive submissions for dubbed versions and accelerates release planning for filmmakers.
- Supports the growing economic model of **multi-lingual OTT releases** and **Pan-India theatrical markets**.
- Contributes to reducing physical paperwork and enhances transparency in regulatory processes.

Definitions of Key Terms

- **CBFC (Central Board of Film Certification):** A statutory body under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting responsible for certifying films for public exhibition under the Cinematograph Act, 1952.
- **E-Cinepramaan:** CBFC's online platform for film certification services including application submission, tracking, and issuance of certificates.
- **Multilingual Certificate:** A unified film certification document listing all languages approved for a film's release.
- **Pan-India Cinema:** Films released across multiple regional markets simultaneously, often dubbed into various Indian languages.
- **Film Certification:** Legal process of approving films for public screening based on guidelines related to content, themes, and audience suitability.



Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 19(1)(a):** Freedom of speech and expression includes artistic and cinematic expression.
- **Reasonable Restrictions (Article 19(2)):** CBFC regulates film content within limits related to public order, morality, decency, and national security.
- **Cinematograph Act, 1952 & Rules:** Empower CBFC to certify films for public exhibition.
- **Information Technology initiatives:** Promote digital governance, ease of doing business, and transparency in cultural regulation.
- **Digital India framework:** Encourages integration of digital processes across government departments including film regulation.

Conclusion

The introduction of the Multilingual Module on the E-Cinepramaan portal marks a significant step in modernizing India's film certification system. By reducing procedural duplication, improving access, and supporting pan-India content dissemination, CBFC enhances both regulatory efficiency and cultural outreach. This digital reform strengthens India's creative economy and ensures smoother, more uniform certification for multilingual releases.

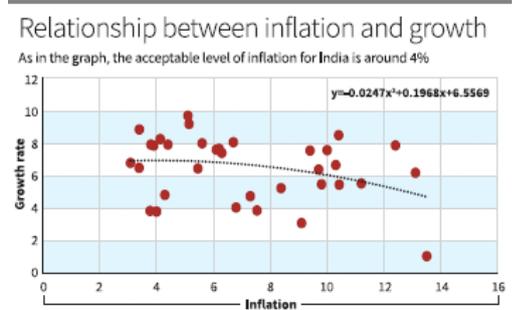
UPSC Relevance

- **GS-2:** Government digital reforms, statutory bodies, transparency, ease of doing business.
- **GS-1:** Cultural diversity, Indian cinema, linguistic plurality.
- **GS-3:** Digital governance, e-governance platforms, creative economy.
- **Prelims:** CBFC, Cinematograph Act 1952, E-Cinepramaan portal features, film certification categories.
- **Essay:** Culture and technology, regulatory modernization, India's soft power through cinema.

10. Flexible Inflation Targeting (FIT) Framework Under Review

Key Points:

- India's **Flexible Inflation Targeting (FIT)** framework—mandating inflation at **4% ± 2%**—expires in **March 2026** and is under review; RBI's discussion paper evaluates key issues such as **headline vs. core inflation**, acceptable inflation level, and width of the inflation band.
- Inflation control remains a **primary objective of monetary policy**, as high inflation acts as a **regressive tax**, hurting the poor, misdirecting investments, reducing savings, and destabilizing growth.
- Evidence and historical data show that **headline inflation** (not core alone) should be the target because food inflation has **second-round effects** on wages and core inflation, especially when aggregate demand expands.
- Empirical analysis suggests a **threshold of around 4% inflation** for India—beyond which growth declines sharply; this aligns with earlier recommendations such as the **Chakravarty Committee** and current RBI findings.





- The existing inflation band of $\pm 2\%$ provides adequate flexibility, but the review must clarify **how long inflation can remain near the upper limit**, as sustained inflation above 6% hampers growth.
- Effective inflation targeting must go hand-in-hand with **fiscal discipline**; weak enforcement of **FRBM Act** or any return to deficit monetisation can undermine FIT, threatening macroeconomic stability.

Additional Important Key Points

- India's inflation has remained broadly range-bound since FIT adoption in 2016, despite multiple shocks (pandemic, supply disruptions, global commodity cycles).
- Phillips Curve trade-off is weak in India—only short-run effects exist; long-run relationship between inflation and growth is near zero.
- Relative price changes (like food inflation during supply shocks) do not by themselves raise general price levels without excess liquidity—highlighting Friedman's monetary theory.
- Acceptable inflation target for the next five years must consider external risks, global spillovers, fiscal pressures, and potential supply-side reforms.

Definitions of Key Terms

- **Flexible Inflation Targeting (FIT):** A monetary policy framework where the central bank targets a specific inflation level while retaining flexibility to support growth.
- **Headline Inflation:** Inflation measured using the entire consumption basket (e.g., CPI).
- **Core Inflation:** Inflation excluding volatile items like food and fuel.
- **Threshold Inflation:** The inflation level beyond which economic growth begins to decline.
- **Monetisation of Deficit:** Financing government deficits by printing money—historically a cause of high inflation.
- **Phillips Curve:** Economic concept suggesting an inverse relationship between inflation and unemployment (weak in modern context).

