



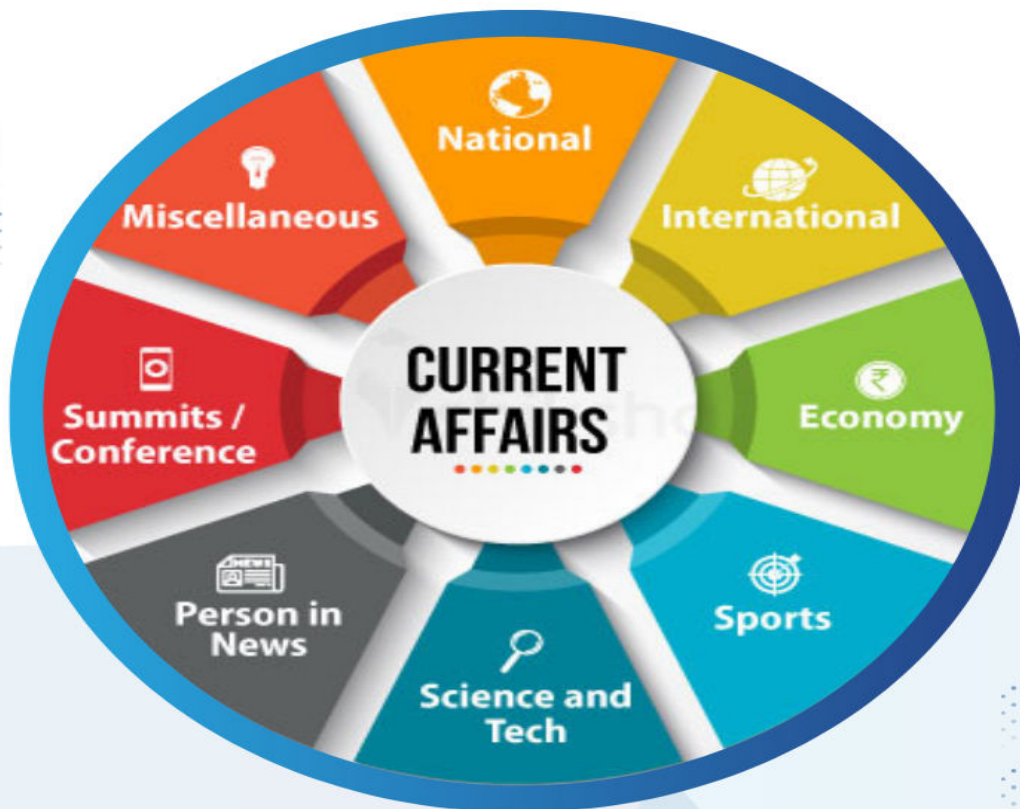
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FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

DATE: 24/11/2025 (MONDAY)



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1. No Plan to Bring Bill on Chandigarh – Government Clarification

The Union Government has clarified that there is no immediate plan to introduce a Constitution Amendment Bill regarding the status of Chandigarh. This comes amid strong political opposition to a proposal that was earlier listed in the Lok Sabha Bulletin.

Key Highlights

- **Official Denial:** The Union Home Ministry explicitly stated that the Centre has **no plan** to introduce a Constitution Amendment Bill to bring Chandigarh under the purview of **Article 240** in the upcoming Parliament session.
- **Political Opposition:** The proposal faced strong opposition from major Punjab political parties, including the **Congress, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)**, who feared it would lead to increased Central control over the Union Territory.
- **Proposed Bill (Shelved):** The Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2025, which was listed earlier, aimed to align Chandigarh with other Union Territories (UTs) without legislatures, potentially allowing for the appointment of an independent **Administrator** with expanded powers.
- **Status Sensitivity:** Chandigarh's status is highly sensitive due to its long-standing claims by **Punjab** and its unique role as the **joint capital of Punjab and Haryana** under the *Punjab Reorganisation Act, 1966*.
- **Government Stance:** The Home Ministry clarified that the original idea was merely to **simplify the law-making process**. The proposal is still **under consideration** and has not been formally approved.
- **Backlash Cause:** The political backlash was triggered because the Lok Sabha Bulletin entry suggested structural changes to Chandigarh's administration without sufficient **wider consultation**.

