



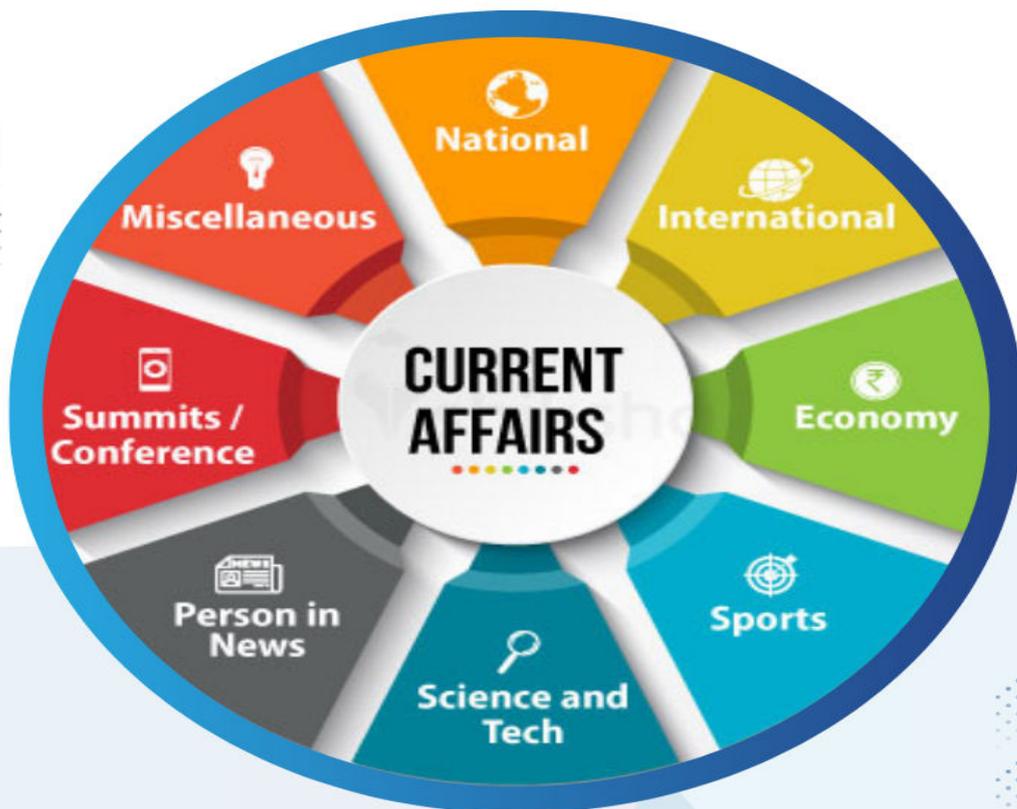
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**VIDHVATH IAS KAS ACADEMY**  
&  
**STUDY CENTRE**

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

**DATE: 11/12/2025 (THURSDAY)**



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## 1. Deepavali: Inscription on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List

### Summary for UPSC

- **Historic Inscription:** Deepavali was inscribed on the **Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity** during the 20th Session of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee in New Delhi (Dec 10, 2025). The inscription affirms the festival's status as one of India's most widely celebrated living traditions.
- **Universal Significance ('Tamso Ma Jyotirgamaya'):** The festival embodies the ancient message of "Tamso Ma Jyotirgamaya" (from darkness to light), symbolizing the universal values of **hope, renewal, and harmony**. It is recognized for promoting social cohesion, unity, and intergenerational transmission of knowledge.
- **Living, People-Centric Heritage and Livelihoods:** Deepavali thrives as a vibrant, community-led festival that sustains a crucial **ecosystem of livelihoods** for millions, including potters (crafting *diyas*), artisans, sweet-makers, and farmers. This economic dimension highlights its role beyond just ritual.
- **Inclusivity and Global Reach:** The nomination process was highly consultative, engaging diverse groups like the Indian diaspora, individuals with special needs, and **transgender communities**, underscoring its deeply **inclusive character**. Its global celebration strengthens cultural bridges worldwide.
- **Contribution to SDGs:** UNESCO acknowledged the festival's role as a living heritage that significantly contributes to several **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly in areas of livelihood enhancement, gender equality, cultural education, and overall community welfare.



### Key Definitions and Concepts

- **Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH):** Refers to practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills that communities recognize as part of their cultural heritage, which are constantly being recreated (as per UNESCO's 2003 Convention).
- **'Tamso Ma Jyotirgamaya':** A famous mantra from the *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, translating to 'Lead me from darkness to light,' representing the festival's core spiritual and philosophical principle.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions (Related to Cultural Heritage)

- **Article 51A (f) (Fundamental Duty):** Obligates every citizen of India "to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture."
- **Article 49 (Directive Principle of State Policy - DPSP):** Places an obligation on the State to protect every monument or place or object of artistic or historic interest, declared to be of national importance, from spoliation, disfigurement, destruction, removal, disposal or export.
- **Nodal Agency:** The nomination was prepared by the Ministry of Culture through the **Sangeet Natak Akademi**.



