



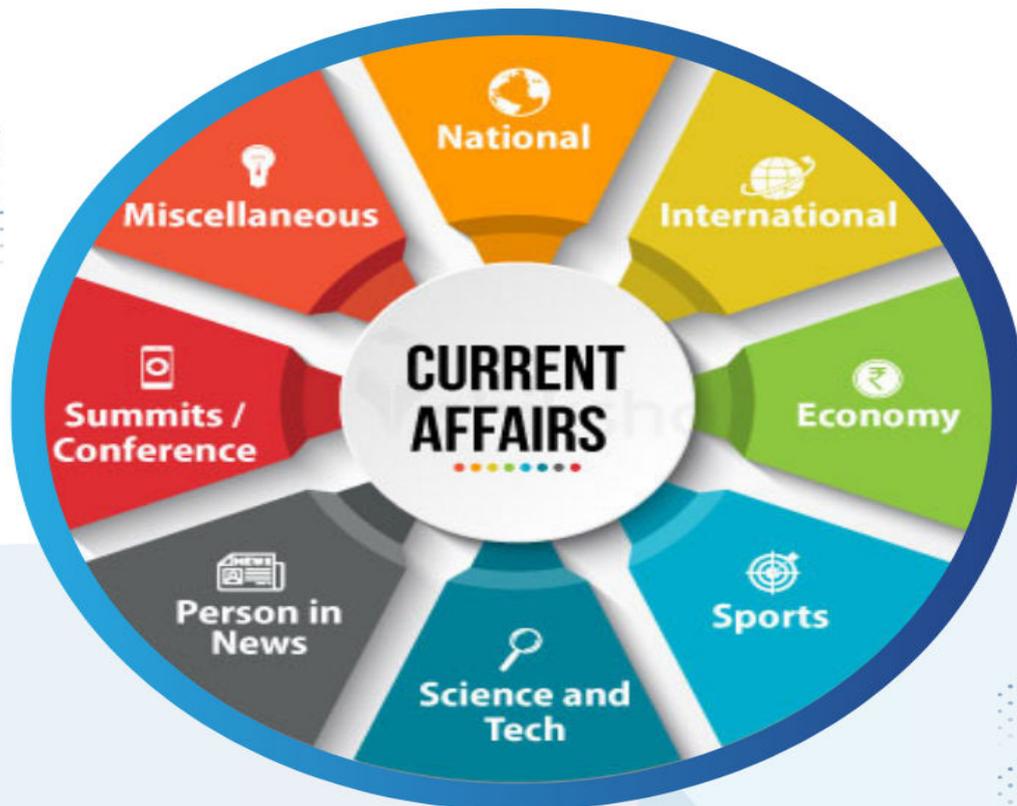
“ We help you reach for the star ”

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

## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION**

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## 1. EC Discretion during Special Intensive Revision (SIR): SC Ruling

The Supreme Court has clarified that while the Election Commission (EC) possesses broad discretionary powers for electoral roll revisions, these powers are not absolute and must adhere to the principles of natural justice and constitutional transparency.

- **Judicial Oversight on Discretion:** The SC emphasized that the EC's "widest discretions" regarding Special Intensive Revision (SIR) are not "untrammelled or unregulated." Any deviation from established procedures must be fair, reasonable, and recorded to prevent the arbitrary disenfranchisement of voters.
- **Statutory vs. Constitutional Harmony:** While the EC invoked Section 21(3) of the Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1950 to claim "unshackled" powers, the Court ruled that such residuary powers must still align with the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960.
- **Protection of Civil Rights:** The Bench highlighted that revising electoral rolls affects the fundamental "civil rights" of existing voters. Consequently, any process that could result in the removal of a name must follow a transparent procedure to ensure no eligible citizen is left behind.
- **Applicability of Article 14:** The Court noted that EC actions must embrace the constitutional guarantees of equality before the law and equal protection of the laws. Procedures cannot be opaque or bypass the "ease of voters" simply for administrative convenience.
- **Reasoned Deviations:** The EC conceded that while it can travel beyond prescribed procedural limits under specific exigencies, it is mandatory to record reasons in writing, ensuring that the process remains "just and fair" rather than whimsical.

### Key Definitions

- **Special Intensive Revision (SIR):** A rigorous process of updating electoral rolls, often involving house-to-house verification, conducted under specific directions of the EC to ensure the accuracy of voter lists before elections.
- **Residuary Power:** A power that allows an authority to act in matters not specifically covered by existing rules or laws, often used to address unforeseen or unique circumstances.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 324:** Grants the Election Commission the power of superintendence, direction, and control of elections, including the preparation of electoral rolls.
- **Section 21(3) of the RPA, 1950:** Empowers the EC to direct a special revision of electoral rolls for any constituency in "such manner as it may think fit," notwithstanding the general rules of revision.
- **Article 14:** Guarantees equality before the law; in this context, it prevents the EC from using its discretion in a discriminatory or arbitrary manner against certain groups of voters.
- **Registration of Electors Rules, 1960:** Provides the detailed framework and procedural safeguards (like notice and hearing) for the preparation and revision of voter lists.

### Additional Key Points

- The ruling reinforces the "**Doctrine of Reasonableness**" in administrative law, suggesting that the more a decision affects individual rights, the higher the standard of procedural fairness required.
- The EC's "residuary power" is intended to be a **facilitative tool** for better election management, not a "blank check" to bypass statutory safeguards meant to protect voter participation.



## Conclusion

The Supreme Court's stance marks a significant step in balancing the administrative autonomy of the Election Commission with the constitutional mandate of procedural fairness. By subordinating the "manner as it thinks fit" clause to the principles of natural justice, the judiciary has ensured that the sanctity of the electoral roll—the bedrock of a representative democracy—remains protected from arbitrary executive discretion.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Functions and responsibilities of Various Constitutional Bodies (Election Commission); Statutory, regulatory, and quasi-judicial bodies; Important Supreme Court Judgments.
- **Prelims:** Powers of the EC under Article 324; Representation of the People Act, 1950 vs. 1951; Constitutional safeguards for voters.
- **Essay/Ethics:** Accountability in governance and the exercise of discretionary power by public institutions.

## 2. Supreme Court Directs Expert Team to Define the Aravalis

The Supreme Court has mandated the formation of a multi-disciplinary committee to scientifically define the "Aravali Range." This decision aims to resolve the ambiguity surrounding the mountain system's geographical boundaries and ensure its ecological protection while balancing regulated economic activities.

