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

## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION**

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**VIDHVATH IAS ACADEMY**



## 1. Samridh Gram Phygital Services Initiative: Samridhi Kendra

- **Phygital Service Hub:** The Samridhi Kendra is an "Integrated Phygital" (Physical + Digital) centre designed as a single-window rural service delivery point, bridging the gap between high-speed digital infrastructure and physical accessibility.
- **Leveraging BharatNet:** The initiative strategically transforms the existing high-speed broadband infrastructure of BharatNet from mere connectivity into a functional platform for healthcare, education, agriculture, and e-governance.
- **Holistic Service Delivery:** It provides telemedicine (Health ATMs), smart classrooms, soil testing, drone-based agricultural services, and assisted access to e-governance, ensuring that remote populations do not have to travel to urban centers for basic rights.
- **Community-Led Model:** The project operates through Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs), fostering rural entrepreneurship and local employment while ensuring the long-term sustainability of the service centers through revenue-generating models.
- **Public-Private Partnership:** Implemented by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) in collaboration with the Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF), the initiative emphasizes community mobilization and digital capacity building.
- **Catalyst for Digital Inclusion:** By providing PM-WANI-based public Wi-Fi and financial literacy, the Samridhi Kendra acts as a nucleus for the "Digital India" vision, aiming for 100% digital penetration in the hinterlands.

### Key Definitions

- **Phygital:** A blended model that combines a physical brick-and-mortar presence with digital service delivery to ensure trust and ease of access for rural users.
- **BharatNet:** Originally the National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN), it is the world's largest rural broadband project aiming to connect all Gram Panchayats in India.
- **Health ATM:** A touch-screen integrated point-of-care machine that allows patients to check health parameters (blood pressure, glucose, etc.) and consult doctors via video.



### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 38 (Directive Principles):** Mandates the State to secure a social order for the promotion of the welfare of the people and to minimize inequalities in facilities and opportunities.
- **Article 243-G (11th Schedule):** Relates to the powers and responsibilities of Panchayats. Digital hubs like Samridhi Kendras empower local bodies to manage health, education, and social welfare effectively.
- **Information Technology Act, 2000:** Provides the legal framework for e-governance and electronic records, which facilitates the delivery of digital certificates and financial services at these centers.
- **Telecom Act, 2023:** Streamlines the expansion of telecom infrastructure, supporting the "Right of Way" necessary for BharatNet and Samridh Gram initiatives.



### Additional Key Points for Examination

- **Location of Pilot:** The first major Samridhhi Kendra under this pilot was inaugurated at Umri Village, Guna District, Madhya Pradesh.
- **Sustainability:** The model incorporates revenue streams from service delivery and e-commerce, reducing dependence on continuous government grants.
- **Social Impact:** Immediate benefits include blood test reports in under 30 minutes and tele-consultations with specialist doctors from metropolitan cities for rural patients.

### Conclusion

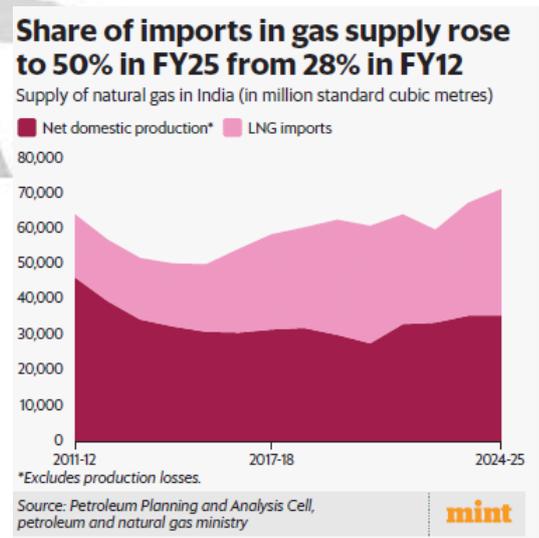
The Samridhhi Gram Phygital Services Initiative represents a paradigm shift from "providing connectivity" to "enabling utility." By creating a localized ecosystem where technology meets human assistance, the government is effectively tackling the digital divide. This "program of the future" ensures that the benefits of the 4th Industrial Revolution are not confined to urban tech hubs but are harvested in the fields of rural Bharat.

### UPSC Relevance

- **General Studies II:** Governance, Constitution, Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections, and issues relating to the development of the Social Sector (Health, Education, Human Resources).
- **General Studies III:** IT and Space, Infrastructure (Telecom), and Science & Technology-based interventions in Agriculture.
- **Essay & Ethics:** Can be cited as a case study for "Digital Democracy," "Last-mile delivery," and "Bridging the Rural-Urban Divide."

## 2. Impact of West Asian Geopolitical Conflict on India's Gas Economy

- **Outsized Dependence on Qatar:** India relies on Qatar for 40-50% of its total Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) imports. This supply is currently jeopardized as the Strait of Hormuz—the primary maritime artery for Qatari gas—faces closure or severe disruption due to the Iran-Israel conflict.
- **Systemic Supply Chain Rupture:** Leading entities like Petronet LNG and QatarEnergy have invoked 'Force Majeure' clauses. This legal declaration acknowledges that "unforeseeable circumstances" (war) prevent the fulfillment of long-term contracts, forcing India to look toward the prohibitively expensive "spot market" for immediate needs.
- **Stagnant Domestic Production:** Despite policy interventions like the Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP), India's domestic gas production remains approximately 25% below its 2011-12 peak. The collapse of major offshore blocks like KG-D6 historically increased import reliance from 28% in 2011 to 50% in 2025.
- **Vulnerability of City Gas Distribution (CGD):** The share of gas used for piped natural gas (PNG) and compressed natural gas (CNG) has nearly doubled in a decade. A supply hit directly impacts





household kitchens and public transport, particularly in high-consumption states like Delhi, Gujarat, and Maharashtra.

- **Threat to "Link Fuel" Transition:** India aims to increase the share of natural gas in its energy mix from 7% to 15% by 2030 to meet climate goals. Sustained regional instability in West Asia threatens this transition, potentially forcing a return to higher-emission fuels like coal or liquid fuels.
- **LPG Import Risks:** Beyond LNG, over 60% of India's Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) is imported. Since LPG is a critical cooking fuel for the masses (intensified by the Ujjwala Scheme), any disruption in West Asian shipping lanes poses a direct threat to national energy security and inflation management.