The Chandigarh question

The Centre hurried to issue a clarification on a Bill that aims to align Chandigarh with other Union Territories without legislatures

■ On November 21, the Lok Sabha Bulletin listed the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2025 among **10 Bills** for the Winter Session

■ Chandigarh has been a **sensitive issue** since the Punjab Reorganisation Act of 1966. Currently, the Governor of Punjab serves as its Administrator

With protests in Punjab, the Ministry issued a clarification

■ Proposal is still under consideration, **no final decision** yet

■ It does **not seek** to alter Chandigarh's governance or administrative structure

■ No Bill will be **introduced** in the upcoming Winter Session

Constitutional and Legal Context

The issue directly involves several key articles of the Indian Constitution concerning the administration of Union Territories:

Constitutional Article	Description and Relevance
Article 239	Defines the administration of Union Territories by the President through an Administrator appointed by him.
Article 240	Grants the President the power to make regulations for specific UTs. Applying this to Chandigarh would intensify direct Central authority .
Articles 239AA & 239AB	Special provisions governing the administration of the National Capital Territory of Delhi (a UT with a legislature). Relevant for comparison with UTs that lack legislatures.



Constitutional Article	Description and Relevance
Punjab Reorganisation Act, 1966	The legal framework that created Haryana and declared Chandigarh as a UT and the joint capital , making its status politically contentious.

Key Definitions

- **Union Territory (UT):** A federal unit that is administered directly by the **Central Government**, unlike states which possess their own full legislative authority.
- **Administrator / Lieutenant Governor:** The President's representative appointed to govern a Union Territory.
- **Constitution Amendment Bill:** A legislative Bill intended to modify, add, or repeal provisions of the Constitution; it requires a **special majority** in Parliament.

Conclusion

The Centre's clarification serves to **reduce political tension** and clearly signals that **no immediate constitutional shift** is planned for Chandigarh. Given its historical context, federal implications, and sensitive status as a joint capital, any future move affecting Chandigarh's administration must be handled with **extreme care** and should aim for **broad consensus** among all stakeholders.

UPSC Relevance

- **Polity & Governance:** Crucial topic for understanding the administration of **Union Territories**, the practical functioning of the **federal structure**, and dynamics of **Centre–State relations**.
- **Exam Utility:**
 - **Prelims:** Important for constitutional articles like **Article 239** and **Article 240**.
 - **GS-II Mains:** Highly relevant for questions concerning **state reorganisation**, issues in **UT administration**, and the process of **constitutional amendments**.

2. SC Advisory Opinion vs. Binding Judgment: Clarifying Governor's Powers

- **Presidential Reference vs. Judgment:** The former CJI clarified that an **Advisory Opinion** given by the Supreme Court in a **Presidential Reference (Article 143)** does **not overrule** a binding judicial judgment. It serves to clarify the law, and while doing so, the Court may observe that the law laid down in a prior judgment is incorrect, as seen in the recent case.
- **Rejection of Fixed Timelines:** The recent 5-judge Constitution Bench Advisory Opinion contradicted an earlier 2-judge bench judgment (Tamil Nadu Governor case, April 8), concluding that the Judiciary **cannot read a fixed timeline** for Governors and the President to act on pending Bills. The Constitution does not provide one, and creating one is the function of **Parliament**, not the Judiciary.
- **Governor's Constitutional Duty:** While rejecting fixed deadlines, the Opinion stressed that Governors and the President cannot resort to "**prolonged, unexplained, and indefinite inaction**." Such delays are subject to **limited judicial review** to ensure constitutional functionaries act "as soon as possible" and uphold cooperative federalism.



- **Constitutional Provisions & Key Definitions:**

- **Article 143 (Advisory Jurisdiction):** Empowers the President to seek the SC's opinion on a question of law or fact of public importance. The opinion is **advisory** and **not binding** on the President.
 - **Article 200 (Governor's Assent):** Outlines the Governor's options on a Bill: grant assent, withhold assent (by returning the Bill for reconsideration), or reserve for the President.
 - **"Deemed Assent" Doctrine:** The Opinion explicitly rejected the concept of "deemed assent" (where a Bill is considered passed after a time limit), ruling that the Supreme Court cannot use its power under **Article 142** to substitute the constitutional function of the Governor/President.
- **Implications for Federalism:** The issue touches on the friction between elected state governments (Legislature/Council of Ministers) and the gubernatorial office, often seen as a representative of the Centre. The ruling preserves the **discretionary space** of the Governor/President under Articles 200 and 201 but establishes that their inaction cannot be a constitutional **veto** against the will of the State Legislature.



Conclusion

The Supreme Court's Advisory Opinion on the Governor's power to assent to Bills provides crucial clarity on the limits of judicial intervention in constitutional gaps. By refusing to impose rigid timelines while simultaneously allowing limited judicial scrutiny of indefinite delays, the Court has attempted to balance the principles of **Separation of Powers** and **Constitutional Accountability** within India's federal structure.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II Polity & Governance:** Highly relevant for topics on **Indian Federalism**, the role and powers of the **Governor** and **President**, discretionary powers of constitutional offices, **Centre-State legislative relations**, and the **Supreme Court's Advisory Jurisdiction** (Article 143).
- **Key Concepts:** *Article 200, Article 201, Article 143, Article 142, Separation of Powers, Judicial Review, and Cooperative Federalism*. This is a primary source for Mains questions on institutional friction and constitutional interpretation.