- **Multi-Disciplinary Expertise:** The Court intends to appoint a body comprising environmentalists, scientists, foresters, and mining experts. This team will work directly under the Supreme Court's supervision to create a comprehensive roadmap for permissible activities and ecological conservation.
- **Stay on Previous Definition:** On December 29, 2025, the SC stayed its own earlier judgment from November 20, 2025, which had accepted a uniform definition based on a 100-meter elevation threshold. The stay was triggered by concerns that such a narrow technical definition could exclude nearly 90% of the range from legal protection.
- **Ecological Buffer Role:** The Bench emphasized that the Aravalis serve as the "green lungs" of North-Western India and a critical barrier against desertification from the Thar Desert. Protecting the range is vital for groundwater recharge and climate stabilization across Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Gujarat.
- **Regulation vs. Blanket Ban:** While the Court is firm on stopping illegal mining and tree felling immediately, it has left the door open for "regulated mining" where the law permits. The expert team will help determine if sustainable mining is possible without compromising the system's fragile integrity.
- **Judicial Supervision:** Unlike previous government-led committees, this team will function "under the umbrella" of the Supreme Court. This ensures independent oversight and prevents administrative delays or policy dilutions that previously led to public furore.





## Key Definitions

- **Local Relief:** The difference in elevation between the highest and lowest points within a specific area. In the context of the Aravalis, it is used to measure whether a landform meets the "hill" criteria.
- **Green Wall Project:** A massive afforestation initiative aimed at creating a 5-km buffer of green cover around the Aravali range to combat land degradation and desertification.
- **Orogeny:** A process of mountain building, typically through the folding of the Earth's crust; the Aravalis are among the oldest fold mountains in the world.

## Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 48A (DPSP):** Mandates the State to protect and improve the environment and safeguard forests and wildlife.
- **Article 51A(g) (Fundamental Duties):** Casts a duty upon every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers, and wildlife.
- **Article 21:** Interpreted by the SC to include the right to a clean and healthy environment as part of the Right to Life.
- **Section 3 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986:** Empowers the Central Government to take measures to protect and improve the quality of the environment, often used to notify Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZ).
- **MMDR Act, 1957:** The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act governs the mining sector; the SC is examining how this interacts with ecological safeguards in the Aravalis.

## Conclusion

The Supreme Court's intervention highlights a shift from a purely metric-based definition (elevation) to a more holistic, science-based approach. By involving a diverse panel of experts, the judiciary aims to create a "permanent" definition that protects the continuity of the ridge. This move ensures that the Aravalis continue to function as a vital ecological shield for the National Capital Region and beyond, preventing the irreversible loss of biodiversity and water resources.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper I:** Indian Geography (Oldest mountain systems, physical features, and desertification).
- **GS Paper III:** Environment & Ecology (Conservation, environmental impact assessment, and degradation); Mining and Resource Management.
- **Prelims:** Location of Aravalis (spanning 4 states), highest peak (Guru Shikhar), and major rivers originating (Luni, Sabarmati, Banas).

## 3. Indigenous Defense Milestone: Rollout of first 'Made in India' C-295 Aircraft

The External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar, announced that the first indigenously manufactured C-295 military transport aircraft is expected to roll out from the Vadodara facility before September 2026. This development marks a pivotal moment in India-Spain bilateral relations and India's pursuit of "Atmanirbhar Bharat" (self-reliance) in the aerospace sector.

- **Strategic Private Sector Participation:** This project represents the first instance in India where a military aircraft will be manufactured entirely by a private sector consortium (Tata Advanced



Systems Ltd) in collaboration with a global major (Airbus). This breaks the long-standing monopoly of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) in military aviation.

- **Modernization of the IAF Fleet:** The C-295 aircraft are set to replace the Indian Air Force's (IAF) aging fleet of Avro-748 transport planes, which have been in service since the 1960s. The new aircraft provides a 5-10 tonne capacity and is equipped with contemporary technology for tactical airlift operations.
- **Bilateral Defense Industrial Collaboration:** The rollout is part of a 2021 deal worth \$2.5 billion for 56 aircraft. While 16 are being delivered in 'fly-away' condition from Spain, the remaining 40 will be assembled in India, fostering a deep industrial partnership between New Delhi and Madrid.
- **Aerospace Ecosystem and MSME Integration:** The project involves over 125 Indian MSMEs across the supply chain. It is expected to generate 600 direct highly skilled jobs and over 3,000 indirect employment opportunities, while ensuring 90% technology transfer in several phases of production.
- **Versatility in Operations:** The C-295 is designed for diverse missions, including troop transport, paratrooping, medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), and disaster relief. Its ability to operate from short and semi-prepared runways makes it ideal for India's mountainous northern borders and island territories.



### Key Definitions

- **Final Assembly Line (FAL):** The last stage of the manufacturing process where various sub-assemblies and components (like wings, engines, and fuselage) are integrated into a complete, flight-ready aircraft.
- **Fly-away Condition:** Refers to aircraft that are fully built, tested, and ready for immediate operational use upon delivery from the original equipment manufacturer (OEM).
- **Tactical Airlift:** The use of transport aircraft to move supplies and troops directly into a theater of operations, often involving shorter distances and austere landing environments compared to strategic airlift.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Seventh Schedule (Article 246):** "Defence of India" and "Naval, military and air forces" fall under **List I (Union List)**, giving the Central Government exclusive power to legislate and manage defense procurement and manufacturing.
- **Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020:** The governing framework that prioritizes "Make in India" and specifies categories like "Buy (Global - Manufacture in India)" to encourage foreign OEMs to set up production units locally.
- **Article 51:** A Directive Principle of State Policy (DPSP) that promotes international peace and security; bilateral defense ties with Spain for a "rule-based order" align with this constitutional spirit.



## Conclusion

The rollout of the first 'Made in India' C-295 signals the maturity of the Indian private sector in handling complex aerospace platforms. By transitioning from a mere buyer to a co-manufacturer, India is not only modernizing its tactical airlift capabilities but also creating a blueprint for future indigenous civil and military aviation projects.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Bilateral, regional, and global groupings involving India (India-Spain Relations); Effect of policies of developed countries on India's interests.
- **GS Paper III:** Security challenges and their management; Indigenization of technology and developing new technology; Science and Technology-developments and their applications in everyday life.
- **Prelims:** Features of C-295 aircraft; Difference between the 1950 and 1951 Representation of the People Acts (contextual linkage to governance); Locations of defense corridors in India.

## 4. Draft National Electricity Policy 2026: Toward a Cost-Reflective Tariff Regime

The Union Power Ministry has unveiled the **Draft National Electricity Policy (NEP) 2026**, which aims to replace the two-decade-old 2005 policy. The draft introduces a paradigm shift in electricity pricing, prioritizing the financial health of Distribution Companies (DISCOMs) through automatic and index-linked tariff revisions.

