



“ We help you reach for the star ”

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

## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION**

**DATE: 15/04/2026 (WEDNESDAY)**



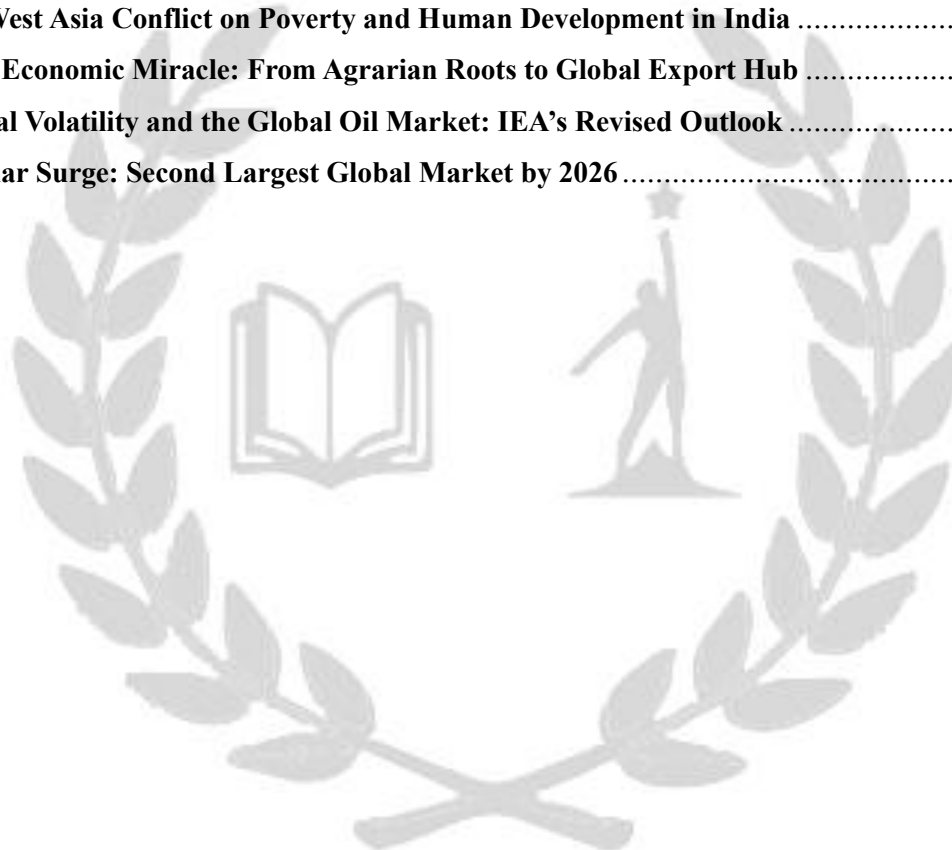
**9972258970 & 9740702455**

**#317/A SKB Arcade, D. Subbaiah Road,  
Ramaswamy Circle, Mysuru-570004**



## Table of Contents

1. Proposed Redistribution of Lok Sabha Seats and Delimitation .....	2
2. Rescue of Indian Golden Jackal and Threat of Canine Distemper .....	3
3. Impact of West Asian Geopolitical Crisis on Indian Exports.....	4
4. The Crisis of Thermal Injustice and Heat Governance in India .....	6
5. Uneven Consumption Growth Patterns in Rural-Dominated Indian States .....	7
6. Film Piracy and Intellectual Property Rights in India .....	9
7. Environmental Impact of Ritual Offerings and the Narmada Milk Controversy .....	10
8. Global Economic Outlook: IMF Growth Cuts and Recession Warnings.....	12
9. Impact of West Asia Conflict on Poverty and Human Development in India .....	13
10. Vietnam's Economic Miracle: From Agrarian Roots to Global Export Hub .....	15
11. Geopolitical Volatility and the Global Oil Market: IEA's Revised Outlook .....	16
12. India's Solar Surge: Second Largest Global Market by 2026 .....	18