3. UNSC Reform: Necessity for Global Governance (IBSA Perspective)

- **UNSC Reform Imperative:** Prime Minister Modi asserted at the **India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA)** summit that reform of the **UN Security Council (UNSC)** is "no longer an option but a necessity." The current global governance institutions do not reflect the **21st-century realities**, especially since none of the IBSA nations holds a permanent UNSC seat.
- **IBSA as a Unified Voice:** The IBSA grouping is highlighted as a critical platform connecting three continents (Asia, South America, Africa), three major democracies, and three major economies. The goal is for the trilateral troika to send a **clear, unified message** advocating for changes to institutions of global governance, amplifying the voice of the **Global South**.



- **Focus on Counter-Terrorism:** A key area of focus is strengthening security cooperation, with PM Modi proposing the institutionalisation of the **IBSA National Security Adviser (NSA)-level meeting**. He called for a unified global stand against terrorism, stating there is **no place for double standards** on such a serious issue.
- **Definition & Constitutional Context:**
 - **IBSA Dialogue Forum:** A trilateral, developmental initiative to promote **South-South cooperation** and coordination on global issues among the three major developing nations.
 - **UNSC:** The UN's primary crisis-management body responsible for maintaining international peace and security (UN Charter, **Article 24**). Structural reform of the UNSC (e.g., expansion of permanent seats) requires an amendment to the **UN Charter**, needing a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly and ratification by two-thirds of member states, including all **P5** (permanent members, UN Charter, **Article 108**).
- **India's Proposal for Cooperation:** The PM also proposed institutionalising new alliances to foster South-South cooperation, including:
 - An **IBSA Digital Innovation Alliance** for sharing Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) like UPI.
 - An **IBSA Fund for Climate Resilient Agriculture**.
- **Significance for Multilateralism:** The meeting was deemed timely, coinciding with the culmination of four consecutive G20 presidencies by countries from the Global South (including IBSA members India, Brazil, and South Africa), showcasing their collective capability to drive initiatives focused on **human-centric development** and **multilateral reform**.



Conclusion

PM Modi's address at the IBSA meeting underscores India's commitment to reformed multilateralism, using platforms like IBSA to build consensus among developing nations. The strong pitch for UNSC reform highlights the collective ambition of emerging powers to align the structure of global institutions with contemporary geopolitical and economic realities, ensuring greater representation and democratic legitimacy.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II International Relations:** Directly relevant to topics on **UN Reforms** (especially UNSC expansion, India's permanent seat bid), **Multilateral Forums** (IBSA, G4, BRICS), and **India's Foreign Policy**.
- **Key Concepts:** *South-South Cooperation, Global Governance, Multilateralism, Veto Power, UN Charter (Articles 24, 108)*, and the role of major developing economies.

4. Reforming Judicial Language: Towards Dignity and Equity

- **Eliminating Discriminatory Nomenclature:** A Supreme Court (SC) report, titled "**Reforming administrative nomenclature in the Indian judiciary embedding dignity and equity in service rules,**" urges the judiciary to abandon archaic administrative job titles like *Halalkhor*, *scavenger*,



dhobi, coolie, cycle sawar, masalchi, and malan. These terms perpetuate a "**grammar of inequality.**"

- **The "Grammar of Inequality":** This phrase, defined by the report, refers to the "set of unwritten, hierarchical rules inherited from **feudal, colonial, and caste-based systems** that structure the judiciary's administrative nomenclature." The continued use of this terminology has the "unintended effect of **normalising outdated hierarchies** and undermining a respectful work culture."
- **Constitutional and Legal Basis for Reform:** Terms like "*Halalkhor*" and "*scavenger*" directly violate the constitutional prohibitions on **caste-based discrimination**. The reform aligns with the core principles of **dignity of the individual** (Preamble) and the **right to equality** (Article 14) and the **prohibition of discrimination** (Article 15), urging courts to close the gap between what the judiciary pronounces and what it practices.
- **Recommended Modern Alternatives:** The report suggests replacing the derogatory terms with dignified alternatives: *Halalkhor/scavenger* to **Sanitation Assistant**, *dhobi* to **Laundry Operator**, *coolie* to **Freight Assistant**, *cycle sawar* to **Logistics Assistant**, *basta bardar* to **Document Handler**, and *masalchi* to **Kitchen Assistant**.
- **CJI's Initiative and Impact:** The former Chief Justice of India endorsed the report, forwarding it to all State High Courts. The action signals that updating the administrative language is a small but **significant step** towards affirming the **worth and dignity** of every individual working within the judicial system, regardless of their rank or role.