- **Automatic Annual Tariff Revisions:** The draft proposes a "backstop mechanism" where power tariffs will be automatically revised every year if State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs) fail to issue timely tariff orders. This is designed to prevent the accumulation of "regulatory assets" (unrecovered costs) caused by political delays in price hikes.
- **Index-Linked Pricing:** Future tariff revisions will be linked to a specific cost-based index. While SERCs will define the exact methodology, the shift ensures that power rates fluctuate in alignment with inflation and the actual cost of generation and supply.
- **Monthly Pass-Through of Fuel Costs:** A critical feature is the mandatory monthly adjustment of bills to reflect changes in power purchase costs. This "automatic pass-through" means consumers will see immediate fluctuations in their monthly bills based on the global and domestic prices of fuel (coal/gas).
- **Establishment of Stabilization Funds:** To mitigate extreme price volatility, DISCOMs are encouraged to set up "Stabilization Funds." These funds will act as a buffer, absorbing sharp spikes in power purchase costs to prevent massive "bill shocks" for retail consumers.
- **Reduction of Cross-Subsidies:** The policy signals a phased end to the practice where industrial and commercial users pay higher rates to subsidize domestic and agricultural consumers. It specifically proposes exempting manufacturing, railways, and metro systems from high surcharges to boost national economic competitiveness.





## Key Definitions

- **Regulatory Assets:** These are expenditures incurred by DISCOMs that are accepted as "recoverable" by regulators but are not immediately passed on to consumers through tariffs, leading to a massive debt burden on the utilities.
- **Cross-Subsidy:** A pricing mechanism where one category of consumers (e.g., Industrial) is charged more than the cost of supply to allow another category (e.g., Rural/BPL households) to be charged less.
- **Average Cost of Supply (ACS):** The total cost incurred by a DISCOM to supply one unit of electricity, including generation, transmission, and distribution costs.

## Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Electricity Act, 2003 (Section 3):** Mandates the Central Government to periodically prepare and notify the National Electricity Policy and Tariff Policy in consultation with State Governments.
- **Concurrent List (Entry 38, List III):** "Electricity" is a concurrent subject, meaning both the Centre and States can legislate on it. However, the NEP acts as a guiding framework that SERCs (under state jurisdiction) are expected to follow.
- **Section 61 & 62 of Electricity Act:** These sections empower Regulatory Commissions to determine tariffs based on commercial principles and the requirement that tariffs "progressively reflect the cost of supply."

## Additional Key Points

- **Targeting Consumption:** The draft sets a per capita electricity consumption target of **2,000 kWh by 2030** (up from approximately 1,460 kWh in 2025), necessitating massive infrastructure scaling.
- **Smart Metering:** The success of monthly pass-through and index-linking is heavily dependent on the nationwide rollout of **Prepaid Smart Meters**, which allow for real-time data tracking and billing accuracy.

## Conclusion

The Draft NEP 2026 represents a "hard" reform approach to the power sector's chronic financial distress. By removing the political buffer from tariff setting and introducing automatic, index-linked revisions, the government aims to make DISCOMs bankable. While this ensures a more reliable power grid, it shifts the burden of operational inefficiencies and market volatility directly onto the end consumer, marking the end of the "frozen tariff" era in several Indian states.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Federalism (Centre-State relations in the power sector); Statutory and Regulatory bodies (CERC/SERC).
- **GS Paper III:** Infrastructure (Energy); Economic Development (Impact of high power costs on manufacturing and "Make in India"); Mobilization of resources.
- **Prelims:** Provisions of the Electricity Act, 2003; Difference between Central and State Regulatory Commissions; Energy consumption targets.



## 5. Overhauling Disease Control: India's Regional Surveillance Plan

The Union Government is set to revamp the **National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC)** under the upcoming iteration of the **Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM)**. This strategic shift moves away from centralized monitoring toward a robust, regionalized response system to counter the rising frequency of zoonotic and infectious outbreaks.

- **Decentralization of Response:** The plan involves establishing **5 new regional offices, 20 metropolitan surveillance units, and 27 state regional centers**. This structure aims to eliminate diagnostic delays by allowing local authorities to detect and contain outbreaks without waiting for central intervention.
- **Frontline Role for NCDC:** In a significant role-recasting, the **NCDC** will now have full responsibility for **frontline service delivery**, including field surveillance and evidence collection. Meanwhile, the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** will shift its focus strictly toward advanced medical research and vaccine development.
- **Expansion of High-Containment Labs:** To bolster field-level diagnostics, **10 new Biosafety Level-3 (BSL-3) laboratories** will be commissioned. These facilities are critical for handling dangerous airborne pathogens, ensuring that high-risk samples do not need to be transported long distances to the few existing apex labs.
- **Metropolitan Health Security:** For the first time, dedicated units will target health security in crowded urban centers. These units will specifically address the "urban health penalty"—the increased risk of disease spread caused by overcrowding and poor sanitation.
- **Zoonotic Disease Focus:** The overhaul is a direct response to the "spillover" of animal-borne diseases. With zoonotic threats like **Nipah, Zika, and Avian Influenza** becoming endemic, the new plan integrates the "**One Health**" approach to monitor the intersection of human, animal, and environmental health.

### Key Definitions

- **Biosafety Levels (BSL):** A set of biocontainment precautions required to isolate dangerous biological agents.
  - **BSL-3:** Used for indigenous or exotic agents that may cause serious or lethal disease via aerosol transmission (e.g., Tuberculosis, SARS-CoV-2).
  - **BSL-4:** The highest level, reserved for the deadliest pathogens with no known vaccines or treatments (e.g., Ebola, Marburg).
- **Zoonotic Disease:** An infectious disease that has jumped from a non-human animal to humans. Approximately 75% of emerging infectious diseases are zoonotic in origin.
- **PM-ABHIM:** A pan-India mission (outlay of approximately **₹64,180 crore** till 2026) focused on bridging gaps in public health infrastructure, particularly in surveillance and pandemic preparedness.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Seventh Schedule (Article 246):** "Public health and sanitation; hospitals and dispensaries" is a **State List (List II)** subject, but "Prevention of the extension from one State to another of infectious or contagious diseases" falls under the **Concurrent List (List III)**, justifying the Centre's regional plan.
- **Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897:** The primary pre-independence law used to provide special powers to the government to contain outbreaks.



- **Article 47 (DPSP):** Mandates the State to regard the improvement of public health as among its primary duties.
- **International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005:** An international legal instrument binding on 196 countries, including India, which requires nations to develop minimum core public health capacities to detect and respond to events.

## Conclusion

The proposed restructuring of the NCDC marks a transition from a "reactive" to a "proactive" public health architecture. By building high-containment infrastructure at the regional level and separating operational surveillance from academic research, India is creating a "health shield" capable of suppressing localized outbreaks before they escalate into national pandemics.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health; Governance and decentralization.
- **GS Paper III:** Science and Technology- developments and their applications; Security challenges (Bio-terrorism/Bio-security).
- **Prelims:** Locations of NCDC branches; Difference between BSL-3 and BSL-4; One Health Mission; Specific viral diseases like Nipah and Kyasanur Forest Disease.