### Key Definitions

- **Force Majeure:** A legal provision in contracts that frees both parties from obligation when an extraordinary event (war, strike, natural disaster) beyond their control occurs.
- **Strait of Hormuz:** A narrow waterway between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman; it is the world's most important oil and gas chokepoint.
- **Spot Market:** A public financial market in which financial instruments or commodities are traded for immediate delivery, usually at much higher prices during a crisis than long-term contracts.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 73:** Extends the executive power of the Union to matters involving international treaties and trade, crucial for negotiating alternative energy corridors.
- **The Petroleum Act, 1934:** Regulates the import, transport, and storage of petroleum and other inflammable substances, providing the legal basis for managing emergency reserves.
- **Energy Conservation Act, 2001:** Provides the framework for diversifying energy sources and improving efficiency to reduce the impact of external supply shocks.
- **Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP):** A 2017 policy under the Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP) that allows companies to carve out blocks of their choice to boost domestic production.

### Additional Key Points for Examination

- **Energy Mix Disparity:** Coal still dominates at 60%, making the 15% gas target a steep climb during geopolitical volatility.
- **Sectoral Impact:** The fertilizer sector is the largest consumer of gas; a shortage could lead to increased subsidy burdens or higher food inflation due to rising production costs.
- **Strategic Reserves:** Unlike crude oil, India lacks massive strategic underground storage for LNG, making it more vulnerable to immediate shipping disruptions.

### Conclusion

The current impasse in the Strait of Hormuz serves as a "wake-up call" for India's energy diplomacy. While the transition to a gas-based economy is environmentally prudent, the lack of diverse suppliers and stagnant domestic output creates a strategic vulnerability. Securing the "Gas Economy" will require a three-pronged approach: accelerating domestic exploration, diversifying import sources (e.g., USA, Australia, Mozambique), and expanding strategic gas storage infrastructure.

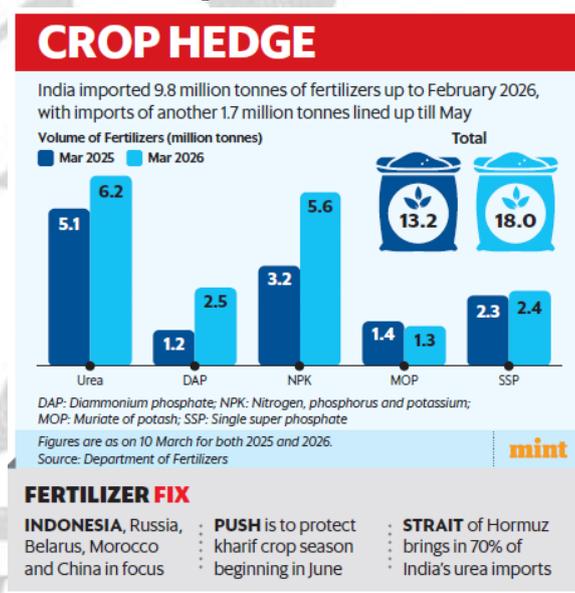


## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** International Relations (West Asia conflict and its impact on India), Effect of policies and politics of developed/developing countries on India's interests.
- **GS Paper III:** Economic Development (Energy infrastructure), Indian Economy (Inflation and import bills), Security (Energy security as a component of National Security).
- **Prelims:** Mapping of the Strait of Hormuz, Persian Gulf, and major LNG terminals in India (Dahej, Kochi, etc.); features of OALP and HELP.

## 3. Strategic Diversification of India's Fertilizer Imports

- **Geopolitical Vulnerability:** India, the world's largest importer of Urea and Diammonium Phosphate (DAP), is facing a supply crisis due to the West Asia conflict. The primary threat is the maritime blockade at the Strait of Hormuz, a critical chokepoint through which 70% of India's urea imports currently transit.
- **Shift to Non-West Asian Sources:** To safeguard the upcoming Kharif sowing season, New Delhi is pivoting toward alternative suppliers. Key nations entering the "reckoning" include Belarus, Morocco, Russia, Indonesia, and China to hedge against regional instability in the Persian Gulf.
- **Natural Gas Nexus:** Natural gas is the fundamental feedstock for urea production. With the fertilizer sector consuming nearly 30% of India's natural gas, domestic production has been squeezed by government mandates that prioritize City Gas Distribution (CGD), leading to a 3.2% dip in domestic urea output this fiscal.
- **Diversified Procurement Strategy:** While the government remains the sole bulk importer of urea, it is encouraging private players to utilize long-term arrangements with nations like Morocco and Jordan for phosphatic fertilizers, thereby partially offsetting the risks of single-region disruption.
- **Energy-Fertilizer Linkage:** Experts suggest that beyond importing finished fertilizers, India must diversify its LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) sourcing from the US, Australia, and Canada to revive domestic manufacturing plants and reduce "excessive dependence" on West Asian gas.
- **Logistical Coordination:** The Department of Fertilizers and the Fertilizer Association of India (FAI) are actively synchronized to manage production planning and logistics, ensuring that the "food security" of the nation is not compromised by external maritime bottlenecks.



## Key Definitions

- **Kharif Season:** The summer cropping season in India (June–October) which relies heavily on the timely availability of fertilizers like Urea and DAP for crops like paddy and maize.
- **Diammonium Phosphate (DAP):** The second most commonly used fertilizer in India after Urea; it is high in phosphorus, which is essential for root development and flowering.



- **Strait of Hormuz:** A strategic waterway between the Gulf of Oman and the Persian Gulf. It is the world's most important energy and commodity chokepoint.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 39 (b) & (c):** Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP) mandate the State to ensure that the ownership and control of material resources are distributed to subserve the common good and prevent the concentration of wealth. Secure fertilizer supply is vital for rural equity.
- **Essential Commodities Act, 1955:** Fertilizers are declared an "essential commodity" under this Act. This allows the government to regulate their production, supply, and distribution to prevent hoarding and price spikes during international crises.
- **Fertilizer Control Order (FCO), 1985:** Issued under the Essential Commodities Act, it ensures the quality and price of fertilizers sold to farmers and regulates the trade of imported stocks.
- **Entry 33 of the Concurrent List (Schedule VII):** Gives both the Union and States the power to control the production, supply, and distribution of products of any industry, including fertilizers.