Conclusion

The Supreme Court's report on reforming administrative nomenclature represents a crucial institutional self-correction aimed at internalizing the constitutional values of **equality** and **dignity**. By addressing the "grammar of inequality" embedded in its service rules, the judiciary performs a symbolic act of justice, recognizing that language itself is the first act of justice and pedagogy.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II Polity & Governance (Social Justice):** Highly relevant for topics concerning the **Judiciary's role in social change, constitutional morality, right to dignity**, and issues related to **caste-based discrimination** and the implementation of social justice principles within government institutions.
- **Key Concepts:** *Constitutionalism, Dignity, Equality (Article 14), Prohibition of Discrimination (Article 15), Constitutional Ethics, and Institutional Reform.*

5. India's Demographic Dividend: Resource and Employability Challenge

This summary, originally structured for a magazine, details India's potential as a global workforce superpower and the significant challenges it faces in human capital development and employability.

Key Issues and Challenges

- **Demographic Advantage vs. Human Capital Gap:**
 - **Resource:** India's key asset is its **Demographic Dividend**, contributing over **one billion working-age people** (15-64 years) to the global pool, surpassing China.



- **Challenge:** The potential is undermined by low education and skilling levels. Only a **mere 4%** of individuals aged 15-59 have received **formal vocational or technical training** (PLFS 2023-24 data), and approximately **73%** have secondary education or less.
- **Employability Crisis and Sectoral Disparity:**
 - Despite a rise in overall graduate employability to 56.4%, a large **45% of graduates remain unemployable**.
 - There is a significant domain disparity: **Management (MBA) and Engineering graduates** are the most job-ready, whereas those from **Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and Polytechnics** are among the least, indicating a failure in vocational training to meet market demands.
- **Future of Work and AI Preparedness:**
 - The rise of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, where India ranks high in skills penetration (2.63 times the global average), necessitates a policy shift.
 - Policy must focus on **future-ready jobs** less vulnerable to automation—those requiring human empathy, dynamic problem-solving, or manual dexterity (e.g., elder care, customer service).
- **Low Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR):**
 - The potential of the dividend is restricted by a very **low FLFPR**, particularly in urban areas, despite showing a rising trend.
 - Low participation is driven by both **supply-side factors** (social norms, family responsibilities) and **demand-side factors**, leading to increased engagement in flexible **gig and platform work** among women.
- **Conclusion:** Unlocking this unparalleled economic value requires urgent, focused investment in **formal skilling**, addressing the vocational education gap, strategically preparing the workforce for the AI future, and aggressively boosting the **FLFPR**.



UPSC Relevance

- **GS-I Society & GS-III Indian Economy:** This topic is crucial for understanding the potential and challenges of the **Demographic Dividend**, the status of **Human Capital Formation**, issues of **Unemployment and Underemployment**, the necessity of the **Skill India Mission** and related schemes, and the socio-economic implications of the **Women's Role in the Economy (FLFPR)**.
- **Key Concepts:** *Demographic Dividend, Employability, Formal Vocational Training, Gig Economy, Rare Earth Minerals, Human Development Index.*

6. Indian Rupee Depreciation and RBI's Challenges

- **Sharp Rupee Decline and Near-Term Outlook:** The Indian Rupee (INR) recently hit a record low of **89.41 against the US Dollar (USD)**, breaching critical psychological resistance levels. The broader trend of depreciation is expected to continue, with the INR potentially nearing the **90-mark**. Market participants attribute the recent sharp fall to the **Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) temporary**



absence from the market after weeks of intervention, coupled with sustained **USD demand from importers**.

- **RBI's Intervention Policy and Constraints:** The RBI's public stance is that the rupee has "**no specific target**," and its weakness reflects **global dollar strength and geopolitical tensions**. While the RBI is expected to intervene to prevent a rapid, volatile movement toward 90, its "**elbow space**" for **aggressive intervention** is limited due to the need to manage foreign exchange reserves judiciously, especially when the underlying depreciation trend is strong.
- **Global Factors Driving Depreciation (DXY Strength):** Despite softening US 10-year Treasury yields and mixed US labor market data, the **USD remains strong globally (DXY)**. This strength is fuelled by **lower expectations of a US Federal Reserve (Fed) rate cut**, which strengthens the dollar relative to emerging market currencies like the rupee. The INR's weakness is thus partially a reflection of the global rise of the USD.
- **Key Domestic Drivers of Weakness:**
 - **Importers' Demand:** Persistent, strong USD demand from domestic importers, likely anticipating further weakness, continues to pressure the INR.
 - **Uncertainty over Trade Deal:** Growing uncertainty surrounding the delayed **India-US trade deal** adds to market nervousness and dampens sentiment.
 - **Market Dynamics:** The recent sharp fall was exacerbated by **cascading stop-loss triggers** (automatic selling orders), suggesting heightened speculative activity in the absence of RBI defense.
- **Contrasting Fundamentals:** The depreciation of the INR (4.4% since April) is occurring despite relatively **strong domestic economic fundamentals**, including a contained **Current Account Deficit (CAD) of 1.3% of GDP**. This contrast suggests that external and technical factors, rather than domestic economic weakness, are currently dominating exchange rate movements.