VIDHVATH IAS ACADEMY

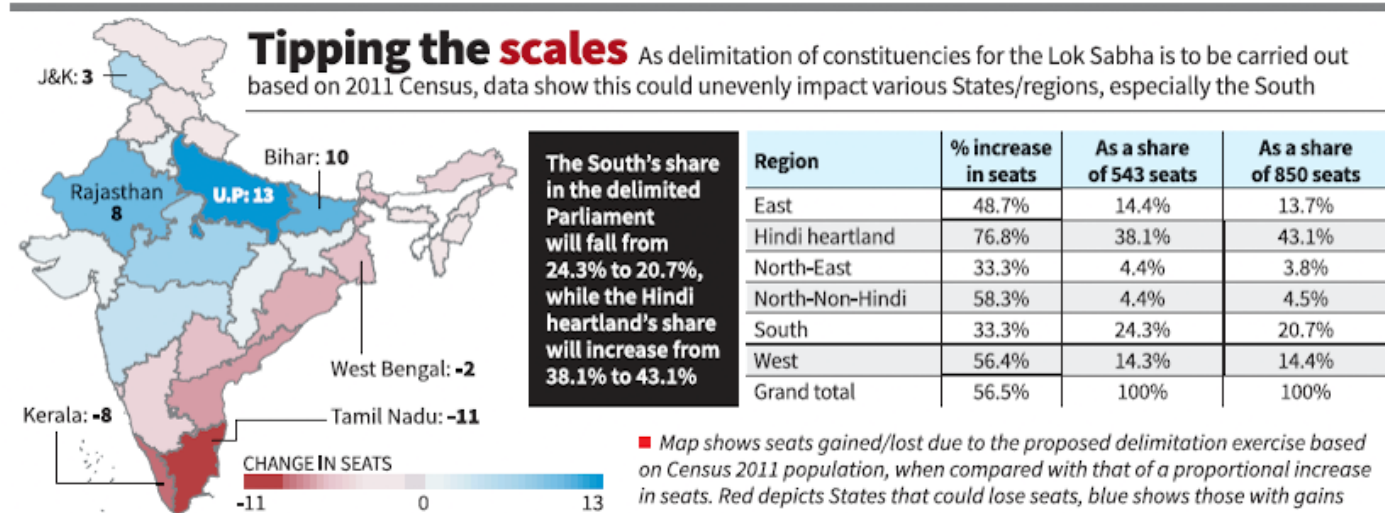


### 1. Proposed Redistribution of Lok Sabha Seats and Delimitation

The Union Government has circulated drafts for a Constitution Amendment Bill and a Delimitation Bill, aiming to reorganize the Lok Sabha's composition based on the 2011 Census figures while expanding its total strength to a maximum of 850 seats.

#### Key Highlights of the Proposal

- **Shift in Demographic Basis:** The proposal seeks to move away from the 1971 Census figures—which have anchored seat distribution for decades—to the 2011 Census (the latest published figures), reflecting significant inter-state and intra-state population shifts.
- **Expansion of House Strength:** To accommodate a larger population and the implementation of 33% women's reservation, the Bills propose increasing the Lok Sabha ceiling from 550 to 850 seats (815 for States and 35 for Union Territories).
- **Impact on Regional Representation:** If enacted, the share of seats for Northern "Hindi Heartland" states is projected to rise from 38.1% to 43.1%, while the share for Southern states—which successfully implemented population control—is expected to shrink from 24.3% to 20.7%.
- **Linkage with Women’s Reservation:** The government posits that this redistribution is essential to expedite the implementation of the Constitution (128th Amendment) Act, which mandates one-third reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.
- **Legislative Duty:** The draft Delimitation Bill mandates that the Commission must readjust seat allocations based on the "latest census figures," potentially overriding the previous freeze intended to last until the first census after 2026.
- **Political Contention:** Opposition parties argue that using women’s reservation as a "facade" for "backdoor delimitation" penalizes states that met national population stabilization goals, creating a "federal imbalance."



#### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 81:** Defines the composition of the House of the People (Lok Sabha).
- **Article 82:** Provides for the readjustment of seats after each census. The **84th Amendment Act (2001)** froze the total number of seats based on the 1971 Census and the division of territorial constituencies based on the 1991 Census (later updated to 2001 by the 87th Amendment) until the first census after 2026.



- **Article 170:** Governs the composition of Legislative Assemblies and mirrors the delimitation freeze seen in Article 82.
- **Delimitation Commission Act:** Provides the legal framework for a high-power body whose orders have the force of law and cannot be called into question before any court.

### Key Definitions

- **Delimitation:** The act or process of fixing limits or boundaries of territorial constituencies in a country or a province having a legislative body.
- **Inter-State Redistribution:** The process of changing the number of parliamentary seats allocated to different states based on their proportional population growth.
- **Population Stabilization:** A stage where a population neither grows nor declines, typically achieved through healthcare and family planning.

### Conclusion

The proposed shift to the 2011 Census for seat redistribution marks a significant departure from the long-standing "population freeze" policy intended to protect the political interests of states with lower fertility rates. While the expansion of the Lok Sabha to 850 seats may address the issue of "under-representation" in high-population states, it creates a "federal dilemma" by potentially diluting the parliamentary voice of states that have excelled in socio-economic development. Balancing democratic "one person, one vote" principles with federal equity remains the primary challenge for this legislative exercise.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (Polity & Governance):** Issues related to the structure, organization, and functioning of the Legislature; Federalism; and Constitutional Amendments.
- **GS Paper I (Society):** Population and associated issues.
- **Prelims:** Articles 81, 82, and 170; Delimitation Commission history; and Census-based seat allocation.

## 2. Rescue of Indian Golden Jackal and Threat of Canine Distemper

A five-month-old Indian golden jackal pup was recently rescued from the outskirts of Bengaluru in an immobile state. The rescue operation, conducted by PfA Wildlife Hospital and the Karnataka Forest Department, highlights the increasing intersection of wildlife and urban landscapes, along with the rising threat of domestic diseases to wild canid populations.

### Key Highlights of the Rescue

- **Rescue Operation:** Acting on a distress call to the Deputy Range Forest Officer, a specialized team found the pup unable to move, indicating a severe physiological breakdown.
- **Tentative Diagnosis:** Clinical signs point toward Canine Distemper Virus (CDV), a highly contagious and often fatal viral disease.
- **Urban-Wildlife Conflict:** The pup was found on the outskirts of Bengaluru, a zone where rapid urbanization frequently leads to contact between wild scavengers and domestic animals.





- **Ecological Health Indicator:** The presence of such diseases in jackals serves as a warning for the health of the local ecosystem, as jackals are apex scavengers that help control waste and pest populations.
- **Rehabilitation Efforts:** The animal is currently under specialized veterinary care, underscoring the role of non-governmental organizations like PfA in supporting state forest departments.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972:** The Indian Golden Jackal (*Canis aureus*) is protected under **Schedule I** of the Act (as per recent amendments), granting it the highest level of legal protection and prohibiting hunting or trade.
- **Article 48A (DPSP):** Mandates that the State shall endeavor to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country.
- **Article 51A(g) (Fundamental Duties):** It is the duty of every citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers, and wildlife.
- **Concurrent List (Entry 17B):** Protection of wild animals and birds is a subject where both the Centre and States can legislate, ensuring a collaborative approach to wildlife management.