### Additional Key Points for Examination

- **Fertilizer Subsidy Burden:** A rise in international prices or a shift to expensive spot-market imports directly increases the government's subsidy bill, impacting the Fiscal Deficit.
- **The "China-Russia" Factor:** Despite geopolitical complexities, Russia and China have emerged as the largest urea suppliers this fiscal, highlighting a pragmatic "National Interest first" approach in India's trade policy.
- **Self-Reliance (Atmanirbharta):** The crisis underscores the need to fast-track the revival of closed urea plants (like those in Sindri, Barauni, and Ramagundam) to reduce import dependency.

### Conclusion

India's "hunt" for fertilizers across continents reflects a strategic shift from simple procurement to "Strategic Hedging." By diversifying suppliers from the Mediterranean (Morocco) to Eastern Europe (Belarus), India is insulating its agrarian economy from the volatility of West Asian geopolitics. However, true security lies in decoupling domestic fertilizer production from West Asian gas by exploring diverse LNG corridors and coal-gasification technologies.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** India's relations with West Asia, Russia, and China; Impact of global politics on India's food security.
- **GS Paper III:** Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies; Agriculture (Input management); Infrastructure (Energy and Ports); Supply chain resilience.
- **Economic Geography:** Mapping of the Strait of Hormuz, fertilizer mineral deposits in Morocco (Phosphates), and Belarus (Potash).

## 4. Regulatory Overhaul for Plasma-Derived Medicinal Products (PDMs)

- **Streamlining Blood Product Testing:** The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has proposed a draft notification (March 9, 2026) to amend the Drugs Rules, 1945. The primary change is the elimination of "double testing" for viral markers (HIV, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C) at the finished product stage.



- **Shift to Global Standards:** India is aligning its protocols with international benchmarks such as the British, United States, and European Pharmacopoeias. These standards prioritize testing the "first homogeneous pool" of raw plasma rather than repeating identical tests on the final medicine.
- **Reducing Production Costs and Delays:** Currently, India imports over 60% of its plasma-derived products. Removing redundant final-stage testing is expected to reduce administrative and financial burdens on manufacturers, accelerating the supply of life-saving treatments.
- **Critical Therapies in Focus:** The reform targets essential medicines like Albumin (for trauma/burn patients), Immunoglobulins (for immune disorders), and Clotting Factors (for Hemophilia), making them more affordable and accessible.
- **Emphasis on Source Safety:** The new framework shifts the safety burden to the "collection level." This necessitates strengthening pan-India donor screening, ensuring Nucleic Acid Testing (NAT) for all donors, and maintaining 100% traceability of plasma units.
- **Economic Impact:** By rationalizing manufacturing, the government aims to bolster a domestic market valued at approximately \$383.5 million (2024), fostering "Atmanirbharta" (self-reliance) in the high-growth pharmaceutical bioproducts sector.



### Key Definitions

- **Plasma-Derived Medicinal Products (PDMPs):** Medicines manufactured from human plasma (the liquid component of blood), used to treat rare, chronic, and life-threatening conditions.
- **Nucleic Acid Testing (NAT):** A highly sensitive blood screening technology that detects the genetic material of viruses (like HIV) much earlier than traditional antibody tests, reducing the "window period" of infection.
- **Pharmacopoeia:** An official publication containing a list of medicinal drugs with their effects and directions for their use, serving as a quality standard for the industry.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 47 (DPSP):** Directs the State to regard the improvement of public health as among its primary duties. Rationalizing drug rules to improve availability of life-saving medicines aligns with this mandate.
- **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940:** The parent legislation that regulates the import, manufacture, distribution, and sale of drugs in India.
- **Drugs Rules, 1945:** Subordinate legislation providing the specific procedures for drug testing and licensing. The proposed amendment specifically targets these rules to modernize blood-related protocols.
- **Entry 19, List I (Union List):** Gives the Central Government exclusive power over "Medicines and Drugs," allowing the Ministry of Health to set uniform national standards for blood products.



### Additional Key Points for Examination

- **The "Window Period" Challenge:** While double testing is being removed, the efficacy of this move depends entirely on the sensitivity of initial donor screening to catch infections that haven't yet produced antibodies.
- **Viral Inactivation:** Expert opinion highlights that the manufacturing process itself involves multiple viral inactivation steps (like heat treatment or solvent-detergent steps), making finished product testing largely redundant if source material is clean.
- **Import Dependency:** High reliance on imports makes India vulnerable to global supply chain shocks; domestic regulatory easing is a strategic move for health security.

### Conclusion

The proposed amendment to the Drugs Rules, 1945, represents a pragmatic shift from "procedural redundancy" to "scientific efficiency." By focusing on the quality of raw plasma and aligning with global pharmacopoeial standards, India aims to lower the cost of biological therapies. However, the success of this transition rests on the stringent implementation of NAT testing and robust traceability at every blood bank across the country to maintain public trust in the safety of plasma-derived medicines.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Governance and Public Health; Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors; Issues relating to the development and management of Social Sector/Health.
- **GS Paper III:** Science and Technology-developments and their applications and effects in everyday life; indigenization of technology; Bio-technology and Pharma industry.
- **Prelims:** Components of blood (Plasma vs. Serum), NAT testing, functions of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), and the significance of the Indian Pharmacopoeia.

## 5. Geopolitical Crisis: Securing the Strait of Hormuz

- **Vital Energy Artery:** The Strait of Hormuz is a critical maritime chokepoint through which approximately 20% of the world's petroleum and massive quantities of India's LNG and fertilizers flow. Its closure by Iran has created a global energy supply crisis and a backlog of over 600 international trading ships.
- **Proposed US Military Intervention:** The US administration has proposed "escort operations" where warships guard tankers. However, naval experts warn that Iranian antiship missiles and drones could turn the narrow 21-mile wide passage into a "kill box," necessitating a 2:1 ship-to-tanker ratio for adequate defense.
- **Complex Escort Logistics:** Effectively reopening the strait would require a massive commitment, including MQ-9 Reaper drones for persistent surveillance and "mosquito fleet" deterrents. Such operations could reduce traffic to only 10% of normal levels due to security delays and ship availability.