## Conclusion

The UNESCO inscription of Deepavali provides global affirmation of India's inclusive, living cultural traditions, reinforcing the nation's responsibility to safeguard and promote community-based heritage. This recognition is a tribute to the collective cultural labour that sustains the festival's vitality.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS-I (Indian Heritage and Culture):** Importance of UNESCO ICH sites/festivals, cultural significance, and the role of diverse communities in sustaining traditions.
- **GS-II (International Relations/Organization):** Role of UNESCO, cultural diplomacy, and the contribution of the Indian diaspora (soft power).
- **GS-III (Sustainable Development/Economy):** The link between cultural heritage preservation and livelihood generation (traditional crafts, artisans) and its contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

## 2. NHRC National Conference: Public Services, Dignity, and Human Rights

### Summary for UPSC

- **Theme and Core Mandate:** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) organized a National Conference on 'Ensuring Everyday Essentials: Public Services and Dignity for All' to commemorate Human Rights Day. The core focus was viewing **public services** as "**everyday essentials**" and fundamental entitlements, crucial for upholding the **dignity of citizens** in a Welfare State, as mandated by the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP).
- **Shift from Legal-Centric to Saturation Model:** A key policy contrast was drawn between the pre-2014 **legal-centric rights approach** and the post-2014 **saturation model**. The latter focuses on **closing last-mile gaps** to ensure every entitlement (e.g., housing under PMAY, tap water under JJM, Ujjwala gas, Ayushman Bharat health coverage) reaches **every citizen**, leading to rapid declines in multidimensional poverty.
- **Role of Civil Servants and Good Governance:** The NHRC Chairperson emphasized that **public servants** (civil servants) are the crucial link responsible for implementing policies and ensuring the benefits of welfare schemes reach the common person. **Good governance** rooted in empathy and dignity was highlighted as a **human right** itself.
- **Entrenchment of Socio-Economic Rights via Article 21:** While the Constitution may not explicitly guarantee the Right to Health, courts have read it into **Article 21 (Right to Life)**. Progress in health (Ayushman Bharat, strengthened primary healthcare, NCD control) and sanitation (Swachh Bharat, JJM) are seen as realizing a dignified life, though persisting inequities and biological/social determinants of health remain challenges.
- **Technology and Dignity:** Digital infrastructure, particularly the **JAM Trinity (Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, Mobile)**, has been instrumental in strengthening the delivery of benefits, reducing identity fraud, and ensuring dignity through seamless access to essential services, banking, and grievance redressal systems. Aadhaar is emphasized as a unique identification number, not proof of citizenship.
- **Emerging Rights and Future Challenges:** The NHRC was called upon to examine emerging human rights challenges, including **climate and environmental rights** (essential for a dignified life),





**AI and technology governance**, protections for **gig and platform workers**, and issues related to digital surveillance.

### Key Definitions and Concepts

- **Welfare State (India):** A concept where the state plays a key role in the protection and promotion of the economic and social well-being of its citizens, based on the principles of equality of opportunity and equitable distribution of wealth (Reflected in DPSP).
- **Saturation Model (of delivery):** A policy approach aimed at ensuring 100% coverage of eligible beneficiaries for key government schemes, thereby eliminating last-mile gaps and reducing the scope for exclusion errors.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions (Related to Human Rights & Public Services)

- **Article 21 (Fundamental Right):** Guarantees the Right to Life and Personal Liberty. Courts have expanded its scope to include the Right to Health, Right to Shelter, Right to Clean Environment, and the Right to live with dignity.
- **Part IV (Directive Principles of State Policy - DPSP):** Acts as the foundational framework for India as a Welfare State, mandating the state to secure a social order for the promotion of the welfare of the people (Art. 38) and securing adequate means of livelihood (Art. 39).
- **Article 25 (Universal Declaration of Human Rights - UDHR):** The provision cited, which guarantees the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of oneself and one's family, including housing, nutrition, medical care, and necessary social services.
- **Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993:** The statutory basis for the establishment and functioning of the NHRC, India.

### Conclusion

The NHRC conference reinforced that effective public service delivery, especially through the 'saturation model,' is not mere administration but the fundamental mechanism for realizing human rights and ensuring everyday dignity in India. The focus now shifts to strengthening institutions, addressing emerging challenges like climate change and AI, and moving beyond minimum entitlements towards true empowerment.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II (Polity and Governance):** Direct relevance to the role and functions of the NHRC; government policies and interventions for development (e.g., PMAY, JJM, Ayushman Bharat); the concept of the Welfare State and DPSP; and the implementation challenges of welfare schemes.
- **GS-IV (Ethics, Integrity, and Aptitude):** Ethical duties of civil servants (public service/governance as a human right); empathy and dignity in service delivery; and tackling corruption and negligence.
- **GS-I (Society/Social Justice):** Poverty alleviation, multidimensional poverty, health, and social determinants of health.

## 3. Farmer-Police Clash over Ethanol Factory: Environment, Rights, and Policy Trade-offs

### Summary for UPSC

- **The Conflict (Development vs. Environment):** Farmers and farm laborers in Hanumangarh, Rajasthan, clashed violently with police during a 'mahapanchayat' protesting the construction of a



private ₹450 crore **ethanol factory**. The core contention of the long-standing protest (over a year) is the fear that the plant will lead to severe **air pollution** and **water toxicity/depletion** in the region, affecting agriculture and public health.

- **Escalation and Law & Order Dimension:** The protest escalated into violence, including police *lathi-charge* and the use of tear gas, followed by the farmers ransacking the factory premises and torching vehicles. This highlights the critical **law and order** challenge in balancing industrial development with citizens' **right to protest** and their demand for environmental protection. Prohibitory orders (Section 144, CrPC) were already in force.
- **Environmental Concerns of Ethanol Production:** The opposition stems from well-established environmental risks associated with ethanol production (classified under the **Red Category** of polluting industries). Concerns include: **high water consumption** (especially for grain-based plants, stressing scarce water resources) and the generation of highly polluting **vinasse** (wastewater) that contaminates water bodies and soil if untreated.
- **The Ethanol Blending Policy Context:** The conflict is a side-effect of the Central Government's **Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme** (aiming for E20 by 2025-26) which targets energy security, reduced oil imports, and boosted farmer income. However, such protests underscore the major policy trade-off: **Economic/Energy benefits vs. Environmental/Food/Water Security** (the 'Food vs. Fuel' dilemma).
- **Citizen Participation and Political Dimension:** The protest gained political support, with the participation of sitting MLAs, MPs, and leaders from various political and farmer groups (from Rajasthan and Punjab). This demonstrates the need for robust mechanisms like effective **public hearings** and transparent **Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)** before granting clearance for such large-scale, high-impact projects.
- **Rights in Conflict:** The clash involves the fundamental **Right to Protest** (Art. 19(1)(a) and 19(1)(b)) being curtailed by restrictions on public order (Section 144) and the citizens' **Right to a Healthy Environment** (read into Art. 21) being challenged by industrial/developmental activities (Art. 19(1)(g) freedom of trade, subject to restrictions).