### Key Definitions

- **Canine Distemper Virus (CDV):** A multi-systemic viral disease affecting the respiratory, gastrointestinal, and central nervous systems of animals. It is often transmitted from unvaccinated domestic dogs to wildlife.
- **Indian Golden Jackal:** A medium-sized canid native to the Indian subcontinent, characterized by an omnivorous diet and a lifespan of approximately 8 to 10 years in the wild.
- **In-situ Conservation:** The conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and the maintenance and recovery of viable populations of species in their natural surroundings.

### Conclusion

The rescue of the jackal pup is not merely a localized event but a reflection of the larger "One Health" challenge. The suspected transmission of Canine Distemper from domestic dogs to a protected wild species emphasizes the need for mass vaccination of stray dogs in buffer zones and near forest peripheries. Protecting generalist species like the golden jackal is vital for maintaining the sanitary balance of suburban ecosystems.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III (Environment & Biodiversity):** Conservation, wildlife protection acts, and the impact of zoonotic/domestic diseases on biodiversity.
- **Prelims Focus:** IUCN status of the Golden Jackal (**Least Concern**), its protection status under the Wildlife Protection Act, and the characteristics of Canine Distemper.

## 3. Impact of West Asian Geopolitical Crisis on Indian Exports

The escalating maritime tensions in West Asia, involving blockades and threats to regional ports, have severely disrupted trade routes. The ordeal of a Kerala-based exporter losing a high-value consignment of perishable goods highlights the vulnerability of India's export-import (EXIM) community to external geopolitical shocks and the resultant economic losses.



## Key Highlights of the Crisis

- **Logistical Disruptions:** Conflict in the West Asian region has led to indefinite delays, cargo offloading at unscheduled ports (e.g., Oman instead of UAE), and lack of transparency from shipping agents regarding consignment status.
- **Economic Burden on Exporters:** Beyond the loss of original goods, exporters are being forced to pay "War-Risk Surcharges" and additional mandatory fees, often exceeding the initial shipping costs, for circumstances beyond their control.
- **Perishability and Waste:** For the agriculture sector, delays mean the total loss of cargo. In this instance, a consignment of melons valued at ₹8.5 lakh rotted, incurring further costs for municipal disposal at the destination port.
- **Shift to Air Cargo:** Due to the unreliability of sea routes, exporters are increasingly forced to use air freight. While faster, this has led to a two to threefold increase in freight charges, eroding the competitiveness of Indian exports.
- **Financial Risk:** Exporters often pay advances to suppliers and shipping lines long before a crisis hits, leaving them with no insurance or recourse when geopolitical instability strikes during transit.



## Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 301:** Guarantees freedom of trade, commerce, and intercourse throughout the territory of India, though this is subject to national interest and international treaties.
- **Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992:** The primary legislation governing India's EXIM policy, providing the framework for the development and regulation of foreign trade.
- **Carriage of Goods by Sea Act, 1925:** Defines the responsibilities, liabilities, rights, and immunities of carriers concerning the shipment of goods by sea.
- **Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT):** The statutory body under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry responsible for formulating and implementing the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP).

## Key Definitions

- **War-Risk Surcharge:** An additional fee levied by shipping companies to cover the increased insurance premiums and operational risks associated with sailing through conflict zones.
- **Reefer Container:** A refrigerated shipping container used for the transportation of temperature-sensitive, perishable cargo such as fruits, vegetables, and meat.
- **EXIM Community:** The collective group of stakeholders involved in the Export-Import business, including traders, logistics providers, and regulatory bodies.
- **Jebel Ali Port:** Located in Dubai, it is the largest man-made harbor in the world and a critical transit hub for Indian goods entering the Middle East and Europe.

## Conclusion

The West Asian crisis underscores the "fragility of distance" in international trade. While India seeks to expand its export footprint through schemes like "Districts as Export Hubs," such geopolitical disruptions necessitate a more robust maritime insurance framework and a diversified logistics strategy. The incident



serves as a call for the government to provide better diplomatic and financial safeguards for small and medium-sized exporters facing "force majeure" situations in volatile international waters.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (International Relations):** Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests; West Asian geopolitics.
- **GS Paper III (Economy):** Changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth; Infrastructure (Ports and Shipping); Mobilization of resources.