Conclusion

The recent sharp fall of the rupee is symptomatic of persistent global dollar strength and technical market dynamics, despite stable domestic fundamentals. While the RBI may intervene to curb volatility, the sustained depreciation trend highlights the limitations of intervention without fundamental shifts in global monetary policy (Fed rate cuts) or a substantial improvement in external trade dynamics.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-III Indian Economy (External Sector):** Highly relevant for topics on the **Exchange Rate Mechanism (Floating Rate)**, **RBI's Monetary Policy Tools (Forex Intervention)**, the impact of **US Federal Reserve Policies** on emerging markets, **Current Account Deficit (CAD)**, and **Global Currency Dynamics (DXY)**.
- **Key Concepts:** *Exchange Rate Volatility, Forex Reserves, Depreciation vs. Devaluation, Dollar Index (DXY), Capital Account Convertibility, and Open Market Operations.*



7. CAG Overhaul: Shifting to Real-Time (Live) Audits

- **Shift from Retrospective to Real-Time Auditing:** The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) is preparing for a major overhaul, moving from the current system of **delayed, retrospective scrutiny** of public spending (often years after project completion) to **real-time or "live" audits**. This new mechanism will track ministries and Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) while projects and schemes are actively being executed.
- **Goal: Early Course Correction and Loss Prevention:**
The primary objective is to **flag tendering lapses, execution delays, and potential losses early**—as they occur—rather than publishing findings long after the damage is done (e.g., the 2G spectrum allocation or coal block allocation scandals, which estimated losses in trillions of rupees retrospectively). This allows for **timely corrective action** and prevents losses before they materialize.
- **Mechanism and Digital Tools:** The shift is facilitated by the adoption of **digital tools** that continuously track every stage of a scheme's execution. The new system, known as **Monitor Performance Audits (PA) and Subject Specific Compliance Audits (SSCA)**, captures milestones, compares progress in real-time, and centrally alerts concerned ministries and functional wings, enabling faster in-process corrections.
- **New Audit Focus Areas:** The real-time review will examine execution files for adherence to prescribed norms, specifically looking into potential **tendering irregularities**, including signs of **collusion** or **dummy bidding** (e.g., tracking identical IP addresses). This early vigilance enhances accountability and checks corruption right from the procurement stage.
- **Constitutional and Legal Context (Key Definitions):**
 - **Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG):** The constitutional authority established under **Article 148** of the Constitution of India. The CAG is the guardian of the public purse and controls the entire financial system of the country at both the Union and the state levels.
 - **Audit vs. Concurrent Audit:** The current system is largely a **Performance Audit** (post-facto evaluation). The new system moves towards **Concurrent/Real-Time Audit**, which is a continuous examination of transactions to ensure compliance and correctness *as* they happen, minimizing the time gap between a transaction and its audit.
- **Significance:** This change represents a long-overdue reform that makes the audit process more effective and relevant. By preventing losses before they occur, the CAG's shift will not only improve public financial accountability but also potentially save substantial public money for reallocation to welfare programs.



Conclusion

The CAG's transition to real-time auditing is a transformative institutional reform that aligns its functions with modern digital governance practices. This proactive approach ensures greater efficiency, transparency, and accountability in the utilization of public funds, moving the focus from identifying past failures to actively safeguarding the exchequer in the present.



UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II Polity & Governance:** Absolutely crucial for topics on **Constitutional Bodies (CAG)**, **Accountability, Transparency**, and **Institutional Reforms**. It directly relates to the effectiveness of the **Financial System and Public Auditing**.
- **Key Concepts:** *Article 148, CAG (Duties and Powers) Act, Concurrent Audit, Performance Audit, Public Financial Management, and Digital Governance.*