### Key Definitions and Concepts

- **Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP):** A Government of India initiative (under the National Policy on Biofuels) to blend ethanol (a biofuel) with petrol, primarily to cut oil imports and reduce carbon emissions.
- **Vinasse:** A major wastewater byproduct from ethanol distilleries, known for its high concentration of pollutants, which requires extensive treatment before safe discharge.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions (Related to Topic)

- **Article 21 (Right to Life):** Interpreted by the Supreme Court to include the **Right to a Healthy and Pollution-Free Environment**. This forms the basis of the farmers' demand.
- **Article 19(1)(a) & (b) (Fundamental Rights):** Guarantees the **Right to Freedom of Speech and Expression** and the **Right to Assemble Peacefully**, which form the constitutional backing for the 'mahapanchayat' and protest. These rights are subject to reasonable restrictions (e.g., public order).



- **Article 48A (DPSP) & Article 51A(g) (Fundamental Duty):** Impose a mandate on the **State** to endeavor to protect and improve the environment, and a duty on **citizens** to protect and improve the natural environment.
- **Legal Framework:** The construction is governed by the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**, the **Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974**, and the requirements for Environmental Clearance (EC) and Consent to Operate (CTO).

### Conclusion

The Hanumangarh protest is a microcosm of the persistent national challenge of achieving sustainable development: how to strategically implement national goals like the EBP while rigorously safeguarding the fundamental environmental and livelihood rights of local communities, demanding effective legal enforcement and transparent governance over industrial clearances.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS-I (Indian Society/Social Issues):** Farmers' movements, conflicts arising from industrialization, and environment vs. development debate.
- **GS-II (Polity and Governance):** Conflict between Fundamental Rights (Protest, Art. 21) and Public Order (Sec. 144); role of constitutional institutions (Courts/Legislature) in environmental protection; governance failures in project clearances.
- **GS-III (Economy/Environment):** Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP), Biofuel Policy, Food vs. Fuel debate, and environmental costs of industrial growth (water stress, pollution from Red Category industries).

## 4. MGNREGS Suspension in West Bengal: Legal Contempt and Federal Tussle

### Summary for UPSC

- **Contempt Notice over Scheme Suspension:** The Paschim Banga Khet Majoor Samity a union of agricultural workers, issued a legal notice for **contempt of court** against both the **Central and West Bengal State governments**. This action follows the continued, prolonged **delay/suspension** of work and wage payments under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in the state, which has been stalled since March 2022.
- **Judicial Directives and Non-Compliance:** The key legal basis for the contempt notice is the non-compliance with clear directives from both the **Calcutta High Court** and the **Supreme Court of India**. The Supreme Court, upholding the High Court's order, had directed the resumption of the scheme, emphasizing that the **Right to Work** (a statutory right under MGNREGA) cannot be indefinitely denied or delayed.
- **Grounds for Suspension (Centre vs. State):** The Central Government initially suspended the scheme and funding, citing **Section 27 of the MGNREGA Act** due to non-compliance with central directives, mainly related to **allegations of financial irregularities** by state officials. The state government, while claiming political malice and an "economic blockade," has also been criticized for not clearing administrative hurdles or addressing corruption effectively.
- **Humanitarian and Livelihood Crisis:** The suspension has had a severe **human cost**, impacting an estimated **70 lakh rural workers** who have been deprived of their guaranteed employment and accrued wages (pending wages estimated at around ₹2800 crore). This has exacerbated rural distress, fueled distress migration, and undermined the objective of providing a social safety net, especially during lean agricultural periods.



- **Cooperative Federalism and Rule of Law:** The issue highlights a critical breakdown of **cooperative federalism** where a vital social security scheme is held hostage by a political and administrative standoff between the Centre and the State. It underscores the judiciary's role in affirming fundamental worker entitlements against administrative/political delays, and the importance of the **Rule of Law** in social welfare implementation.
- **Key Provisions Violated:** The suspension violates the core provision of  $\text{\text{MGNREGA}}$  guaranteeing **100 days of wage employment** to every rural household that demands it, along with the right to timely **wage payment** and compensation for delay. The courts affirmed that **corruption allegations cannot be grounds for the collective punishment** of genuine workers.

### Key Definitions and Concepts

- **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act ( $\text{\text{MGNREGA}}$ ), 2005:** A social security and public works legislation that provides a **legal guarantee** of 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.
- **Contempt of Court:** A civil or criminal offense that consists of being disobedient to or disrespectful of a court of law and its officers, in the form of action or inaction. In this case, it is Civil Contempt (willful disobedience of any judgment, decree, direction, or order of a court).
- **Section 27 of the  $\text{\text{MGNREGA}}$  Act:** Gives the Central Government the power to issue directions to the State Governments for the proper implementation of the scheme. It has been cited by the Centre to halt the release of funds due to non-compliance.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions (Related to Topic)

- **Article 21 (Fundamental Right):** The **Right to Life** is read by the Supreme Court to encompass the **Right to Livelihood** and the **Right to Live with Dignity**, which the guaranteed employment under  $\text{\text{MGNREGA}}$  upholds.
- **Article 41 (Directive Principles of State Policy - DPSP):** Requires the State to make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education, and to public assistance in cases of unemployment.  $\text{\text{MGNREGA}}$  operationalizes this DPSP as a statutory right.
- **Article 256 (Centre-State Relations):** Obligates the State to ensure compliance with the laws made by Parliament and any existing laws applicable in the State, including Central government directives on Centrally Sponsored Schemes.
- **Section 3, MGNREGA Act:** The core legal provision that mandates the state to guarantee employment and is the basis for the workers' legal entitlement.