## 4. The Crisis of Thermal Injustice and Heat Governance in India

The phenomenon of extreme heat in India has transitioned from a seasonal regional hardship to a systemic national crisis, with 57% of districts now classified as heat-prone. This crisis is characterized by "thermal injustice," where the socioeconomic elite manage heat through private cooling while nearly 400-490 million informal workers face a violation of their Right to Life due to a lack of "cooling autonomy."

### Key Dimensions of the Heat Crisis

- **Geographic and Demographic Shift:** Heatwaves have expanded from the arid Northwest to humid coastal regions and temperate zones, with the last two years recording unprecedented temperatures.
- **The Climate-Caste Nexus:** Marginalized groups in dehumanizing roles, such as sanitation workers and waste pickers, face "hazardous micro-climates" where temperatures are 5% higher due to toxic fumes and heated waste.
- **Occupational Vulnerabilities:** Gig workers face "algorithmic pressure" that discourages rest, while construction and outdoor workers suffer from high metabolic heat compounded by radiant heat from steel and concrete.
- **Economic Survival vs. Biological Survival:** Extreme heat causes a significant drop in productivity and income for street vendors and delivery partners, forcing them to choose between their health and their livelihood.
- **Legal and Fiscal Vacuum:** Current labor laws like the OSHWC Code 2020 largely ignore outdoor heat, and the exclusion of heatwaves from the "Notified National Disaster" list limits state funding for relief.
- **The 10% Trap:** States are currently restricted to using only 10% of their State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for heat relief because it is not yet classified as a national disaster.



### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 21:** The Supreme Court in the *Ranjitsinh (2024)* ruling has expanded the Right to Life to include the "Right to be free from the adverse effects of climate change," which encompasses the "Right to Cool."
- **OSHWC Code 2020:** Section 23 allows the government to notify standards for weather, but it currently lacks mandatory minimum safety floors for outdoor heat exposure.
- **Factories Act, 1948:** Provides protection for indoor workers regarding ventilation and temperature but excludes the vast majority of India's outdoor informal workforce.



- **16th Finance Commission Recommendations:** Proposes including heatwaves and lightning in the "Notified National Disaster" list for 2026-31 to unlock the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF).

### Key Definitions

- **Thermal Injustice:** The disproportionate impact of extreme heat on marginalized communities who lack the financial or infrastructural means to access cooling.
- **Cooling Autonomy:** The ability of an individual to control their environment and body temperature through rest, shade, and hydration without facing economic penalties.
- **Heat Index:** A "felt air temperature" metric that combines relative humidity with air temperature to reflect the actual physiological stress on the human body.
- **Parametric Heat Insurance:** A financial model, like the SEWA blueprint, that triggers automatic payouts to workers when temperatures cross a pre-defined threshold to cover income loss.

### Conclusion

Addressing India's heat crisis requires moving beyond discretionary advisories to enforceable constitutional rights. Legislative action must bridge the gap by transitioning to the Heat Index as a legal trigger, notifying binding work-rest cycles under the OSHWC Code, and providing financial cushions for loss of income. Reimagining heat governance as a component of the social contract is essential to ensure that "thermal safety" becomes a non-negotiable mandate of justice.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper I (Geography & Society):** Distribution of key natural resources; changes in critical geographical features; effects of globalization on Indian society (Caste and Climate).
- **GS Paper II (Polity & Governance):** Government policies and interventions for development; Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections; Rights-based approach to climate change.