8. Renewed Push for Free Trade Agreement and Strategic Cooperation

- **Revival of FTA Negotiations:** India and Israel have signaled a **renewed push** to deepen their economic partnership, with the main focus being the formal initiation of negotiations for a **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)**. This revival comes after more than a decade of intermittent discussions, indicating heightened political will from both sides, as evidenced by the Commerce Minister's recent high-level meetings in Israel.
- **Broadening Strategic Partnership:** The cooperation extends beyond traditional trade to a **strategic partnership** across multiple high-tech domains. Key areas emphasized for deeper engagement include **Technology, Innovation, and Investments**, leveraging Israel's strengths in R&D and India's robust economic growth and market size.
- **Focus on Economic Corridor and Connectivity:** A significant strategic element highlighted by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu is the intent to build a **"strong economic corridor from India through Israel to Europe."** This explicitly points towards the wider geopolitical and economic connectivity projects aimed at enhancing regional integration and trade routes (often linked to proposed corridors like the IMEC).
- **Key Definitions & Context:**
 - **Free Trade Agreement (FTA):** A pact between two or more countries to reduce barriers to imports and exports, typically by eliminating or reducing **tariffs and quotas** on goods and services, aiming to boost bilateral commerce.
 - **Strategic Partnership:** In the India-Israel context, this partnership evolved from a defense and security focus (key area of cooperation since the 1990s) to now encompass critical and emerging technologies, economic ties, and connectivity initiatives.
- **Bilateral Engagement Platforms:** The renewed push follows positive outcomes from recent engagements, including a **business forum** and a **CEOs forum**, which served to underline India's economic potential and the vast opportunities available for Israeli partners in investment and technology transfer.



Conclusion

The renewed commitment from India and Israel to pursue an FTA marks a significant step in elevating their decade-long strategic relationship. The focus on integrating trade, technology, investments, and connectivity—especially through potential corridors to Europe—indicates a mutual desire to enhance economic power and resilience in a dynamic global environment.



UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II International Relations & GS-III Indian Economy:** Crucial for topics on **India's Foreign Policy, Bilateral Relations (India-Israel), Trade Agreements (FTAs)** and their economic implications (tariffs, market access), and the geopolitical importance of **Global Economic Corridors**.
- **Key Concepts:** *Free Trade Agreement (FTA), South-West Asia, Strategic Partnership, Trade Deficit/Surplus, Geoeconomics, and Technology Cooperation.*

9. SECI-Rajasthan Dispute: Risk to Green Energy Investment

- **Dispute Over Power Sale Agreement (PSA):** A major standoff has erupted between the central Public Sector Undertaking, **Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI)**, and **Rajasthan Urja Vikas and IT Services Ltd (RUVITL)** (the state's distribution company or DISCOM). The dispute centers on **RUVITL's unilateral attempt to withdraw** from a legally binding **PSA** for the procurement of **630 MW of Firm and Dispatchable Renewable Energy (FDRE)**, which utilizes energy storage for round-the-clock supply.
- **Impact on Investor Confidence and Targets:** Analysts and rating agencies (like ICRA) warn that this contractual dispute threatens to **shake investor confidence** in India's green energy sector. India needs to attract an estimated **\$1.3 trillion** in clean-power investment by 2035 to meet its energy transition goals and the **Net Zero by 2070** commitment. Such standoffs introduce regulatory risk, jeopardizing these massive investment targets.
- **The Problem of Unsigned PPAs/PSAs:** The SECI-RUVITL clash reflects a larger systemic issue: many DISCOMs are **hesitating to sign Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) or PSAs**, often waiting in hopes of securing even lower tariffs later. This delay has led to a large volume of **unsigned capacity (around 40-45 GW)**, significantly slowing the pace of renewable energy capacity addition. Only 5.8 GW of capacity was awarded in the first eight months of FY26, a sharp decline compared to previous years.
- **Key Definitions and Context:**
 - **SECI (Solar Energy Corporation of India):** A Central Public Sector Undertaking (CPSU) under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE); acts as the primary agency for implementing national solar energy schemes and acts as an aggregator/intermediary between generating companies and DISCOMs.
 - **FDRE (Firm and Dispatchable Renewable Energy):** A mechanism where renewable energy generation is bundled with battery or other energy storage to ensure the continuous, reliable supply of power, offering a higher quality of power delivery than simple intermittent renewable energy.
 - **PSA/PPA:** Legally binding contracts detailing the terms and conditions for the sale and purchase of electricity between the generator (SECI/Developers) and the utility (DISCOM).
- **Ministerial Intervention and Underlying Cause:** The setback occurs amid a directive from the Union Power Ministry to central agencies (like SECI, NTPC) to **cancel awarded contracts** where





signing the final PPA/PSA is not feasible. The root cause is a lack of willingness from **state DISCOMs** to honor the awarded tariff (₹4.98 per unit in this case) or sign the agreement in a timely manner, creating a regulatory deadlock.