### Conclusion

The contempt notice against both the Central and State governments over the  $\text{\text{MGNREGS}}$  delay in West Bengal is a significant development that underscores the failure of administrative mechanisms and political will to honor a fundamental legal right. It reinforces the Judiciary's role as the final guardian of social security entitlements against administrative and political gridlock, setting a critical precedent for the implementation of all rights-based welfare schemes.



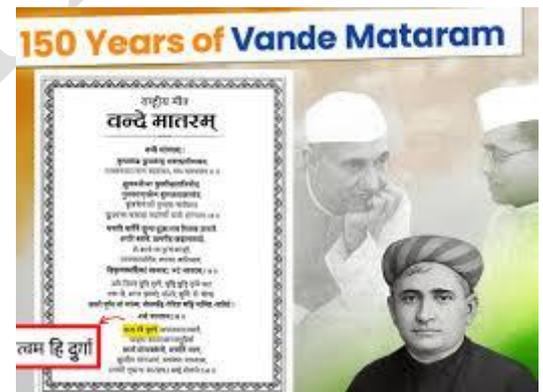
## UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II (Polity and Governance/Social Justice):** Direct relevance to the  $\text{\$}\text{\textit{MGNREGA}}\text{\$}$  scheme, issues of Centre-State relations (Cooperative/Competitive Federalism), role of the Judiciary in enforcing social rights (judicial activism), and the mechanism of contempt of court.
- **GS-III (Indian Economy/Development):** Evaluation of  $\text{\$}\text{\textit{MGNREGA}}\text{\$}$ 's role as a social safety net, impact on rural distress and migration, and challenges related to financial accountability and corruption in implementation.
- **GS-IV (Ethics):** Ethics in governance, accountability of civil servants/political executive, and the 'collective punishment' of beneficiaries due to corruption at higher levels.

## 5. Vande Mataram Controversy: Historical Context and Legal Status

### Summary for UPSC

- **The 1937 Congress Resolution (The "Mutilation" Debate):** The current political controversy revolves around the **Congress Working Committee CWC Resolution of October 30, 1937**.<sup>2</sup> To ensure the song's **pan-India and inclusive appeal** and address objections from Muslim leaders over the later stanzas' references to Hindu goddesses (as noted by leaders including Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, and Jawaharlal Nehru), the CWC unanimously decided to adopt only the **first two stanzas** as the National Song for Congress and public functions.<sup>3</sup> The claim of "mutilation" or "betrayal" is a modern political interpretation challenging this pragmatic, pre-Independence decision.
- **Origin and Historical Significance:** Composed by **Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay** and first published in his novel *Anandamath* and literary journal *Bangadarshan* in 1875.<sup>4</sup> It became the "**mantra**" and emotional rallying cry of the national movement, especially following the Partition of Bengal (1905), and was first sung at the 1896 Congress session by Rabindranath Tagore. This historical significance is undisputed across the political spectrum.
- **Constituent Assembly's Decision (1950):** On January 24, 1950, Dr. Rajendra Prasad announced the Constituent Assembly's decision: '**Jana Gana Mana**' would be the **National Anthem** (due to its secular meaning and suitability for marching tunes), while '**Vande Mataram**' would be the **National Song** and **honored equally** with the National Anthem.<sup>5</sup> This settled the status of both symbols based on historical significance and communal harmony.
- **Legal Distinction (Anthem vs. Song):** Crucially, the **National Song** does **not** have the same constitutional or legal backing as the **National Anthem**.<sup>6</sup> Article  $\text{\$}51\text{\textit{A}}\text{\$}$  (Fundamental Duty, introduced by the 42nd Amendment, 1976) mandates respect only for the **National Anthem and National Flag**, not the National Song.<sup>8</sup> The **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971** also specifically criminalizes disrespect to the National Anthem, but lacks a parallel provision for the National Song.
- **Judicial Intervention:** The Supreme Court's landmark judgment in **Bijoe Emmanuel vs. State of Kerala (1986)** upheld the fundamental rights of freedom of religion and expression ( $\text{\$}\text{\textit{Article 25}}\text{\$}$  and  $\text{\$}\text{\textit{Article 19}}\text{\$}$ (1)(a)), ruling that **compelling participation in singing the National Anthem (or Song)** against genuine religious conviction is a violation, provided the individual stands respectfully and does not cause disturbance.<sup>11</sup>





- **Contemporary Debate and Future Proposals:** The current debate, marking the 150th year of the song, questions the intentions of the ruling party.<sup>12</sup> Proposals have been made to Parliament to amend  $\text{\text{Article 51A}}$  to accord the National Song the same status and respect as the National Anthem. This highlights the political use of national symbols to shape the national narrative and identity.

### Key Definitions and Concepts

- **National Anthem ( $\text{\text{Jana Gana Mana}}$ ):** The musical composition designated as the official anthem, accorded a specific set of rules for rendition, and backed by a Fundamental Duty (Article 51A).<sup>15</sup>
- **National Song ( $\text{\text{Vande Mataram}}$ ):** A patriotic hymn of historical significance in the freedom struggle, given 'equal honour' by the Constituent Assembly, but lacking the same mandatory legal/constitutional enforcement as the Anthem.<sup>16</sup>

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions (Related to Topic)

- **Article 51A (a) (Fundamental Duty):** To abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag, and the **National Anthem**.<sup>17</sup> (Vande Mataram is notably absent).
- **Article 25 (Fundamental Right):** Guarantees the **Freedom of Conscience and Free Profession, Practice, and Propagation of Religion**, which was the basis of the SC verdict in the *Bijoe Emmanuel* case.<sup>18</sup>
- **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971:** Provides for penal punishment for showing disrespect to the **National Anthem** and **National Flag**, but not explicitly the National Song.