## 6. Strengthening the MSME Ecosystem: SIDBI Equity Infusion and APY Extension

The Union Cabinet has approved a substantial equity infusion of **₹5,000 crore** into the **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** to bolster credit flow to the MSME sector. Simultaneously, the government extended the **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)** until FY31, reinforcing India's social security net for unorganized workers.

- **Phased Capital Support:** The ₹5,000 crore infusion will be executed in three tranches: **₹3,000 crore in FY26** (at March 2025 book value), followed by **₹1,000 crore each in FY27 and FY28**. This staggered approach ensures fiscal prudence while progressively strengthening SIDBI's lending capacity.
- **Expanded Beneficiary Reach:** The capital boost is projected to increase SIDBI's beneficiary base from **7.62 million MSMEs in FY25 to 10.2 million by FY28**. This addition of approximately **2.57 million new beneficiaries** is critical for reaching the underserved micro-enterprises.
- **Employment Generation:** With an average of 4.37 employees per MSME, this enhanced credit flow is estimated to support and sustain employment for nearly **11.2 million people** by the end of FY28, addressing a key macroeconomic priority of job creation.
- **Strengthening CRAR:** The infusion ensures that SIDBI maintains a healthy **Capital to Risk-Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR)**—targeted above **14.50%** under regulatory norms. A robust CRAR protects SIDBI's credit rating, allowing it to raise market funds at competitive interest rates.
- **Social Security Continuity:** The extension of **Atal Pension Yojana (APY) to FY31** ensures long-term old-age income security for the unorganized sector. The government will continue providing





"gap funding" and promotional support to maintain the scheme's viability for its **86.6 million+** subscribers.

- **Strategic Sectoral Alignment:** These moves align with the "Viksit Bharat @2047" vision, focusing on a **digital upgrade** of the MSME sector to improve global competitiveness and reduce export rejections through better quality standards.

### Key Definitions

- **Capital to Risk-Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR):** Also known as the Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR), it measures a bank's capital against its risk-weighted credit exposures. It acts as a cushion to absorb a reasonable amount of losses.
- **Book Value:** The value of an asset or a company according to its balance sheet account balance. In this context, it determines the price at which the government "buys" new equity in SIDBI.
- **Gap Funding:** Financial support provided by the government to bridge the shortfall between the actual requirements of a scheme and the resources generated through contributions or other means.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 282:** Empowering the Union to make grants for any public purpose, often used for funding social security schemes like APY.
- **Article 41 (DPSP):** Directs the State to ensure the right to work, education, and public assistance in cases of old age, sickness, and disablement.
- **SIDBI Act, 1989:** The statutory framework that established SIDBI as the principal financial institution for the promotion, financing, and development of the MSME sector.
- **PFRDA Act, 2013:** The legal basis for the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority, which regulates and administers the Atal Pension Yojana.

### MSME Sector: The Economic Backbone

- **GDP Contribution:** MSMEs contribute approximately **30%** of India's GDP.
- **Export Share:** The sector accounts for nearly **45%** of total Indian exports.
- **Manufacturing Output:** MSMEs contribute roughly **35-40%** of the total manufacturing output of the country.

### Conclusion

The dual decision of the Cabinet targets both economic growth and social welfare. By recapitalizing SIDBI, the government is addressing the "credit gap" that often stifles small businesses, while the APY extension safeguards the most vulnerable section of the workforce. Together, these measures aim to create a resilient economic environment where small enterprises drive industrial growth and unorganized workers are integrated into the formal financial system.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections; Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies.
- **GS Paper III:** Indian Economy (Mobilization of resources, Growth, Development and Employment); Role of MSMEs in the Indian economy.

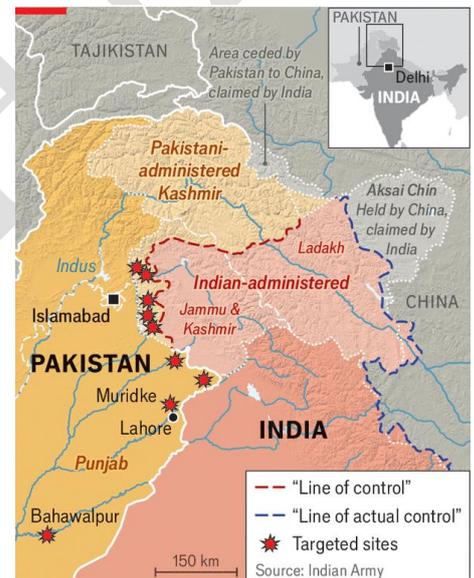


- **Prelims:** Features of APY (eligibility 18-40 years, guaranteed pension); Functions of SIDBI; Concept of CRAR/BASEL III norms.

## 7. Geopolitical Claims and the Indo-Pak Nuclear Standoff: 2026 Update

Marking the one-year anniversary of his second term, US President Donald Trump claimed that his administration's intervention prevented a potential nuclear war between India and Pakistan in 2025. This statement highlights the complex interplay of transactional diplomacy, third-party mediation, and the "de-hyphenation" of US-South Asia policy.

- **The Nuclear Claim:** President Trump asserted that India and Pakistan were "going to go nuclear" during a military standoff in May 2025. He cited the shooting down of eight aircraft as evidence of the conflict's severity, claiming US intervention saved "millions of lives."
- **Genesis of the Crisis (Operation Sindoor):** The 2025 tensions were triggered by a terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Kashmir, in April 2025, which killed 26 people. India responded on May 7 with "Operation Sindoor," launching drone and missile strikes against terror infrastructure. A ceasefire was subsequently reached on May 10, 2025.
- **Mediation vs. Bilateralism:** A major point of diplomatic friction remains the nature of the ceasefire. While the White House lists "brokering peace" as a top achievement of "Trump 2.0," India has consistently rejected claims of third-party mediation, maintaining that the cessation of hostilities was a **bilateral decision** reached through direct communication.
- **Transactional Diplomacy:** Under Trump's second term, US policy has shifted toward a "transactional" framework. Pakistan's cooperation in counter-terrorism (e.g., the capture of the Abbey Gate bombing suspect) and business deals (e.g., the Pakistan Crypto Council) led to a slash in US tariffs on Pakistani goods, while India faced doubled tariffs (50%) over trade and strategic disagreements.
- **The "Eight Wars" Narrative:** Trump claimed to have ended "eight unendable wars in 10 months," including conflicts in Gaza, between Israel and Iran, and the Armenia-Azerbaijan dispute. While some ceasefires were achieved, analysts describe them as "fragile and incremental" rather than permanent peace settlements.



### Key Definitions

- **Operation Sindoor:** The code name for India's 2025 military response involving precision strikes against terror camps across the Line of Control (LoC) following the Pahalgam attack.
- **Nuclear Flashpoint:** A geopolitical region where a local conflict has a high probability of escalating into a nuclear exchange. South Asia is frequently characterized as such due to the "Cold Start" doctrine and Pakistan's "Full Spectrum Deterrence."
- **Transactionalism:** A foreign policy approach that prioritizes immediate, monetizable assets and specific concessions over long-term strategic alliances or shared values.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 51 (DPSP):** Directs the Indian State to promote international peace and security and maintain just and honorable relations between nations.