- **Risks of Ground Invasion:** Military analysts suggest that securing the waterway may require seizing Iranian territory. This "raid or occupy" strategy involves amphibious assaults by Marines in mountainous terrain, exposing troops to asymmetric warfare from the 190,000-strong Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).
- **Asymmetric Warfare Capabilities:** Despite previous strikes, Iran retains mobile cruise missiles and long-range drones that can strike targets deep within the Persian Gulf or near Iraq, meaning even a coastal occupation might not fully eliminate the threat to shipping.
- **Economic & Insurance Hurdles:** Military presence alone may not resume normal traffic. Shippers and insurance companies require absolute safety guarantees. Without a diplomatic end to hostilities, the "risk premium" remains too high for the normal transit of 100 ships per day.

### Key Definitions

- **Strait of Hormuz:** A narrow waterway connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. It is the only sea passage from the Persian Gulf to the open ocean.
- **Kill Box:** A military term for a three-dimensional area used to facilitate the integration of joint weapons fire; in this context, it refers to a zone where naval vessels are highly vulnerable to concentrated shore-based fire.
- **Asymmetric Warfare:** Unconventional warfare where a weaker power uses non-traditional tactics (like suicide boats, drones, and mobile missiles) to exploit the vulnerabilities of a technologically superior naval force.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS):** While Iran has signed but not ratified UNCLOS, the treaty generally provides for "Transit Passage" through straits used for international navigation, which cannot be suspended by coastal states.
- **Article 51 of the UN Charter:** Pertains to the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations.
- **Freedom of Navigation (FON):** A principle of customary international law that, with certain exceptions, ships flying the flag of any sovereign state shall not suffer interference from other states.
- **The Admiralty Act, 2017 (India):** Provides the legal framework for the jurisdiction of Indian courts over maritime claims, which becomes relevant when Indian-flagged vessels or cargo are caught in international conflict zones.

### Additional Key Points for Examination

- **Impact on India:** As discussed in previous sections, India's "Gas Economy" and "Fertilizer Security" are directly tied to this strait. Any prolonged military conflict here leads to "Imported Inflation."
- **Global Coalition:** The US is calling for a multilateral effort involving China, France, and the UK, reflecting the shift toward "minilateralism" in securing global commons.
- **Strategic Depth:** Iran's ability to strike 100s of miles away from the strait (e.g., near Iraq) proves that local tactical success in the strait does not equate to regional maritime security.



## Conclusion

The "reopening" of the Strait of Hormuz is not merely a tactical naval exercise but a high-stakes geopolitical gambit. The transition from maritime blockades to escorted convoys involves significant "friction"—both in terms of military risk and economic efficiency. For a country like India, which sits at the receiving end of this energy corridor, the situation underscores the urgent need for "Strategic Autonomy" and the diversification of energy routes away from singular chokepoints.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** International Relations; Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests; Important International institutions and their structure.
- **GS Paper III:** Energy Security; Internal Security challenges; Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security (via economic disruption).
- **Prelims Mapping:** Geographic location of the Strait of Hormuz, Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, and the "Strait of Malacca" as comparative chokepoints.

## 6. Government Blocks Subsidised LPG for PNG Consumers

- **Mandatory Surrender of LPG:** The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, through a notification dated 14 March 2026, has barred households with Piped Natural Gas (PNG) connections from holding or obtaining subsidised domestic Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) connections.
- **Amendment to LPG Order:** The government has amended the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000. This legal change makes it mandatory for consumers to surrender their cylinders once a PNG connection is functional at their premises.
- **Supply Chain Optimization:** The move aims to rationalise the distribution of cooking gas and reduce the fiscal burden of dual subsidies on the same household. It ensures that the limited supply of subsidised LPG is diverted to rural and remote areas where piped infrastructure is not feasible.
- **Addressing Global Disruptions:** Amidst the ongoing West Asia conflict and disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz (from where India imports a significant portion of its LPG), the regulator is pushing City Gas Distribution (CGD) companies to accelerate PNG rollouts to decrease import dependency on bottled gas.
- **Efficiency in Energy Mix:** PNG is considered safer, more convenient, and more environmentally friendly than LPG cylinders. By forcing a transition in urban pockets, the government seeks to meet its target of increasing natural gas share in the energy basket to 15% by 2030.
- **Regulatory Push for CGD:** The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) is incentivising distributors to achieve 100% saturation in authorized geographical areas, viewing PNG as a permanent solution to the logistical challenges of cylinder delivery.



## Key Definitions

- **Piped Natural Gas (PNG):** Natural gas (primarily methane) supplied through a network of pipelines directly to the consumer's kitchen, eliminating the need for storage cylinders.



- **Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG):** A flammable mixture of hydrocarbon gases (propane and butane) stored in pressurized cylinders, largely used as a cooking fuel in India.
- **City Gas Distribution (CGD):** The network that reticulates gas through pipelines to domestic, commercial, and industrial consumers within a specific geographic area.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Essential Commodities Act, 1955:** The amendment was issued under this Act, which empowers the Union to regulate the production, supply, and distribution of "essential" items (including petroleum products) to prevent hoarding and ensure equitable distribution.
- **LPG (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000:** The specific statutory order that governs how LPG is sold in India. This order carries the force of law, and non-compliance (holding both PNG and LPG) can lead to penalties or disconnection.
- **Article 39(b) (DPSP):** Directs the State to ensure that the "ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good." Rationalising fuel supply for the needy over the affluent urban consumer aligns with this principle.
- **Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) Act, 2006:** Provides the legal framework for the regulator to oversee the CGD sector and protect the interests of consumers while ensuring fair competition among gas companies.

### Additional Key Points for Examination

- **Fiscal Impact:** This policy will help in "subsidy leakage" prevention. Since PNG is generally cheaper and more efficient, the government aims to stop the diversion of subsidised LPG cylinders to the commercial sector by urban households.
- **Ujjwala Connection Priority:** By freeing up LPG stocks from urban areas, the government can better support the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) which targets BPL households in rural India.
- **Infrastructure Challenges:** While the mandate is clear, the "last-mile" connectivity for PNG remains a challenge in congested urban clusters, making the transition difficult for some old housing colonies.