### Conclusion

The recurring controversy over Vande Mataram, 75 years after its status was settled by the Constituent Assembly, underscores the continuous tension between historical reverence, national unity, and religious inclusivity in India's political discourse.<sup>19</sup> While its role in the freedom struggle is paramount, the legal and constitutional distinction between the National Anthem and the National Song remains clear, placing the onus on political leadership to respect the nuanced decisions made by the founding fathers.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS-I (Modern History/Culture):** Origin, evolution, and role of  $\text{\text{Vande Mataram}}$  in the freedom struggle (Swadeshi Movement, Congress sessions), and the historical compromise of 1937.<sup>21</sup>
- **GS-II (Polity and Governance):** Status of national symbols in the Constitution, analysis of Article 51A (Fundamental Duties), judicial review (SC verdict in *Bijoe Emmanuel*), and contemporary debates on constitutional amendments.
- **GS-IV (Ethics):** Conflict between patriotism, national symbols, and individual rights (Freedom of Conscience and Religion); the ethics of using historical issues for political gain.

## 6. Supreme Court's Verdict on Timelines: Constitutional Morality vs. Textualism

### Summary for UPSC

- **The Core Constitutional Issue:** The Supreme Court's verdict in the **16th Presidential Reference ( $\text{\text{Article 143}}$ )** addresses the critical constitutional silence regarding **prescribing timelines**



for the functions of high constitutional authorities, primarily the **Governor** ( $\text{\text{Article 200}}$ ) on Bills passed by State Assemblies and the **Speaker** on defection petitions ( $\text{\text{Tenth Schedule}}$ ).

- **SC's Textualist Approach (No Judicial Timelines):** The Court, in its advisory opinion, chose **not to impose fixed, one-size-fits-all judicial timelines** on the Governor/President for assenting to State Bills. The reasoning is based on judicial deference to the constitutional design (textualism) and the **Doctrine of Separation of Powers**, arguing that prescribing timelines would amount to **judicial overreach** and usurpation of gubernatorial function.
- **Constitutional Perversion via Inaction:** Critics argue this verdict creates a constitutional anomaly, enabling "**constitutional perversion.**" The non-stipulation of timelines allows functionaries (like Governors sitting indefinitely on Bills or Speakers delaying defection rulings) to effectively **nullify the legislative will** of elected bodies and defeat the ideals of anti-defection law, respectively, thereby undermining the democratic process.
- **Rejection of 'Deemed Assent' but Limited Review:** The Court explicitly rejected the concept of '**deemed assent**' (where a Bill automatically becomes law after a fixed, court-imposed period), stating it is alien to the Constitution. However, it clarified that **prolonged, unexplained, and indefinite inaction** by the Governor on a Bill is unconstitutional and can be subject to **limited judicial review**, allowing courts to issue a *mandamus* directing the Governor to act (though without dictating the final decision).
- **The Conflict with Constitutional Morality:** The ruling is criticized for overlooking the doctrine of **Constitutional Morality** (championed by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar), which mandates that constitutional text be interpreted in accordance with the foundational ethical principles of democracy, liberty, and public conscience. The hesitation to interpret constitutional silence to safeguard its morality is seen as an **abdication of ultimate judicial function**.
- **Governance and Federalism Implications:** The verdict reinforces the discretion of the Governor under  $\text{\text{Article 200}}$  (Assent, Withhold, or Reserve for President) and rejects prior judicial attempts to limit this discretion based on the Council of Ministers' advice. This risks undermining legislative intent, posing challenges to **cooperative federalism**, and allowing the central executive's representative (Governor) to delay the legislative agenda of elected State governments.



### Key Definitions and Concepts

- **Constitutional Morality (Dr. Ambedkar):** Paramount reverence for the forms and spirit of the Constitution, ensuring obedience to authority while upholding democratic processes and allowing open speech and criticism. It is vital to prevent the Constitution from being subverted by mere changes in administrative practice.
- **Presidential Reference ( $\text{\text{Article 143}}$ ):** The power of the President of India to seek the advisory opinion of the Supreme Court on any question of law or fact of public importance. The opinion is not binding on the President.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions (Related to Topic)



- **Article 200 (Governor's Assent to Bills):** Outlines the Governor's options upon presentation of a Bill: assent, withhold assent, return for reconsideration, or reserve for the President (Article 201). It uses the phrase "as soon as possible" regarding returning a Bill.
- **Tenth Schedule (Anti-Defection Law):** Provides the Speaker/Chairman with the quasi-judicial authority to decide on the disqualification of members on grounds of defection. The Constitution is silent on the timeline for this decision.
- **Article 142 (SC's Power):** The power of the Supreme Court to pass any decree or order necessary for **doing complete justice** in any cause or matter pending before it. The Court rejected its use to create 'deemed assent' in this context.

### Conclusion

The Supreme Court's opinion reinforces a strict textualist view of the Constitution, safeguarding the separation of powers by refusing to mandate fixed timelines for the President and Governor. However, critics argue this approach fails to account for the political realities of constitutional perversion and risks defeating democratic ideals, highlighting the continuous struggle to fully internalize the principles of constitutional morality in governance.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II (Polity and Governance/Federalism):** Directly relevant to the role, powers, and discretion of the Governor (Articles 200, 201); the mechanism of Presidential Reference (Article 143); the doctrine of Separation of Powers; and the recurring tension in Centre-State legislative relations.
- **GS-IV (Ethics):** The concept of **Constitutional Morality** as advocated by Dr. Ambedkar and its application in judicial interpretation and the ethical conduct of high constitutional functionaries (Governor, Speaker).
- **GS-II (Legislature):** Issues related to the Tenth Schedule and the Speaker's quasi-judicial role and delays in the anti-defection mechanism.