- **Shimla Agreement (1972):** A bilateral treaty between India and Pakistan which mandates that all differences be resolved "through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon," forming the legal basis for India's rejection of US mediation.
- **Lahore Declaration (1999):** Signed by the Prime Ministers of both nations, it emphasizes the "nuclear dimension" of the security environment and the need to prevent conflict.
- **Bilateral Pact on Nuclear Installations (1988):** Despite hostilities, both nations continue the practice of exchanging lists of nuclear installations every January 1st to prevent attacks on atomic facilities.

### Conclusion

The 2025-2026 period has seen a dramatic shift in South Asian geopolitics. While the US administration claims credit for preventing a nuclear catastrophe, India maintains its "strategic autonomy," refusing to concede the role of a mediator. The cooling of Indo-US ties—evidenced by trade wars and the revival of a transactional US-Pakistan partnership—suggests that the "strategic partnership" of the previous decade is being replaced by a more volatile, interest-based engagement.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** India and its neighborhood relations; Bilateral, regional and global groupings; Effect of policies of developed countries on India's interests.
- **GS Paper III:** Challenges to internal security (Terrorism); Role of external state and non-state actors; Nuclear doctrine of India.
- **Prelims:** Agreements like Shimla and Lahore; Operation Sindoor; Institutional roles of NCDC and ICMR in health security; Nuclear command authority.

## 8. Surging Fertiliser Imports: Record \$18 Billion Projection for FY26

India's fertiliser import bill is projected to hit an all-time high of **\$18 billion** by the end of March 2026, marking a 76% increase over the previous fiscal. This surge is primarily driven by heightened agricultural activity following robust monsoon rains, which significantly expanded the crop area for the current seasons.

- **Demand Driven by Monsoon:** Above-average rainfall during the 2025 southwest monsoon (8% above normal) and exceptionally high precipitation in October (49% higher) increased soil moisture. This encouraged farmers to expand winter crop (Rabi) sowing by 3.3%, reaching 65.23 million hectares, thereby escalating the demand for urea and DAP.
- **Import Dependency on Key Nutrients:** While India is progressing toward urea self-sufficiency, it remains heavily dependent on imports for other critical fertilisers. Currently, the country imports nearly **100% of its Potash (MOP)**, **95% of its Phosphate**, and around **20-25% of its Urea** requirements.
- **Fiscal Burden of Subsidies:** The surge in imports directly impacts the fiscal deficit. The government fertiliser subsidy for FY26 is expected to exceed the budget estimate of ₹1.67 lakh crore, potentially reaching **₹1.95 lakh crore**. Urea receives the highest subsidy, often covering nearly 80-85% of its production/import cost.
- **Supply Chain Diversification:** To ensure food security, India has secured long-term supply agreements for Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP) and raw materials from countries like **Russia, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Oman, and Jordan**. This strategy aims to mitigate price volatility and global supply chain disruptions.



- **Shift Toward Alternatives:** To curb the rising import bill, the government is aggressively promoting **Nano Urea** and **Nano DAP**. These liquid variants are more nutrient-efficient, easier to transport, and have a lower environmental footprint compared to conventional bulk fertilisers.

### Key Definitions

- **Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS):** A scheme introduced in 2010 where a fixed amount of subsidy is decided by the government for Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilisers based on their individual nutrient content (N, P, K, and S).
- **Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of Urea:** Unlike P&K fertilisers, the MRP of urea is statutorily fixed by the government (currently approx. ₹242 per 45 kg bag), with the difference between the cost of production/import and MRP being paid as a subsidy.
- **Soil Moisture Stress:** A condition where the water content in the soil is insufficient for plant growth. High rainfall in 2025 eliminated this stress, leading to the "record sowing" observed this fiscal.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Entry 33 of List III (Concurrent List):** The Seventh Schedule gives both Centre and States power over the "trade and commerce in, and the production, supply and distribution of... fertilisers."
- **Essential Commodities Act, 1955:** Fertilisers are declared as an "essential commodity." This allows the government to regulate their price, distribution, and movement across the country.
- **Fertiliser (Control) Order (FCO), 1985:** Issued under the Essential Commodities Act, this is the primary regulation governing the quality, price, and distribution of fertilisers in India.
- **Article 39(b):** A Directive Principle of State Policy (DPSP) that mandates the state to ensure that the ownership and control of material resources are distributed to best subserve the common good, justifying the controlled subsidy regime.

### Conclusion

The projected \$18 billion import bill underscores the critical link between India's food security and global commodity markets. While the expansion in crop area is a positive sign for agricultural growth, the resulting fiscal pressure highlights the urgent need for structural reforms. Achieving "Atmanirbharta" in the fertiliser sector through revived domestic plants and the adoption of high-efficiency nano-fertilisers remains the only sustainable path to reducing this massive import dependency.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III:** Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies; Food security; Major crops and cropping patterns.
- **GS Paper II:** Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors.
- **Prelims:** Components of NBS; The role of IFFCO in Nano Urea; India's major import partners for Potash and Phosphorus; Statutory pricing of Urea.

## 9. Judicial Accountability and the Process of Removing Judges

A constitutional storm has emerged following an impeachment notice submitted by 107 Members of Parliament against Justice G.R. Swaminathan of the Madras High Court in December 2025. This development brings to the forefront the intricate and rigorous legal mechanism designed to balance judicial accountability with the independence of the judiciary.



- **Constitutional Framework for Removal:** The Constitution does not use the word 'impeachment' for judges (reserved only for the President under Article 61). Instead, it provides for the 'removal' of Supreme Court judges under **Articles 124(4) and 124(5)**. By virtue of **Articles 217(1)(b) and 218**, this same procedure is applicable to High Court judges.
- **Grounds for Removal:** A judge can be removed only on two specific grounds: '**proved misbehaviour**' or '**incapacity**'. While the Constitution does not define 'misbehaviour,' the Supreme Court in cases like *K. Veeraswami (1991)* has interpreted it as conduct involving corruption, lack of integrity, or wilful abuse of judicial office.
- **Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968:** This Act regulates the procedure for investigation. A motion requires the signatures of at least **100 members in the Lok Sabha** or **50 members in the Rajya Sabha**. The Speaker or Chairman has the statutory discretion to admit or refuse the motion after preliminary consideration.
- **The Investigation Phase:** If admitted, a three-member committee is formed, comprising a Supreme Court judge, a Chief Justice of a High Court, and a distinguished jurist. This committee conducts a quasi-judicial inquiry to establish if the charges are proved.
- **The Parliamentary Threshold:** If the committee finds the judge guilty, the motion must be passed by each House of Parliament by a **special majority**: a majority of the total membership of that House and a majority of not less than **two-thirds** of the members present and voting.
- **Role of the President:** The final step involves an address presented to the President in the same session. The President then issues an order for the removal of the judge.