### Conclusion

The de-linking of LPG from PNG-enabled households marks a significant step toward "Energy Justice." It forces a transition toward a more modern and stable piped-gas economy while simultaneously insulating the government's subsidy bill from volatile international LPG prices. This regulatory shift is a pragmatic response to the current geopolitical instability in energy-exporting regions, ensuring that domestic resources are used where they are most needed.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors; Issues arising out of their design and implementation.
- **GS Paper III:** Indian Economy (Energy sector and Subsidies); Infrastructure (Energy pipelines); Environmental impact of cleaner fuels.
- **Prelims:** Essential Commodities Act, 1955; Distinction between LPG and PNG; Role of PNGRB; Current targets for India's natural gas energy mix.



## 7. Economic Stabilization Fund and India's Energy Security Strategy

- **Fiscal Shock Absorber:** The Government of India has introduced a ₹57,300 crore Economic Stabilization Fund via supplementary demands for grants (13 March 2026). This fund acts as a "buffer" to shield households from inflationary spikes in energy prices caused by the ongoing West Asia conflict.
- **Agricultural Safeguards:** Alongside the stabilization fund, a dedicated fiscal pool has been created to neutralize rising fertilizer prices. This is critical for protecting the farm sector's "input costs" and ensuring food security amidst global supply chain disruptions.
- **Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR):** India's current SPR capacity stands at 5.33 million tonnes (approx. 40 million barrels). With daily consumption projected to hit 6 million barrels in 2026, the current reserve lasts less than 10 days, highlighting an urgent need for massive infrastructure expansion.
- **Hydrocarbon Policy Revamp:** The current crisis necessitates a shift from "lackadaisical" exploration to an aggressive "hydrocarbon policy." This includes streamlining the entire value chain—surveys, drilling, and refining—to exploit domestic reserves at optimal costs.
- **Green Transition Bottlenecks:** While the International Solar Alliance (ISA) showcases global leadership, domestic hurdles like patchy EV charging networks and vested interests in the power sector continue to constrain the transition to renewable energy.
- **Diplomatic Role (BRICS+ Presidency):** Holding the BRICS+ presidency in 2026, India is positioned to move beyond reactive fiscal measures toward proactive diplomacy. New Delhi must leverage this platform to seek peaceful resolutions in the Gulf to stabilize global energy markets.



### Key Definitions

- **Economic Stabilization Fund:** A counter-cyclical fiscal tool used by governments to set aside money during growth periods or via special grants to offset future economic shocks or revenue shortfalls.
- **Supplementary Demand for Grants:** A request presented to Parliament (under Article 115) when the amount authorized by the Appropriation Act for the current financial year is found to be insufficient for that year.
- **Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR):** Emergency fuel stores maintained by a country to ensure energy security during any temporary supply disruption. In India, these are managed by the Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (ISPRL).

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 115:** Deals with Supplementary, additional, or excess grants. It allows the government to seek parliamentary approval for unplanned expenditure, such as the ₹57,300 crore stabilization fund.
- **Article 266 (Consolidated Fund of India):** All revenues received and loans raised by the Union are credited here; the stabilization fund is carved out of this fund through legislative approval.



- **Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948:** The primary legal framework governing the exploration of hydrocarbon resources in India, which the government aims to modernize for better "ease of doing business."
- **Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, 2003:** While the government aims to maintain the deficit target, the "escape clause" in the FRBM Act allows for deviations during periods of national security crises or war-driven economic instability.

### Additional Key Points for Examination

- **Fiscal Arithmetic vs. Pain Reduction:** The government is currently prioritizing "household welfare" over "deficit accuracy," acknowledging that extraordinary geopolitical times require flexible fiscal math.
- **The "Anachronism" Debate:** While global trends favor rapid decarbonization, India's current energy security requires a pragmatic balance between domestic hydrocarbon exploration and the long-term green transition.
- **Institutional Role:** The Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) and other think tanks emphasize that "diversification" must extend beyond geography to include "fuel types" (Green Hydrogen, Biofuels).

### Conclusion

The creation of the Economic Stabilization Fund is a vital "short-term" firefighting measure. However, as the conflict in West Asia persists, India must transition from "cushioning shocks" to "eliminating vulnerabilities." This requires a structural overhaul: doubling down on domestic oil exploration, expanding strategic reserves to cover at least 30-90 days of consumption, and removing the "on-ground" bottlenecks that hinder the mass adoption of renewable energy and electric mobility.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Parliament and State Legislatures (Structure, functioning, conduct of business); International Relations (BRICS+ presidency and energy diplomacy).
- **GS Paper III:** Indian Economy (Fiscal Policy, Budgeting, and Inflation); Infrastructure (Energy, Ports, and Reserves); Science & Technology (Renewable energy transition).
- **Essay:** "Energy Security as a Pillar of National Sovereignty" or "Balancing Fiscal Deficit with Social Welfare in Times of War."

## 8. Geopolitics and the Shifting Paradigms of Global Oil Prices

- **Risk Premia vs. Physical Supply:** In the wake of the March 2026 West Asia conflict, Brent crude surged past \$118 per barrel, a 100% increase from December 2025 levels. Modern oil pricing is increasingly driven by "geopolitical sentiment" and financial speculation rather than just the physical supply-demand balance, leading to price fluctuations of 5%-10% within days of diplomatic signals.
- **Vulnerability of Maritime Arteries:** Global energy security is tied to critical chokepoints like the Strait of Hormuz (transporting 20% of global oil) and the Suez Canal/Bab el-Mandeb (10%). Military tensions have led to "war risk surcharges" and a doubling of supertanker freight rates, directly inflating the landed cost of imports for nations like India.
- **Oil as a Political Instrument:** The redirection of Russian crude post-2022 and the current sidelining of 20% of global supplies due to the Iran-Israel war demonstrate that oil is now a tool of statecraft.



This "politicalization" introduces complex payment frameworks and longer shipping routes that heighten operational and financial volatility.



- **Financialization of Commodities:** Oil is now traded as a risk-sensitive financial asset (futures and derivatives), serving as an inflation hedge. This explains why prices may continue to climb even when physical inventories are sufficient, as speculative positions expand based on "expectations" of future scarcity.
- **Evolution of Strategic Reserves:** Originally meant for physical interruptions, Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPRs) are now used to manage "psychological volatility." The G-7's March 2026 announcement to release 400 million barrels was aimed specifically at stabilizing market sentiment and curbing the momentum of Brent's rise.
- **Strategic Relevance for India:** With India's oil demand projected to drive much of global growth through 2026 (reaching nearly 6 million bpd), the nation must integrate maritime awareness and financial expertise into its energy policy to navigate the "new normal" of high-risk, high-volatility markets.