## 7. Sudan Civil War: Largest Displacement and Humanitarian Catastrophe

### Summary for UPSC

- **Root Cause: Power Struggle and Military Integration:** The civil war, which erupted in April 2023, is fundamentally a power struggle between the leaders of the two main security forces: the **Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF)** led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the paramilitary **Rapid Support Forces (RSF)** led by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo ('Hemedti'). The immediate trigger was escalating tensions over the **integration of the RSF into the national army**, stemming from both generals' unwillingness to relinquish power and influence gained after their joint 2021 coup.
- **Geopolitical and Territorial Fragmentation:** The conflict has fragmented Sudan into zones of control, with the **SAF** maintaining control over the east and centre (including the capital's remnants and **Port Sudan**), while the **RSF** has consolidated power across most of the





**Darfur** and **Kordofan** regions, including seizing the last **SAF** stronghold in El Fasher. This division risks the **de facto partition** of the country and has intensified fighting in the strategically and resource-rich Kordofan region.

- **Catastrophic Humanitarian Crisis and Displacement:** The conflict has triggered the **largest and fastest-growing displacement crisis globally**, with approximately **10 million people** forced to flee their homes as of late 2025. The war has resulted in over 50,000 reported deaths, the collapse of healthcare, and widespread reports of ethnically-driven violence and **war crimes** (including drone strikes on civilians and mass sexual assaults, particularly by the RSF and allied militias).
- **Economic Collapse and Famine Conditions:** The economy has suffered a devastating blow, with GDP contracting sharply by an estimated **29%** in 2023-24. The destruction of infrastructure, especially in the economic hub of Khartoum, and the disruption of supply chains have led to hyperinflation and a severe food crisis. Sudan entered **Famine conditions (IPC Phase 5)** in parts of the country in September 2025, with food prices skyrocketing and over **31%** of the population facing crisis-level food insecurity.
- **Regional Security and External Involvement:** The war poses a significant threat to **regional security** in the Horn of Africa, with millions of refugees spilling into fragile neighboring states like Chad, South Sudan, and Ethiopia. External powers (such as the UAE and Egypt) have been accused of **foreign involvement** through arms shipments and diplomatic support to the warring factions, deepening the conflict and undermining mediation efforts.

### Key Definitions and Concepts

- **Famine (IPC Phase 5):** The most severe level of food insecurity, declared when **20%** of households face an extreme lack of food, **30%** of children are acutely malnourished, and at least **2** deaths per 10,000 people occur daily due to starvation/malnutrition-related diseases.
- **Rapid Support Forces (RSF):** A powerful paramilitary group led by 'Hemedti', which originated from the **Janjaweed** militias involved in the Darfur genocide in the 2000s, fueling deep-seated ethnic fault lines.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions (Related to Topic)

- **International Humanitarian Law (IHL):** The law of armed conflict, which mandates the protection of civilians and civilian objects (like hospitals and schools) from attack. The reported drone strikes on Kalogi and violence against civilians constitute potential violations of IHL and war crimes.
- **Genocide, War Crimes, and Crimes against Humanity:** The violence in Darfur and the targeting of specific ethnic groups (like the Masalit) have led to accusations of **genocide** and calls for investigation by the **International Criminal Court (ICC)**.
- **Refugee Convention, 1951:** Provides the legal framework for the protection of refugees fleeing Sudan, placing obligations on host countries.

### Conclusion

The Sudan civil war is a complex outcome of a failed democratic transition, historical ethnic fault lines, and a brutal power struggle among military elites, resulting in an unprecedented humanitarian and economic catastrophe. The conflict's continuation, fueled by territorial gains and external support, presents a critical



challenge to international law, global humanitarian efforts, and regional stability, demanding a unified, enforceable political solution.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II (International Relations/Polity):** Geo-politics of the Horn of Africa, impact of civil wars on democratic transitions, the role of military juntas, humanitarian diplomacy, and India's 'Operation Kaveri' (evacuation).
- **GS-III (Economy/Security):** Economic impact of conflict (GDP contraction, inflation), food security, famine classification, and the role of resources (gold, oil) in fueling conflict.
- **GS-I (Geography/Society):** Displacement crisis, refugee movement, and the ethnic/tribal dimensions of conflict in Darfur and Kordofan.

## 8. India's Economic Growth: Momentum vs. Structural Credibility

### Summary for UPSC

- **Robust Short-Term Momentum:**  
The Indian economy showed strong short-term momentum, achieving **8.2%** GDP growth in the latest quarter. This surge is characterized by high growth in key sectors like **Services (9.2%)**, **Manufacturing (9.1%)**, and **Private Final Consumption Expenditure (7.9%)**, indicating genuine industrial and urban demand, strong credit activity, and controlled inflation (nominal GDP grew **8.8%**).
- **IMF's 'Grade C' Warning on Statistical Architecture:**  
Despite the high growth rate, the IMF assigned India a **Grade C** in its national income accounting assessment. This low grade (out of **A, B, C, D**) flags major **structural weaknesses** in the country's **statistical methodology and institutional capacity**. Key concerns include: outdated base year (**2011-12**), reliance on **WPI** instead of **PPI** for deflation, and large discrepancies between the **GVA** and expenditure approaches to GDP estimation.
- **Uneven Sectoral Recovery and Structural Contradictions:**  
The **8.2%** growth is uneven. Key foundational sectors like **Mining (0.04%)** and **Utilities (4.4%)** remain sluggish, indicating a narrow recovery. A structural contradiction persists: though the **tertiary sector contributes about 60% of GVA**, a large share of India's workforce remains trapped in low-productivity **agriculture and informal services**, creating a persistent output–employment mismatch.
- **Structural Vulnerabilities and External Sector Risk:**  
The RBI's Annual Report warns that long-term growth faces structural risks. India's export basket is poorly aligned with evolving global demand, and rising **protectionism, tariff uncertainty, and geopolitical tensions** threaten future export performance. While strong services exports and remittances provide stability, they cannot replace a diversified and globally competitive **goods export base**.
- **Financial and Fiscal Stability:**  
Financial indicators show improvement: Banks have strong balance sheets and high capital adequacy, supporting robust credit growth. The Centre has pursued fiscal consolidation through high