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **RBI Act, 1934 (Amended 2016):** Provides statutory basis for inflation targeting and the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).
- **FRBM Act, 2003:** Mandates fiscal discipline, essential for the success of FIT.
- **Article 312:** Allows creation of All India Services including Indian Economic Service—relevant for economic governance.
- **Article 39(c):** Ensures policies that protect economic stability and equitable distribution of resources.
- **Parliament's role in approving inflation targets:** As per RBI Act amendments.

Conclusion

The ongoing review of India's FIT framework is crucial for shaping the country's macroeconomic stability over the next five years. Evidence strongly supports maintaining **4% inflation** as the central target, using **headline inflation** as the metric, and retaining the **$\pm 2\%$ band**. Inflation targeting must be complemented by



strict adherence to fiscal rules under the FRBM Act. Any dilution of fiscal or monetary discipline could destabilize growth and undermine India's economic credibility.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-3:** Monetary policy, inflation targeting, macroeconomic stability, RBI-MPC framework, fiscal discipline.
- **GS-2:** Institutional accountability, statutory bodies, economic governance.
- **Prelims:** FIT target, MPC mandate, CPI vs. WPI, headline vs. core inflation, FRBM Act, Chakravarty Committee.
- **Essay:** Inflation vs. growth, balancing monetary & fiscal policies, economic stability in emerging markets.

11. Great Nicobar Mega-Project: Environmental Admission, Legal Issues

Key Points:

- On **30 Oct 2025** the **Union Environment Ministry** told the **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** that the **Great Nicobar mega-project** (revised cost ~₹92,000 crore; earlier estimate ₹72,000 crore in 2021) will have **significant environmental impacts** on the biodiversity-rich island.
- The project (transshipment port at **Galathea Bay**, airport, power plant, tourism township) affects critical habitats: ~**20,000+ live coral colonies**, **50+ nesting mounds of the endemic Nicobar Megapode (Schedule I species)** and active **Giant Leatherback turtle** nesting beaches. The NGT noted **20,668 coral colonies** in April 2023.
- Major procedural controversies: **NBWL denotified** the proposed Galathea Bay Wildlife Sanctuary (2021), and NCSCM's ground-truthing report and the high-powered committee's recommendations that allegedly reclassify CRZ status were kept confidential, raising transparency and scientific-rigour concerns.
- Coastal regulation conflict: Galathea Bay arguably qualifies as **CRZ-IA** (areas with mangroves, corals, turtle-nesting beaches → highest protection; port construction generally prohibited), yet project proponents/committees have argued it does not fall in CRZ-IA—this legal contention underpins litigation.
- Recorded ecological importance persists (e.g., **600+ leatherback nestings in 2024**). The Ministry's admission of known impacts plus a mitigation plan up to **2052** highlights reliance on long-term mitigation rather than denial of harm.
- Core governance issue: tension between large-scale commercial development and statutory/environmental safeguards (transparency, independent science, public interest, procedural propriety), with ongoing judicial and expert scrutiny.



Additional Important Key Points

- Project proponents: **Andaman & Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO)**; NGT and Calcutta High Court have ongoing challenges.



- Confidentiality claims partly justified on defence grounds—critics say this is selectively used when commercial interests are involved.
- Denotification of sanctuary (NBWL) and subsequent downgrading of CRZ category to CRZ-1B (if accepted) illustrate institutional reversal with major conservation consequences.
- Mitigation promises (till 2052) do not eliminate risks of irreversible loss (coral reef degradation, species extinction, disruption of nesting cycles).
- Environmental assessment transparency (NCSCM report, HPC findings) remains contested—NGT has sought independent verification.

Definitions of Key Terms

- **CRZ-IA:** Coastal Regulation Zone category for ecologically sensitive areas (mangroves, coral reefs, turtle-nesting beaches, protected areas) with **maximum protection**; usually prohibits large construction.
- **NBWL (National Board for Wildlife):** Statutory body under Wildlife (Protection) Act that recommends wildlife sanctuaries/national parks and advises on project clearances in eco-sensitive zones.
- **Denotification:** Removal of a site's protected status (e.g., wildlife sanctuary), which changes permissible activities.
- **Mitigation Measures:** Steps proposed to avoid, reduce or compensate environmental harm—may include conservation plans, relocation, habitat restoration, long-term monitoring.
- **High-Powered Committee (HPC):** Expert committee constituted by NGT or Ministry to examine contested environmental issues.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 21:** Right to life includes right to a healthy environment (enshrined in Supreme Court jurisprudence).
- **Article 48A & Article 51A(g):** Directive Principles / Fundamental Duties on protecting environment and wildlife.
- **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972:** Schedule I affords highest protection to species like Nicobar Megapode; NBWL's role is critical.
- **Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2011 (and subsequent amendments):** Governs development along the coast; CRZ-IA areas are generally no-development zones.
- **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986; EIA Notification:** Require environmental clearances, assessments, public consultations for major projects.
- **National Green Tribunal Act, 2010:** Forum for environmental adjudication—NGT has directed surveys, committees and orders in this case.
- **AMASR Act, 1958 / Ancient Monuments rules (where applicable):** Protect heritage sites; relevant where archaeological sites exist.