### Key Definitions

- **Risk Premium:** The extra cost embedded in the price of a commodity to compensate for the risk of potential supply disruptions or geopolitical instability.
- **Brent Crude:** A major trading classification of sweet light crude oil that serves as one of the main benchmark prices for purchases of oil worldwide.
- **Chokepoint:** A strategic narrow passage (like a strait) that can be easily blocked to stop the flow of international trade, particularly energy resources.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Entry 53, List I (Union List):** Gives the Central Government exclusive power over "Regulation and development of oilfields and mineral oil resources; petroleum and petroleum products."
- **The Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and Other Maritime Zones Act, 1976:** Defines India's rights over its maritime zones, crucial for protecting offshore oil assets and ensuring safe passage for energy imports.
- **Article 297:** Specifies that all lands, minerals, and other things of value underlying the ocean within the territorial waters, or the continental shelf, or the exclusive economic zone of India shall vest in the Union.
- **Energy Conservation Act, 2001:** While focused on efficiency, this provides the statutory basis for diversifying the energy mix to reduce the strategic risk of oil dependency.

### Additional Key Points for Examination

- **The "Dual Exposure":** Importing nations face a "Double Whammy"—high physical prices for barrels and high logistical costs (freight/insurance) due to insecure maritime lanes.



- **Shift in Demand Center:** While the US and G-7 manage supply-side policies, Asia (primarily India and China) is now the center of global demand growth, making these nations most vulnerable to "geopolitically driven" price shocks.
- **Role of G-7 and IEA:** The coordinated release of 400 million barrels (equivalent to roughly 20 days of Hormuz traffic) marks one of the largest market interventions in history to counter "psychological" price peaks.

## Conclusion

The current crisis underscores that oil prices have entered a phase where the "perceived risk" is as influential as the "resource itself." For India, managing energy security no longer means simply buying barrels; it involves a sophisticated mix of naval diplomacy, financial hedging, and rapid infrastructure expansion of strategic reserves. As the "era of cheap, stable oil" fades, resilience will depend on how effectively the state manages the invisible political and financial currents surrounding every shipment.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** International Relations; Geopolitics of West Asia; Role of major powers (US, G-7, BRICS+) in global energy governance.
- **GS Paper III:** Indian Economy (Inflation and Current Account Deficit); Infrastructure (Energy and Strategic Reserves); Security (Maritime security and chokepoints).
- **Current Affairs:** Impact of the 2026 Iran-Israel conflict on India's fiscal math; The efficacy of IEA-led global oil stock releases.

## 9. COP 30 and the Belém Adaptation Indicators: Water-Centric Climate Action

- **Shift to "COP of Implementation":** COP 30, held in Belém, Brazil (November 2025), transitioned climate adaptation from abstract promises to a measurable discipline. It established the "Belém Adaptation Indicators" under the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience, focusing on accountability and systems that function under extreme stress.
- **Water as the Core of Adaptation:** For the first time, global indicators integrated Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) into climate accountability. This recognizes that climate change is felt most viscerally through water—via floods, droughts, glacial melts, and saline intrusion—making water security the anchor of climate survival.
- **The 59 Belém Indicators:** These indicators are clustered into two critical areas: (a) Climate-resilient water systems aimed at reducing scarcity and ensuring universal access to safe water during extreme events, and (b) Risk governance, mandating universal multi-hazard early warning systems by 2027 and updated vulnerability assessments by 2030.
- **India's Institutional Readiness:** India's "Water Vision 2047" and the consolidation of governance under the Ministry of Jal Shakti align with the Belém framework. Programs like NAQUIM 2.0 (aquifer management) and the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) have already shifted from mere asset creation to integrated, climate-resilient stewardship.
- **Systemic Risks and Finance:** Despite progress, India faces three major hurdles: acute water scarcity, the fragility of adaptation finance (with a global goal of \$1.3 trillion annually by 2035), and





digital fragmentation that prevents real-time AI integration of hydrological data into local governance.

- **Leadership in the Global South:** By embedding climate stress indicators into domestic mission dashboards (like Jal Jeevan Mission) and leveraging its Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), India can move from a participant to a leader in operationalizing large-scale climate adaptation.

### Key Definitions

- **WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene):** A key public health and climate resilience sector; its integration into COP 30 marks a shift toward "human-centric" climate metrics.
- **NAQUIM (National Aquifer Mapping and Management Programme):** A flagship initiative to map India's groundwater resources; version 2.0 focuses on hydrogeological action plans at the local level.
- **Water-Food-Climate Nexus:** The interlinked relationship where water availability dictates food security, both of which are increasingly disrupted by climate volatility.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 21:** The Right to Life has been judicially interpreted by the Supreme Court to include the right to clean water and a healthy environment, forming the legal bedrock for climate adaptation.
- **Article 51A (g):** Fundamental Duty of every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers, and wildlife.
- **Entry 17, List II (State List):** Assigns "Water" (water supplies, irrigation, canals, drainage) to States, though the Union exercises control over "Inter-state rivers" under Entry 56, List I.
- **Environment Protection Act, 1986:** Provides the umbrella framework for the central government to coordinate activities of various authorities and frame rules for water quality and climate resilience.

### Additional Key Points for Examination

- **Methane Emissions:** Agriculture accounts for nearly 40% of anthropogenic methane; Belém emphasizes that water-use efficiency in rice cultivation is a mitigation-cum-adaptation strategy.
- **Early Warning Systems:** The 2027 deadline for universal multi-hazard warning systems is a significant milestone for India's IMD and CWC (Central Water Commission).
- **Climate Stress Testing:** The move toward "stress testing" infrastructure (ensuring a dam or pipe works *during* a 100-year flood) replaces the older metric of "coverage expansion."

### Conclusion

COP 30 has redefined resilience not by the volume of infrastructure built, but by the reliability of systems during a crisis. For India, the blueprint exists within its existing missions—the challenge lies in convergence. By aligning metrics, money, and missions, India can convert its hydrological data and digital prowess into a "dashboard for survival," setting a precedent for the Global South in making water the heartbeat of climate action.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Government policies and interventions; Issues relating to the development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health and Water.