GST and direct tax revenues, maintaining high-quality capital expenditure and a stable external sector with healthy forex reserves.

### Key Definitions and Concepts

- **GDP (Gross Domestic Product):**  
Total market value of all final goods and services produced within a country during a given period. It reflects the **pace** of economic activity.
- **GVA (Gross Value Added):**  
Output minus intermediate consumption. It reflects **real value addition** by sectors and is a more accurate indicator of structural economic health.
- **Base Year:**  
The reference year used to calculate real GDP. An outdated base year like **2011-12** fails to capture structural changes, digitalisation, informal-to-formal transitions, and new production patterns.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions (Related to Topic)

- **Constitutional Framework for Fiscal Discipline:**  
Although GDP calculation is not defined in a specific Article, fiscal governance depends on data integrity through provisions like **Article 280 (Finance Commission)** and **Article 112 (Annual Financial Statement/Budget)**. Accurate GDP/GVA statistics are essential for revenue devolution and fiscal planning.
- **Legal/Institutional Framework:**  
National Income estimation is carried out by the **National Statistical Office (NSO)** under **MoSPI**, which is responsible for ensuring reliability, transparency, and global comparability of India's official statistics.

### Conclusion

India's **8.2%** GDP growth demonstrates strong short-term momentum and global economic leadership in terms of growth pace. However, the IMF's **Grade C** assessment is a critical reminder that **statistical credibility and institutional strength** must improve. For growth to become **sustainable, trustworthy, and structurally sound**, India must update the base year, modernise statistical methods, improve labor productivity, and diversify exports to reduce vulnerability.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS-III (Economy):**  
Macro indicators (GDP, GVA, PFCE, inflation), structural weaknesses, export vulnerabilities, IMF/RBI assessments, issues with India's statistical system.
- **GS-II (Governance):**  
Institutional capacity, data credibility, importance of NSO reforms and modernisation.
- **Prelims Keywords:**  
GDP vs GVA, PFCE, Base Year, WPI vs PPI, Fiscal Consolidation.

## 9. Space Spectrum and Orbital Slots: Governance Challenges of Megaconstellations

### Summary for UPSC

- **The New Space Race: Spectrum and Orbital Congestion:**  
A fierce competition is underway among companies launching vast satellite fleets, or



**megaconstellations** (e.g., Starlink's plan for 42000, China's GuoWang for 13000). The race is for limited resources: **radio frequencies (spectrum)**, especially **Ku-band (12-18GHz)** and **Ka-band (26-40GHz)** for high-speed internet, and finite **orbital slots** in Low Earth Orbit (LEO). This expansion is driven by a market expected to grow from **\$4.27 billion** in 2024 to **\$27.31 billion** by 2032.

- **Governance Failure of 'First-Come, First-Served':**

The **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)** is the global coordinator for spectrum and orbital slots. Its traditional **first-come, first-served** system—designed when satellites were few—now gives major advantages to early filers and wealthy spacefaring nations. This risks creating an **inequitable system**, where a handful of players monopolize high-value spectrum-orbit combinations, limiting access for late entrants and widening the digital divide.

- **Bridging the Digital Divide (The LEO Advantage):**

Megaconstellations are vital for narrowing the digital divide, as **2.6 billion** people remained offline at the start of 2025. LEO satellites offer significantly **lower latency (20-40ms vs 600+ms for GEO satellites)**, enabling real-time services such as telemedicine in remote areas with poor ground infrastructure. But the high cost of user terminals (e.g., Starlink's **\$600** device) makes services unaffordable without subsidies or differential pricing.



- **Orbital Sustainability and Debris Mitigation:**

With more than **50000 satellites** projected by 2030, orbital sustainability is in danger. The ITU's **Resolution 74 (2023)** requires satellites to be removed from orbit within **25 years** of mission end to limit debris. Yet compliance rates are low (around **70%**), allowing debris to accumulate and increasing the risk of cascading collisions known as **Kessler Syndrome**.

- **India's Dual Imperative and Regulatory Stance:**

India's strategy includes both national assets (ISRO's GSAT-N2 with **48Gbps** throughput) and private participation (Bharti Enterprises' stake in OneWeb). The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recommended **administrative allocation of spectrum**—not auctions—for non-GEO satellites, to ensure affordable satellite broadband and rapid deployment in alignment with universal service goals.

## Key Definitions and Concepts

- **Megaconstellations:**

Large fleets of satellites—often thousands—operating mainly in LEO to deliver global, low-latency, high-bandwidth communication.

- **Spectrum:**

Radio frequency bands used for satellite-ground communication, allocated by the ITU (e.g., Ku-band, Ka-band).

- **Latency:**

Time delay between sending a signal and receiving a response. Low latency is essential for real-time applications like telemedicine and video conferencing.