### Key Definitions

- **Proved Misbehaviour:** Conduct that is not merely an error of judgment but involves *mens rea* (guilty mind), corruption, or moral turpitude as established by a formal inquiry.
- **Distinguished Jurist:** An eminent person with profound knowledge of law, who can be appointed to the inquiry committee or even as a Supreme Court judge under Article 124(3)(c).
- **Statutory Authority:** An individual or body (like the Speaker in this context) whose powers and duties are defined by a specific law (The Judges Inquiry Act) rather than just the rules of the House.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 124(4):** Prescribes the special majority and Presidential order required for removal.
- **Article 124(5):** Empowers Parliament to legislate the procedure for investigation and proof of charges.
- **Article 218:** Extends the removal procedure of Supreme Court judges to High Court judges.
- **Article 121:** Restricts Parliament from discussing the conduct of a judge except upon a motion for their removal.

### Important Judicial Pronouncements

- **K. Veeraswami v. Union of India (1991):** Held that judges are 'public servants' and can be prosecuted for corruption, but only with the prior sanction of the President in consultation with the Chief Justice of India.
- **M. Krishna Swami v. Union of India (1992):** Clarified that "misbehaviour" implies a high degree of misconduct and requires a clear finding by the inquiry committee before Parliament can act.



## Conclusion

The process of judicial removal is intentionally designed to be "tough" to safeguard the independence of the judiciary from political interference. However, as noted by legal experts like P.D.T. Achary, the absolute discretion of the Speaker to reject a motion at the threshold—even one signed by 100+ MPs—creates a potential loophole where the executive can shield a judge. This highlights a delicate tension between legislative oversight and judicial autonomy.

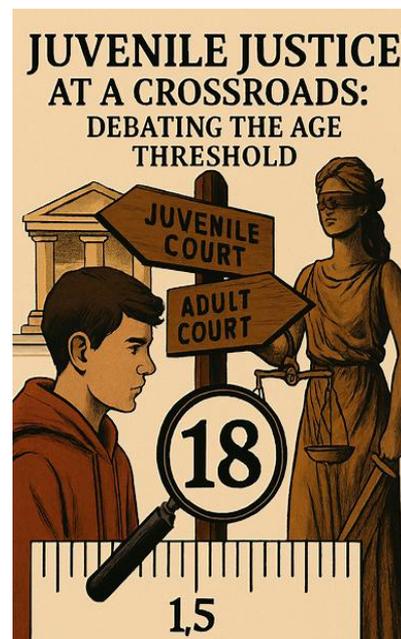
## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Structure, organization and functioning of the Judiciary; Appointment and removal of Constitutional posts; Comparison of the Indian constitutional scheme with that of other countries.
- **GS Paper IV:** Ethics in public administration; Judicial ethics and the standard of conduct for high constitutional functionaries.
- **Prelims:** Specific majorities required for removal; Composition of the inquiry committee; Articles 124, 217, and 218.

## 10. Juvenile Justice at a Crossroads: Debating the Age Threshold

A Private Member's Bill introduced in December 2025 seeks to lower the age threshold for trying children as adults from **16 to 14 years** for "heinous" offences. This proposal marks a potential escalation in the punitive shift of India's juvenile justice system, which began a decade ago with the **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015**.

- **The "Transfer System" Expansion:** Currently, Section 15 of the JJ Act allows the **Juvenile Justice Board (JJB)** to conduct a "preliminary assessment" for children aged 16-18 accused of heinous crimes. The new Bill seeks to extend this to 14-15 year olds, potentially exposing younger adolescents to adult courts and prisons.
- **Defining "Heinous" Offences:** Under the Act, heinous offences are those that carry a **minimum punishment of seven years** or more. The Bill argues that a rise in serious crimes by younger adolescents necessitates this move to ensure "accountability and deterrence."
- **Challenge of Preliminary Assessment:** The JJB must evaluate a child's mental and physical capacity to commit the offence and their ability to understand its consequences. Critics argue these assessments are often **arbitrary and subjective**, lacking standardized scientific tools to retrospectively judge a child's "mens rea" or mental state.
- **NCRB Data vs. Legislative Intent:** National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data for 2023 shows that Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) account for only **0.5% of total registered crimes**. Furthermore, nearly 79% of apprehended juveniles fall in the 16-18 age group, contradicting the claim that 14-16 year olds are driving a crime wave.
- **Erosion of Rehabilitative Reform:** The core philosophy of juvenile justice—that children are developmentally different and amenable to reform—is challenged by this retributive approach. International standards, including the **UNCRC**, advocate for rehabilitation over incarceration for all individuals under 18.





- **Systemic Vulnerability:** Many children in conflict with the law are also "children in need of care and protection." Experts suggest that criminal behavior often stems from **structural inequalities** (lack of education, poverty, and broken homes) rather than inherent criminality.

### Key Definitions

- **Child in Conflict with the Law (CICL):** A person below 18 years of age who is alleged to have committed an offence.
- **Preliminary Assessment:** A quasi-judicial inquiry by the JJB to determine if a juvenile has the "adult-like" capacity to be tried in a Children's Court (adult court).
- **Heinous, Serious, and Petty Offences:** \* **Heinous:** Min. punishment  $\geq$  7 years.
  - **Serious:** Punishment of 3 to 7 years.
  - **Petty:** Punishment  $<$  3 years.

### Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 15(3):** Enables the State to make special provisions for women and children.
- **Article 39(f):** Directs the State to ensure children are given opportunities to develop in a healthy manner and protected against exploitation and moral abandonment.
- **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC):** India is a signatory; it defines a child as anyone under 18 and emphasizes the "best interests of the child."
- **Section 15, JJ Act 2015:** The legal window allowing the transfer of 16-18 year olds to adult trials.

### Important Judicial Pronouncements

- **Barun Chandra Thakur v. Master Bholu (2022):** The Supreme Court emphasized that the "preliminary assessment" is a delicate task requiring expertise and directed the government to issue guidelines for JJBs to prevent mechanical transfers.
- **Explaining "Mens Rea":** Courts have held that for children, the capacity to understand the "wrongfulness" of an act is not the same as having adult-level culpability.

### Conclusion

Lowering the age of juvenility to 14 represents a shift from "Care and Protection" toward a retributive criminal justice model. While the intent is to deter serious crime, empirical data and developmental science suggest that early incarceration often leads to recidivism rather than reform. Strengthening the existing welfare infrastructure—rather than expanding the net of adult punishment—remains the more sustainable path to addressing juvenile delinquency.