- **GS Paper III:** Environmental Ecology and Climate Change (COP 30 outcomes); Disaster Management (Early warning systems); Economics (Adaptation finance).
- **Mains/Ethics:** Inter-generational equity and the "Right to Water" as a fundamental component of climate justice.

## 10. U.S. Section 301 Investigations Against India: Trade Tensions

- **Dual Investigations Launched:** The U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) has initiated two separate probes under Section 301(b) of the Trade Act of 1974. The first targets "excess manufacturing capacity" in 16 economies (including India), while the second examines "forced labor" practices across 60 countries.
- **Excess Capacity Allegations:** The U.S. claims India maintains significant surplus capacity in sectors like solar modules (nearly triple domestic demand), petrochemicals, steel, and textiles. This is viewed as a threat to U.S. domestic industries due to potential "dumping" or market distortion.
- **Trade Surplus Friction:** A key driver is India's bilateral trade surplus with the U.S., cited by the USTR at \$58 billion for 2025 (though Indian data estimates the merchandise surplus at \$42.2 billion). The U.S. seeks to address this imbalance by identifying "unreasonable or discriminatory" policies.
- **Forced Labor Scrutiny:** The second probe investigates whether India and others have taken "sufficient steps" to prohibit goods produced via forced labor. This investigation aims to protect U.S. workers from competing with low-cost goods manufactured under unethical labor conditions.
- **Pathway to New Tariffs:** Experts believe these investigations are a strategic mechanism to reinstate tariffs. Since the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the use of the IEEPA for reciprocal tariffs, Section 301 provides a legal alternative to levy duties once the current 10% global tariff window (under Section 122) expires.
- **Industry Impact:** Sectors like textiles, steel, aluminum, and auto components—already facing a separate 50% U.S. tariff—face heightened uncertainty. While some experts advise against panic due to the long duration of such probes, the potential for "firm and proportionate" counter-responses remains a possibility.



### Key Definitions

- **Section 301(b):** A provision of the U.S. Trade Act of 1974 that allows the President to take all appropriate action, including retaliation, to obtain the removal of any act, policy, or practice of a foreign government that is "unreasonable or discriminatory" and burdens U.S. commerce.
- **Excess Capacity:** A situation where a country's industries are capable of producing significantly more goods than the domestic market can consume, often leading to increased exports at lower prices to international markets.
- **Reciprocal Tariffs:** "Tit-for-tat" duties where a country imposes tariffs on imports from a trading partner at the same rate that the partner imposes on its own exports.



## Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 300A (Indian Constitution):** While property rights are relevant to domestic bills, in the trade context, India's sovereign right to regulate its industry is managed through the **Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992**.
- **WTO Compliance:** Any retaliatory tariffs under Section 301 often face challenges at the World Trade Organization (WTO) under the **General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)**, specifically regarding "Most-Favored-Nation" (MFN) treatment and tariff bindings.
- **Section 122 (U.S. Trade Act 1974):** Allows the U.S. President to impose temporary import surcharges (up to 15%) for a period of 150 days to deal with large balance-of-payments deficits.

## Additional Key Points for Examination

- **The "Trump Factor":** The shift from IEEPA (International Emergency Economic Powers Act) to Section 301 signifies a more targeted, sector-specific legal approach to protectionism by the current U.S. administration.
- **Global Context:** India is not alone; major economies like the EU, Japan, and China are also under the Section 301 scanner, indicating a broader U.S. shift toward "America First" trade unilateralism.
- **Solar Sector Sensitivity:** The U.S. focus on India's solar module capacity is particularly significant given India's global ambitions under the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)** and domestic PLI (Production Linked Incentive) schemes.

## Conclusion

The launch of these Section 301 investigations marks a cooling phase in Indo-U.S. trade relations. By targeting structural issues like industrial capacity and labor standards, the U.S. is building a legal dossier to justify future protectionist measures. For India, the challenge lies in defending its manufacturing subsidies and labor record on the global stage while navigating a trade environment where "geopolitical sentiment" increasingly overrides traditional supply-demand economics.

## 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.
- **GS Paper III:** Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development, and employment; Effects of liberalization on the economy; Changes in industrial policy.
- **Prelims:** Definitions of Section 301, USTR, Trade Deficit vs. Surplus, and WTO Dispute Settlement mechanisms.

## 11. Judicial Directive on Agricultural Diversification and Pulse Cultivation

- **Supreme Court Intervention:** A Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant has directed the Union Government to revisit its policy framework to incentivize farmers to shift from conventional water-intensive crops (wheat and paddy) to pulses. The court emphasized that agricultural diversification is a strategic necessity, particularly in North India.
- **Core Issues Identified:** The judiciary highlighted three critical gaps: the absence of an incentivized Minimum Support Price (MSP) that adequately covers the production costs of small and medium



farmers, the lack of guaranteed timely procurement, and the unregulated price fixation of imported yellow peas.

- **Impact of Imports:** The court was responding to a petition by Kisan Mahapanchayat seeking curbs on yellow pea imports. It noted that cheap imports often depress the market price of home-grown pulses, discouraging local farmers from continuing pulse cultivation.
- **Declining Production Trends:** Government data revealed a steep decline in pulse production from 273 lakh tonnes in 2021-22 to 242 lakh tonnes in 2023-24. While the government cited crop diseases as a cause, the court pointed toward the lack of price security as the primary structural deterrent.
- **Multi-Ministerial Coordination:** The Bench ordered a stakeholder meeting involving the Ministries of Agriculture, Commerce, and Consumer Affairs. It recommended constituting a committee of ground-level experts who understand the "psyche and compelling circumstances" of the farming community to mould a more worthwhile framework.
- **Environmental and Export Logic:** The court questioned the over-production of paddy, suggesting that while it serves export purposes, land must be diverted to pulses to ensure soil health, water conservation, and nutritional security.

### Key Definitions

- **Agricultural Diversification:** The shift from regional dominance of one crop to a regional production of a number of crops, or from low-value agriculture to high-value agriculture, to reduce risk and improve ecological balance.
- **MSP (Minimum Support Price):** A form of market intervention by the Government of India to insure agricultural producers against any sharp fall in farm prices. It is announced at the beginning of the sowing season for certain crops on the recommendations of the CACP.
- **Yellow Peas:** A specific variety of pulses often imported by India to meet the domestic demand-supply gap; they are frequently used as a cheaper substitute for Desi Chana.



### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 21:** The Supreme Court often links agricultural livelihoods and food security to the "Right to Life." Ensuring a fair price for farmers is essential for their dignified survival.
- **Article 38 (DPSP):** Mandates the State to promote the welfare of the people by securing a social order in which justice—social, economic, and political—shall inform all institutions of national life, including economic justice for farmers.
- **Article 48:** Directs the State to organize agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines. Diversification from monoculture (paddy-wheat cycle) is a step toward scientific agriculture.
- **Essential Commodities Act, 1955:** Used by the government to regulate the supply and distribution of pulses to control inflation, though the court suggests this should not happen at the cost of domestic producers.



### Additional Key Points for Examination

- **The Paddy-Wheat Cycle:** Predominant in Punjab and Haryana, this cycle has led to drastic depletion of the water table. Pulse cultivation (leguminous crops) helps in natural nitrogen fixation, improving soil fertility.
- **CACP Recommendations:** The Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) recommends MSP for 23 crops, including 5 pulses (Gram, Tur, Moong, Urad, Lentil). However, the court's observation suggests that "market price" often stays below MSP or procurement is insufficient.
- **Nutritional Security:** Pulses are the primary source of protein for a large section of the Indian population; hence, self-sufficiency in pulses is a pillar of the National Food Security Act, 2013.

### Conclusion

The Supreme Court's directive marks a shift from "consumer-centric" to "producer-resilient" agricultural policy. By questioning the uncontrolled import of yellow peas and advocating for a "guaranteed" MSP for pulses, the judiciary is pushing for a structural transition that balances trade economics with farmer welfare. True diversification will remain elusive unless the government bridge the gap between "announcing" prices and "guaranteeing" procurement at the farm gate.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Judiciary's role in policy-making; Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors.
- **GS Paper III:** Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and MSP; Cropping patterns in various parts of the country; Food security and agricultural diversification.
- **Prelims:** Mandated crops under MSP; Nitrogen fixation properties of pulses; Major pulse-producing states (Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan).

## 12. Sangita Kalanidhi Award and the 100th Music Academy Conference

- **Centenary Milestone:** The Music Academy, Chennai, will host its 100th Annual Conference and Concerts (December 2026–January 2027). This landmark event celebrates a century of preserving and promoting the Carnatic music tradition and the fine arts.
- **Sangita Kalanidhi Recipient:** Renowned Saraswati Veena exponent Jayanthi Kumaresh has been selected for the prestigious Sangita Kalanidhi award. This is significant as a veena artiste is receiving this honour after a hiatus of 34 years, coinciding with the centenary of her guru, S. Balachander.
- **Nritya Kalanidhi Award:** Eminent Bharatanatyam dancer Narendra G. will be conferred with the Nritya Kalanidhi award, which recognizes excellence in the field of Indian classical dance.
- **Academic Leadership:** As the Sangita Kalanidhi-designate, Jayanthi Kumaresh will preside over the academic sessions of the conference, which serve as a platform for scholarly discussions, demonstrations, and the evolution of Carnatic musicology.
- **Diverse Recognition:** The Academy has also announced awards for other maestros, including vocalists Sugandha Kalamegam (Sangita Kala





Acharya), mridangam player Thrissur C. Narendran, and various experts in musicology and dance accompaniment, reflecting a holistic approach to the performing arts.

- **National Instrument Focus:** The award highlights the Saraswati Veena, often regarded as India's national instrument. Jayanthi Kumaresh's work in increasing the instrument's popularity and her cross-genre collaborations are central to her selection for this centennial honour.

### Key Definitions

- **Sangita Kalanidhi:** Widely considered the highest accolade in the field of Carnatic music, awarded annually by the Music Academy, Chennai. The recipient presides over the annual conference.
- **Saraswati Veena:** A large plucked string instrument used in Carnatic classical music. It is a chordophone with four main strings and three drone strings, characterized by its deep, resonant tone.
- **Sadas:** The final convocation or assembly held on January 1st, where the formal titles and awards are conferred upon the selected artistes in the presence of dignitaries.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 29(1):** Protects the right of any section of citizens to conserve their distinct language, script, or culture. The Music Academy's role in preserving Carnatic music is an exercise in cultural conservation.
- **Article 51A(f):** It is a Fundamental Duty of every Indian citizen to value and preserve the rich heritage of the country's composite culture.
- **UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN):** Chennai is a member of the UCCN under the "Music" category (designated in 2017). The Music Academy's annual "December Season" is a primary reason for this international recognition.
- **Copyright Act, 1957:** Protects the original musical works and performances of classical artistes, ensuring the intellectual property rights of composers and performers are upheld in the digital and physical realms.

### Additional Key Points for Examination

- **The Lalgudi Legacy:** Jayanthi Kumaresh belongs to the illustrious Lalgudi G. Jayaraman family, showcasing the "Guru-Shishya Parampara" (teacher-disciple tradition) where musical knowledge is passed through generations.
- **New Award Categories:** To mark the 100th year, the Academy has instituted new awards like the Nritya Kala Acharya and specific awards for Dance Musicians (Vocal and Instrumental), emphasizing the integral role of support artistes.
- **Musicology:** The inclusion of the Musicologist Award highlights that Indian classical music is not just a performing art but a rigorous academic discipline involving historical research and technical analysis.

### Conclusion

The conferment of the Sangita Kalanidhi on Jayanthi Kumaresh during the Music Academy's 100th conference is a symbolic marriage of tradition and revival. By honoring a veena player during this milestone year, the Academy reinforces the foundational role of the veena in Indian aesthetics. Such institutions and awards are vital for the "intangible cultural heritage" of India, ensuring that classical forms remain dynamic and relevant in a globalized world.



### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper I:** Indian Culture - Salient aspects of Art Forms, Literature, and Architecture from ancient to modern times (specifically Carnatic music and Bharatanatyam).
- **GS Paper II:** Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Education, Human Resources, and Culture.
- **Prelims:** Identifying various classical instruments (Veena, Mridangam, Nagaswaram), regional music traditions, and the significance of the Madras Music Academy in the socio-cultural history of South India.



VIDHVATH IAS ACADEMY