## Constitutional & Legal Provisions (Related to Topic)

- **Outer Space Treaty, 1967 (Principle):**  
Declares space as the “province of all mankind” and prohibits national appropriation. It underpins ITU’s principle that spectrum and orbital slots are **limited natural resources** that must be used efficiently and equitably.
- **ITU Resolutions:**  
**ITU-R 74** and **Resolution 8** are major regulatory tools promoting sustainable use of orbital resources, imposing deployment deadlines, and preventing speculative orbital filings.
- **National Policy:**  
India’s space governance framework—including **IN-SPACE** authorization and **TRAI’s** recommendations on administrative spectrum allocation—guides satellite operations for both government and private players.

## Conclusion

The rapid rise of satellite megaconstellations offers transformative potential to bridge the digital divide but poses serious challenges for space governance and sustainability. The current ITU framework is strained by early-filing monopolies, risking unequal access to global space resources. For India and other emerging space powers, shaping international rules on **equitable access**, **debris mitigation**, and **universal service obligations** is essential to ensure that outer space remains a shared and sustainable global commons.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II (International Relations/Polity):**  
Role of the ITU, governance of global commons, implications of the Outer Space Treaty, India's role in space diplomacy.
- **GS-III (Science & Tech/Economy):**  
LEO vs GEO technology, satellite broadband economics, digital divide concerns, orbital debris mitigation.
- **Prelims Keywords:**  
ITU, Megaconstellations, LEO, Ku-band/Ka-band, Resolution 74, Administrative Allocation.

## 10. India’s Tepid Response to Russian Offers: Key Strategic and Defence Dimensions

### Summary:

**Lukewarm Response to Russian Defence Platforms:** Despite Russia’s strong push before President Putin’s visit, India showed limited interest in acquiring the Su-57 fifth-generation stealth fighter, Geran kamikaze drones, long-range UAVs, or submarines. Moscow expected major movement, but New Delhi remained non-committal.

- **Strategic Shift Toward Self-Reliance (Atmanirbhar Bharat):** India’s reluctance is linked to its aggressive pursuit of indigenous defence manufacturing. Defence production has risen from ₹46000 crore (2014) to **₹1.51 lakh crore**, and exports from under ₹1000 crore to **₹24000 crore**, reflecting a structural transformation.





- **No Major Defence Announcements During Putin’s Visit:** Although 19 agreements were signed on trade and economic cooperation, there was no breakthrough on Su-57, Su-75, S-500, or submarine collaboration — indicating India’s cautious approach to high-value foreign defence platforms.
- **Limited Interest in Geran/Shahed-136 Kamikaze Drones:** India did not show enthusiasm for the Geran series, despite their demonstrated battlefield utility in Ukraine. This stems from India’s preference for indigenous loitering munitions and collaborations under Make-in-India.
- **India–Russia Defence Cooperation Continues, but Through R&D and Tri-Service Projects:** The 23rd Working Group Meeting of the Inter-Governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation (IGC-MTC) focused on R&D, co-production, and tri-service collaboration. A protocol was signed, but **big-ticket deals remain absent**, signalling a shift toward technology sharing rather than platform acquisition.
- **Balancing Geopolitics and Defence Diversification:** India is balancing its long-standing defence ties with Russia with diversification toward Western partners, while ensuring its defence supply chain remains resilient amid global geopolitical uncertainties (Ukraine war, sanctions, CAATSA concerns).

### Additional Key Points

- India’s declining appetite for major Russian platforms also aligns with concerns over **technology depth, combat-proven performance, after-sales reliability, and spare supply vulnerabilities** exposed during the Ukraine conflict.
- India’s defence modernisation is increasingly oriented toward **next-gen indigenous platforms** (AMCA, Tejas Mk-2, DRDO long-range UAVs, submarine programmes, and space-based ISR systems).

### Key Definitions

- **Su-57 Fighter:** Russia’s fifth-generation stealth multirole combat aircraft aimed at competing with the F-35 and J-20; criticised for limited stealth features and production delays.
- **Geran (Shahed-136) Drones:** Low-cost “kamikaze” loitering munitions used for mass saturation attacks; significant in Russia’s Ukraine strategy.
- **S-500 Air Defence System:** Russia’s next-generation anti-ballistic missile and hypersonic defence system with a reported range of **600 km**.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat (Defence):** India’s national mission to reduce import dependence and build a self-sustaining defence industrial ecosystem.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions (Relevant to the Topic)

- **Article 73 & 246:** Empower the Union government to legislate and execute decisions on national defence.
- **Seventh Schedule – Union List:** Defence of India, armed forces, deployment, and defence production fall exclusively under Union jurisdiction.
- **Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020:** Provides the legal framework prioritising “Buy Indian” and “Buy & Make (Indian)” categories over foreign procurement.
- **Offset Policy:** Mandates technology transfer and domestic manufacturing obligations for foreign vendors.



- **Strategic Partnership Model:** Enables joint development with foreign OEMs but emphasises India-led production and technology absorption.

### Conclusion

India's muted response to Russia's proposals marks a **strategic inflection point** in bilateral defence ties. While the India–Russia partnership remains important, especially in co-production and military-technical cooperation, New Delhi is signalling that the era of large-scale reliance on imported Russian platforms is fading. India's focus is now on **indigenisation, technological sovereignty, and diversified partnerships**, aligning defence procurement with long-term national security and industrial goals.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS-II:** India–Russia relations, strategic autonomy, defence diplomacy, global geopolitics.
- **GS-III:** Defence technology, indigenisation, strategic industries, dual-use technologies, drone warfare trends.
- **Prelims Keywords:** Su-57, S-500, Geran/Shahed-136, Atmanirbhar Bharat, DAP 2020, IGC-MTC, defence exports, Union List.
- **Mains Angle:** “Discuss how India's pursuit of strategic autonomy and indigenisation is reshaping its defence partnership with Russia.”