### UPSC Relevance

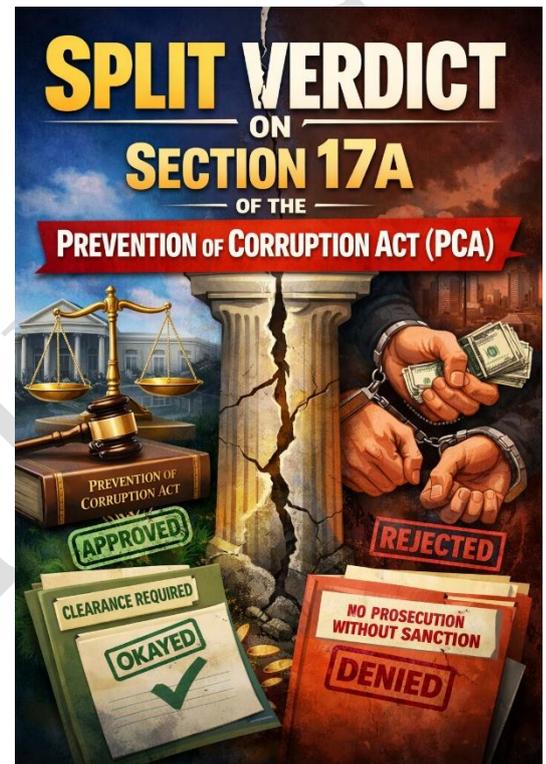
- **GS Paper II:** Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections; Laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections; Issues relating to Children.
- **GS Paper IV:** Ethics and Human Interface; Conflict between retributive and restorative justice.
- **Prelims:** Age categories under JJ Act; Definitions of Heinous vs Serious crimes; Role of NCRB; Constitutional Articles 15, 39, and 47.



## 11. Split Verdict on Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act (PCA)

The Supreme Court recently delivered a split verdict regarding the constitutional validity of Section 17A of the PCA, 1988. This section mandates that investigative agencies obtain prior approval from the government before conducting any inquiry or investigation into alleged offences committed by a public servant during the discharge of official duties.

- **Purpose of Section 17A:** Introduced via a 2018 amendment, this provision aims to protect honest officers from "vexatious and frivolous" litigation. It addresses the "play-it-safe syndrome" in bureaucracy, where officials hesitate to take bold decisions due to fear of malicious prosecution for unintended errors in judgment.
- **Justice K.V. Viswanathan's View:** He upheld the provision but with a critical caveat: to avoid bias, the approval must be based on a binding opinion from an independent body like the **Lokpal** (for Central employees) or **Lokayukta** (for State employees), rather than the government itself.
- **Justice B.V. Nagarathna's Dissent:** She declared the section unconstitutional, calling it "old wine in a new bottle." She argued it violates **Article 14 (Equality before Law)** by creating an unjustified hurdle for investigations, noting that Section 19 already provides adequate protection at the prosecution stage.
- **Evolution of Judicial Precedents:** The Court previously struck down similar protections in **Vineet Narain (1998)** and **Subramaniam Swamy (2014)**. In the 2014 ruling, Section 6A of the DSPE Act was invalidated because it discriminated between officers based on rank (Joint Secretary and above).
- **Distinction between Section 17A and Section 19:** While Section 17A concerns the **pre-investigation** stage (preventing even an inquiry), Section 19 deals with the **pre-prosecution** stage (after the investigation is complete but before the court takes cognizance).
- **Systemic Reform Proposals:** The verdict suggests that to balance accountability and protection, there must be swift disposal of corruption cases to act as a deterrent, alongside penalties for those filing false or malicious complaints against public servants.



### Key Definitions

- **Public Servant:** Defined broadly under PCA to include any employee of the government, local authorities, judges, and anyone performing a 'public duty' in which the community has an interest.
- **Intelligible Differentia:** A legal principle under Article 14 requiring that any classification made by a law must be based on a clear, logical distinction that distinguishes those grouped together from others left out.
- **Vexatious Litigation:** Legal actions instituted without sufficient grounds, primarily intended to harass, annoy, or subdue the defendant (in this case, a public official).



## Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 14:** Guarantees equality before the law and equal protection of laws; used as the primary ground to challenge Section 17A for being arbitrary.
- **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988:** Enacted based on the **K. Santhanam Committee (1962)** recommendations to consolidate laws related to bribery and criminal misconduct.
- **Section 19 (PCA):** Mandates prior sanction for prosecution.
- **Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946:** The parent legislation governing the CBI, which previously contained the now-defunct Section 6A.

## Conclusion

The split verdict highlights a fundamental tension in administrative law: the need to shield the "honest-but-mistaken" officer versus the necessity of an unhindered investigation into "dishonest-and-corrupt" acts. By referring the matter to a larger Bench, the Supreme Court seeks to settle whether the "prior approval" requirement is a protective shield for governance or a "protective umbrella" for corruption.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Important aspects of governance, transparency, and accountability; Role of civil services in a democracy; Important Supreme Court judgments.
- **GS Paper IV:** Ethics and Human Interface (Challenges of corruption); Probity in Governance; Ethical dilemmas in public administration.
- **Prelims:** Origin of PCA (Santhanam Committee); Differences between Section 17A and Section 19; Roles of Lokpal and Lokayukta; Provisions of Article 14.

## 12. Justice Mission-2025: Escalating Tensions in the Taiwan Strait

In late December 2025, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) conducted a large-scale military exercise around Taiwan codenamed '**Justice Mission-2025**'. This second major drill of the year marks a significant escalation in Beijing's "coercive signaling" strategy, serving as a direct response to a record-breaking **\$11.1 billion US arms deal** and hawkish diplomatic statements from regional actors.

- **Strategic Encirclement and Blockade:** The exercise focused on "three-dimensional external line deterrence," involving the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Rocket Force. It simulated a comprehensive blockade of key Taiwanese ports, such as **Keelung and Kaohsiung**, practicing search-and-destroy operations and joint sea-air combat readiness.
- **Proximity of Live-Fire Drills:** For the first time, the PLA fired long-range rockets (likely from PCH-191 launchers) that landed within Taiwan's **contiguous zone** (24 nautical miles). While missiles did not fly over the island as they did in 2022, the 130 sorties on day one represented one of the heaviest air activity levels on record.
- **The "T-Dome" Defense Initiative:** In response to the persistent threat, Taiwan's President Lai Ching-te unveiled the '**T-Dome**' (**Taiwan Dome**). Inspired by Israel's Iron Dome but designed for a broader spectrum of threats (hypersonic missiles and drones), this multi-layered architecture aims to integrate all radar and interceptor systems into a unified command shield by 2026.
- **Catalyst of US Arms Sales:** The drills were explicitly linked by Beijing to a massive **\$11.1 billion weapons package** approved by the Trump administration. This package includes **HIMARS**

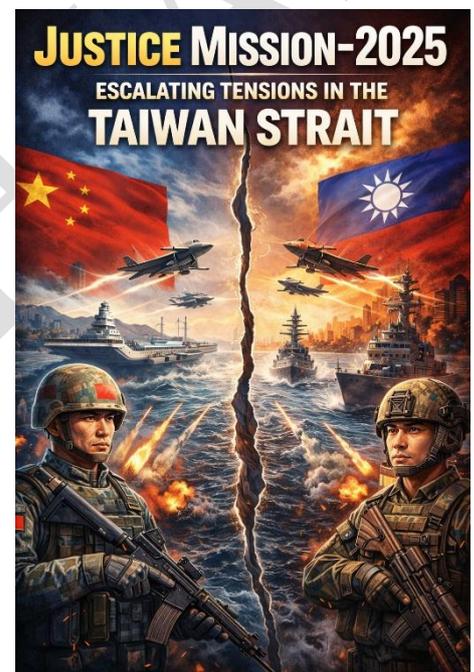


launchers, ATACMS missiles, and Altius drones, signaling a shift toward providing Taiwan with a "Ukraine-style" defensive capability.