Conclusion

The Great Nicobar mega-project exemplifies the difficult trade-off between strategic/infrastructure development and conservation of globally important biodiversity. The Environment Ministry's frank



admission to the NGT acknowledges ecological costs but brings into sharp relief problems of **procedural transparency, scientific independence, statutory consistency (CRZ/NBWL)** and the adequacy of mitigation as an alternative to strict protection. Judicial oversight, independent ecological assessment, meaningful public disclosure, and strict adherence to statutory protection (CRZ/ WPA) are essential before permitting irreversible interventions.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-3:** Environment and Ecology — protected areas, CRZ, impact assessment, biodiversity conservation, project appraisal.
- **GS-2:** Governance, transparency, environmental litigation, role of tribunals (NGT), Centre–Union Territory/state institutional interactions.
- **Prelims:** Facts—Great Nicobar project components (port at Galathea Bay, airport, power plant, tourism township), CRZ categories, Wildlife (Protection) Act Schedule I species (Nicobar Megapode), NGT orders (Apr 2023), NBWL denotification (2021).
- **Essay/Mains:** Themes—development vs conservation, sustainable development, institutional integrity, public interest litigation, environmental governance

12. RBI Trade Relief Measures for US Tariff-Hit Exporters

Key Points:

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has announced **Trade Relief Measures Directions, 2025**, providing immediate relief to exporters affected by **increased U.S. tariffs** and global trade disruptions.
- Measures include **easier access to working capital, higher borrowing limits, and deferment of loan repayments** (term loan instalments deferred till **end of 2025**), aimed at reducing debt-servicing pressure and ensuring business continuity.
- RBI has identified **20 tariff-hit export sectors** eligible for relief, covering fisheries, chemicals, plastics, rubber, textiles, leather, footwear, metals (iron, steel, aluminium), gems & jewellery, machinery, vehicles, furniture, and nuclear equipment.
- The measures are designed to cushion exporters facing global headwinds, stabilize export-oriented MSMEs, and prevent liquidity stress for both exporters and their lenders.
- Banks have welcomed the move, stating that regulatory leeway for export credit will enhance their ability to support companies facing rising tariffs and declining global demand.
- The initiative aims to safeguard India's export competitiveness, prevent job losses, and maintain external sector stability amid an uncertain global trade environment.



Additional Important Key Points

- Export credit availability is critical for sectors reliant on raw material imports and inventory cycles.
- Relief measures may include easing of **export credit interest rates, extended pre-shipment and post-shipment credit periods**, and flexible working capital norms.



- The move aligns with RBI's broader mandate to preserve **financial stability, liquidity flow, and credit availability** in times of external shocks.
- Provides breathing room to export-oriented MSMEs, which employ large workforces and contribute significantly to India's foreign exchange earnings.

Definitions of Key Terms

- **Working Capital:** Short-term financing used for day-to-day operational expenses such as raw material procurement, wages, and logistics.
- **Term Loan:** A long-term loan repaid in scheduled instalments; RBI's deferment helps ease immediate repayment pressure.
- **Export Credit:** Loans provided to exporters to finance production or shipment of goods for international markets.
- **Tariff Shock:** Sudden increase in import duties by a foreign country (here, the U.S.), reducing competitiveness of Indian exports.
- **Global Headwinds:** Unfavourable international economic conditions such as slowing demand, supply chain disruptions, or protectionist policies.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 246 & Union List:** External trade and monetary policy fall under the Union Government's exclusive domain.
- **RBI Act, 1934:** Empowers RBI to regulate credit, protect financial stability, and issue directions to banks during economic stress.
- **Foreign Trade (Development & Regulation) Act, 1992:** Governs promotion and regulation of exports.
- **** Banking Regulation Act, 1949:**** Enables RBI to modify lending norms and compliance standards for banks.
- **Export policies under FTP (Foreign Trade Policy):** Complement RBI measures to support exporters.

Conclusion

The RBI's Trade Relief Measures, 2025 provide timely and targeted support to exporters impacted by international tariff hikes, ensuring liquidity, easing repayment obligations, and sustaining export momentum. These measures help stabilize key industries, protect employment, and uphold India's external sector resilience during global economic uncertainties. Effective implementation through the banking system will be crucial for maximizing the benefits.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-3:** External sector, export competitiveness, global trade shocks, monetary policy interventions, MSME sector.
- **GS-2:** Regulatory bodies (RBI), policy responses to global challenges, Centre–bank coordination.
- **Prelims:** RBI's powers, export credit, working capital, tariff impact, Foreign Trade Policy.
- **Essay:** Globalisation challenges, export resilience, role of institutions in economic stability.