Conclusion

The SECI-Rajasthan dispute underscores the critical regulatory and commercial risks that threaten the stability and speed of India's ambitious green energy transition. Resolving the contractual deadlock and establishing clear, binding frameworks for PSA/PPA execution is essential to restore investor confidence and maintain momentum toward achieving national renewable energy targets.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-III Indian Economy & Infrastructure (Energy):** Highly relevant for topics on **Energy Security, Renewable Energy Targets and Challenges, Financing of Infrastructure**, the role of PSUs (SECI), and issues related to **State DISCOMs (financial health and regulatory risks)**.
- **Key Concepts:** *Net Zero Target (2070), Firm and Dispatchable Renewable Energy (FDRE), Power Purchase Agreement (PPA), Regulatory Risk, and Investment Confidence.*

10. India's Action Plan (AMR 2.0) to Combat Antimicrobial Resistance

- **Next-Generation National Action Plan (AMR 2.0):** India has launched the **National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR 2.0) for 2025-2029** to tackle drug-resistant infections, which are now a major national health threat. The plan emphasizes the **responsible and judicious use of antimicrobials** across all human and animal health sectors, aligning with global standards.
- **Curbing Antibiotic Misuse in Animals and Agriculture:** The central focus is the **phasing out of non-therapeutic antibiotic use in livestock, fisheries, and agriculture**. This is critical because resistance can transfer to humans through the consumption of food products like meat, milk, and eggs. The policy also encourages farmers to switch to alternatives like **traditional ethno-veterinary medicines**.
- **Regulatory and Enforcement Measures:** The strategy aims to tighten access by **enforcing prescription-only access** for antibiotics. This follows previous regulatory action, such as the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization's (CDSCO) order to **ban key antibiotics** (e.g., Colistin) for use in food-producing animals due to the risk posed to human health.
- **High Mortality and Alarming Resistance Trends:** AMR is a significant health crisis, directly causing an estimated **267,000 deaths in India in 2021** and contributing to nearly a million more, according to the Global Burden of Disease study. Surveillance data from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) shows alarming trends, such as **Carbapenem resistance in *Acinetobacter baumannii* reaching 87.5% in 2021**.





- **The "One Health" Approach:** The plan is framed under the **One Health approach**, recognizing that human health, animal health, and the environment are interconnected, and resistance needs to be managed comprehensively across these sectors. Key supporting actions include strengthening the **national lab network, surveillance system, and Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)** measures for early detection and containment.

Conclusion

The rollout of AMR 2.0 marks a vital policy recognition of antimicrobial resistance as a national security and development threat. By mandating the phasing out of non-therapeutic antibiotic use in the animal sector and strengthening surveillance under the One Health framework, India aims to protect the efficacy of life-saving drugs and mitigate the devastating public health and economic costs of drug-resistant infections.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II Health & Governance / GS-III Science and Technology:** Highly relevant for topics on **Public Health Challenges (AMR), Biotechnology and Drug Resistance, Government Policies and Interventions (National Action Plan), and the One Health Approach.**
- **Key Definitions:** **Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)** (When microorganisms like bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites change over time and no longer respond to medicines, making infections harder to treat); **Non-Therapeutic Use** (Use of antibiotics to promote growth or prevent disease in healthy animals); **One Health Approach** (A collaborative, multisectoral, and transdisciplinary approach to achieve optimal health outcomes by recognizing the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment).

11. Constitutional Morality in the Offices of President and Governor

- **Constitutional Responsibility in Decision-Making:** The offices of the President and Governor must adhere to the **Constitutional responsibility** which requires them to act without bias or fear. The core issue is the ease with which assent (signature) can be given or, conversely, declined out of bias, both constituting an infraction of duty. They must be "alert and alive" to both the **letter and the spirit** of the Constitution.
- **Illustrations of Independent Precedent (RV and KRN):** Former Presidents like **R. Venkataraman (RV)** and **K.R. Narayanan (KRN)** demonstrated independent constitutional morality. KRN notably used his prerogative to send back for reconsideration the Union Cabinet's recommendations (under PMs I.K. Gujral and A.B. Vajpayee) to dismiss state governments in **Uttar Pradesh and Bihar (using Article 356)**, citing fairness and morality, with zero politics involved.
- **Judiciary Upholds Letter and Spirit (16th Presidential Reference):** The Supreme Court's opinion on the **16th Presidential Reference** addressed the Governor's action on Bills. The five-judge Bench upheld the **letter of the Constitution** by ruling that the Court cannot fix a deadline for Governors to study Bills. Simultaneously, it upheld the **spirit of the Constitution** by stating that **'evasive inaction' is not permissible**, placing a clock on the Governor's desk that allows the delay to be questioned in court.
- **Role in Federal Polity:** The working of India's **federal polity**—specifically Centre-State relations—depends on the two key actors (Legislature/Cabinet and the Governor/President) playing their roles with **mutual respect** and adherence to the Constitution. The conservative and realistic opinion of the Supreme Court avoided "clutching at a jurisdiction" that wasn't its own, ensuring institutional balance.