- **Regional Flashpoints (Japan):** Tensions were further inflamed by Japanese Prime Minister **Sanae Takaichi**, who suggested that a Chinese blockade of Taiwan could be deemed a "**survival-threatening situation**" for Japan. This could legally allow the mobilization of Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF) under collective self-defense laws.
- **Domestic Political Gridlock in Taiwan:** Despite the external threat, Taiwan faces internal friction. While the ruling **DPP** pushes for increased defense spending (targeting 5% of GDP by 2030), the opposition-led legislature (**KMT and TPP**) has frequently blocked or delayed defense-related supplementary budgets.

### Key Definitions

- **Contiguous Zone:** A band of water extending from the outer edge of the territorial sea to up to **24 nautical miles** from the baseline. Within this zone, a state can exercise limited control to prevent infringement of its customs, fiscal, or sanitary laws.
- **Three-Dimensional Deterrence:** A military strategy involving the simultaneous and coordinated use of Land, Sea, and Air assets to overwhelm or paralyze an adversary's defense systems.
- **One-China Principle:** The diplomatic acknowledgment of China's position that there is only one Chinese government. Beijing uses this principle to oppose Taiwan's participation in international organizations and foreign arms deals.



### Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 51 (DPSP):** Mandates that the Indian State promote international peace and security. India officially adheres to a "One-China Policy" but has significantly increased its economic and cultural engagement with Taiwan in recent years.
- **UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS):** International treaty defining the rights and responsibilities of nations in their use of the world's oceans, including definitions for territorial waters and contiguous zones.
- **Taiwan Relations Act (1979 - US):** A US law that mandates the United States provide Taiwan with defensive weapons and maintain the capacity to resist any resort to force that would jeopardize the security of Taiwan.

### Conclusion

The 'Justice Mission-2025' drills represent a transition from symbolic signaling to actual operational rehearsal for an island-wide blockade. As Taiwan accelerates its 'T-Dome' project and the US deepens its "porcupine strategy" of arming the island, the Taiwan Strait has become the world's most dangerous maritime flashpoint. The involvement of Japan and the EU's concern indicate that any conflict here would not remain bilateral but would immediately jeopardize global semiconductor supply chains and Indo-Pacific stability.



## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests; Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests (US-China-Taiwan triangle).
- **GS Paper III:** Security challenges and their management in border areas; Science and Technology (Air defense systems like T-Dome).
- **Prelims:** Geography of the Taiwan Strait (Bashi Channel, Miyako Strait); UNCLOS definitions (Territorial Sea vs. Contiguous Zone); Major parties in Taiwan (DPP vs. KMT).

## 13. The Constitutional Debate Over Numerals: Devanagari vs. International Form

The choice of numerals was one of the most contentious issues in the Constituent Assembly, reflecting a deep-seated tension between civilizational pride and modern pragmatism. Celebrated alongside **National Mathematics Day**, this debate highlights how even digits became symbols of identity during the framing of the Indian Constitution.

- **Traditionalists vs. Moderates:** A sharp divide emerged between Hindi traditionalists, led by Purushottam Das Tandon, who demanded **Devanagari numerals** as a mark of national identity, and moderates (including South Indian and minority members) who championed **international numerals** for their scientific and administrative utility.
- **The Munshi-Ayyangar Formula:** To break the deadlock, K.M. Munshi and N. Gopalaswamy Ayyangar proposed a compromise. This formula established **Hindi in Devanagari script** as the official language but mandated the use of the "**international form of Indian numerals**" for official Union purposes.
- **The Pragmatic Choice:** Leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru argued that international numerals were essential for global trade, science, and governance. Traditionalists viewed this as a surrender of culture, while moderates saw the imposition of Devanagari numerals as an act of "linguistic tyranny" that would isolate India from the world.
- **Constitutional "Tie" and Consensus:** A preliminary vote on the issue resulted in a dramatic **74–74 tie**. This parity forced the Assembly to abandon majoritarian imposition in favor of a consensus-based approach, ensuring that large segments of the population were not alienated.
- **The "International Form" of Indian Roots:** Article 343(1) uses the phrase "international form of Indian numerals" to acknowledge that the digits 1, 2, and 3 originated in India's decimal system before traveling to West Asia and Europe. This nomenclature allowed for a blend of national pride and global standardization.



## Key Definitions

- **Devanagari Numerals:** The numeral system (१, २, ३...) traditionally used with the Devanagari script.
- **International Form of Indian Numerals:** The modern digits (1, 2, 3...) which are global standards but are intellectually rooted in the ancient Indian Hindu-Arabic numeral system.
- **Munshi-Ayyangar Formula:** The political compromise that settled the language and numeral dispute by balancing the aspirations of Hindi-speaking areas with the concerns of non-Hindi regions.



## Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 343(1):** Declares Hindi in Devanagari script as the official language of the Union and mandates the use of the international form of Indian numerals.
- **Article 343(2):** Provided a **15-year transition period** (1950–1965) during which English and international numerals would continue to be used. It also empowered the President to authorize Hindi and Devanagari numerals for specific purposes during this time.
- **Article 343(3):** Vests Parliament with the power to legislate on the continued use of English or the Devanagari form of numerals after the 15-year period.
- **Official Languages Act, 1963:** Enacted by Parliament to ensure the continued use of English for official purposes, thereby solidifying the use of international numerals alongside it.

## Conclusion

The numerals debate was a microcosm of the larger challenge of nation-building in a pluralistic society. By choosing "international form" over "uniformity," the framers prioritized **accommodation and functional necessity** over cultural majoritarianism. This decision ensures that India remains connected to global scientific discourse while honoring its mathematical heritage through the very digits it gifted to the world.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Indian Constitution—historical underpinnings, evolution, features, and significant provisions. Functions and responsibilities of the Union.
- **GS Paper I:** Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country; Modern Indian history and personalities (Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Munshi).
- **Prelims:** Specifics of Part XVII (Official Language); Articles 343-351; The 15-year transition period; The difference between National and Official language.