- **Constitutional & Legal Context:**

- **Article 356:** Empowers the President to impose **President's Rule** in a state on the recommendation of the Governor, if the constitutional machinery of the state has failed. This article is often the site of friction between the Centre and states.
 - **Article 143 (Presidential Reference):** Allows the President to seek the Supreme Court's advisory opinion on a question of law or fact of public importance. The opinion is advisory, not binding.
 - **Article 200 (Governor's Assent):** Governs the options available to the Governor regarding Bills passed by the State Legislature (grant assent, withhold assent, return for reconsideration, or reserve for the President).
- **Key Definitions:** **Constitutional Morality** refers to adherence to the core values and spirit of the Constitution, even if it goes beyond the mere literal text; **Pocket Veto** is the informal name for the President's ability to keep a Bill pending without either ratifying or rejecting it (by taking no action), a power not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution.

Conclusion

The effectiveness and integrity of India's constitutional arrangement rest heavily on the political neutrality and **Constitutional Morality** exercised by the President and the Governors. Their actions, whether giving assent or demanding reconsideration, must prioritize the Constitution's values over political gratitude or bias, as highlighted by the exemplary conduct of past Presidents and the judicious ruling of the Supreme Court.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II Polity & Governance:** Absolutely vital for topics on **Constitutional Offices (President & Governor)**, **Centre-State Legislative and Executive Relations**, **Article 356 and its misuse**, **Supreme Court's Advisory Jurisdiction (Article 143)**, and the importance of **Constitutional Morality** in practice.
- **Key Concepts:** *Constitutional Morality, Federalism, Article 356, Article 143, Article 200, President's Rule, and Checks and Balances.*

12. Reforming State Public Service Commissions (PSCs)

- **Structural and Procedural Deficit:** State Public Service Commissions (PSCs) face a systemic "**trust deficit**" due to frequent controversies, litigation, and derailed recruitment processes. This stems from structural issues, including operating in a "**politically osmotic environment**" where the '**spoils system**' is visible in member appointments, and a lack of planned manpower needs and dedicated Personnel Ministries in states, leading to irregular exams.
- **Contrast with UPSC Functioning:** The **Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)** operates with greater precision and political neutrality. UPSC members are appointed based on merit and diverse experience; it systematically revises syllabi, taps national talent for evaluation, and uses '**inter-se moderation**' to minimize subjectivity. State PSCs lack these practices and struggle with complex **vertical and horizontal reservations**, leading to continuous litigation.
- **Constitutional Basis and Historical Context:** The establishment of PSCs is rooted in the demand for '**self-rule**' and merit-based entry for Indians into civil services. The **Montagu-Chelmsford Report (1919)** proposed a permanent, apolitical office, leading to the formation of the first PSC in



1926. The **Government of India Act, 1935**, formalized PSCs for provinces. The structure is continued under the Constitution of India (Articles 315-323).

- **Proposed Constitutional Reforms (Personnel):** The text proposes amendments to reform appointments:
 - **Minimum Age:** Fix the minimum age for member appointment at **55 years** to ensure experienced individuals are selected.
 - **Maximum Age:** Increase the maximum age limit (currently 62, based on the **41st Amendment, 1976**) to 65 to utilize the experience of senior civil servants longer.
 - **Mandatory Qualifications:** Stipulate necessary qualifications, such as experience as a **State Government Secretary** for official members or **10 years of professional practice** for non-official members.
- **Procedural and Examination Reforms:** Key procedural reforms include:
 - **Systematized Manpower Planning:** Creation of a **dedicated State Ministry for Personnel Management** to regularize vacancy notification based on a five-year roadmap.
 - **Syllabus and Evaluation:** **Periodic syllabus revision** with public consultation; testing state-specific knowledge in **objective formats** only (to reduce subjectivity); and balancing transparency and confidentiality on the lines of the UPSC.

Conclusion

Implementing the proposed time-bound structural and procedural reforms, including constitutional changes regarding member appointments and creating a dedicated personnel ministry, is essential to curb systemic lapses, restore the credibility of State PSCs, and ensure their efficient functioning on par with the UPSC.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II Polity & Governance (Constitutional Bodies):** Crucial for topics on **Constitutional Bodies (UPSC and State PSCs)**, **Centre-State Relations (Personnel Management)**, **Administrative Reforms**, and the principles governing **Recruitment to Civil Services (Articles 315-323)**.
- **Key Concepts:** *Public Service Commissions (Articles 315-323), Spoils System, Inter-se Moderation, Vertical vs. Horizontal Reservation, 41st Constitutional Amendment Act, and Montagu-Chelmsford Report.*