## 5. Uneven Consumption Growth Patterns in Rural-Dominated Indian States

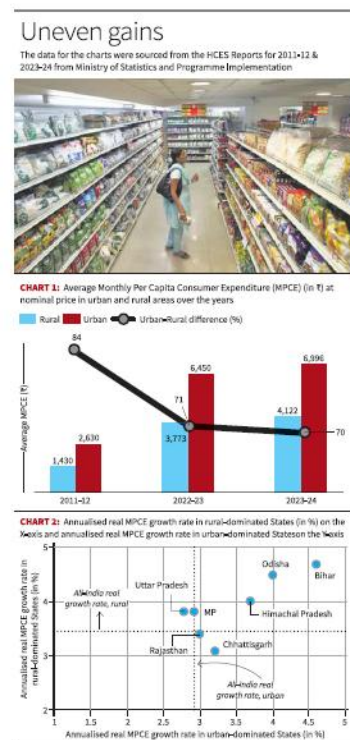
The analysis of Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE) between 2011-12 and 2023-24 reveals a significant shift in India's economic landscape. While urban centers traditionally drive demand, recent data suggests that consumption growth is becoming increasingly state-specific, with rural households in several states outperforming national averages and, in some cases, their urban counterparts.

### Key Highlights of Consumption Trends

- **Rural-Led Momentum:** In states like Bihar, Odisha, and Himachal Pradesh, rural consumption growth has surpassed the national rural average of 3.4%, signaling a robust "catching-up" phase and improved rural purchasing power.
- **Real Growth vs. Nominal Gains:** Adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI), Bihar leads with a 4.7% annual real growth rate in rural areas, indicating genuine improvements in spending power rather than mere price rises.
- **Urban-Rural Divergence:** While states like Odisha show balanced growth, others like Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand exhibit a trend where rural demand drives the economy, contrasting with urban growth that remains at or below the national average of 2.9%.



- **The Quadrant Framework:** States are categorized based on their performance against national averages; Bihar and Odisha occupy the "high-growth quadrant," whereas Chhattisgarh shows urban areas pulling ahead of lagging rural consumption.
- **Reversal of Traditional Patterns:** The data suggests that the constraint on national consumption growth may now lie in urban moderation rather than rural weakness, positioning rural India as a central driver of domestic demand.
- **State-Specific Structural Factors:** Differences in MPCE reflect that growth is no longer uniform but shaped by local economic conditions, agricultural productivity, and state-level policy interventions.



### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 38 (DPSP):** Mandates the State to secure a social order for the promotion of the welfare of the people and to minimize inequalities in income and eliminate inequalities in status and opportunities.
- **Article 39:** Directs state policy toward ensuring that citizens have the right to an adequate means of livelihood and that the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth.
- **Article 243G:** Endows Panchayats with the powers and authority necessary to function as institutions of self-government, specifically for preparing plans for economic development and social justice in rural areas.
- **Collection of Statistics Act, 2008:** The legal framework under which the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) conducts the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) to facilitate evidence-based policymaking.

### Key Definitions

- **Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE):** The average amount spent by an individual in a household on goods and services for daily living during a 30-day period.
- **Real Growth Rate:** The economic growth rate adjusted for inflation, providing a clearer picture of the actual increase in the quantity of goods and services consumed.
- **Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES):** A quinquennial survey conducted by the NSSO to generate estimates of average MPCE and the distribution of households by consumption levels.
- **Catching-up Phase:** An economic phenomenon where lower-income regions grow at faster rates than higher-income regions, leading to a convergence in consumption levels.

### Conclusion

The evolving consumption landscape underscores the resilience of the rural economy, particularly in traditionally "lagging" states. However, the uneven nature of this growth across different geographies necessitates state-specific developmental strategies. To sustain this momentum, policy focus must shift toward enhancing rural infrastructure and diversifying income sources, ensuring that the transition from a city-led to a rural-inclusive demand model becomes a permanent feature of India's structural transformation.



## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III (Indian Economy):** Issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development, and employment; Poverty and developmental issues.
- **GS Paper I (Society):** Rural and social structure; Urbanization, their problems, and their remedies.

## 6. Film Piracy and Intellectual Property Rights in India

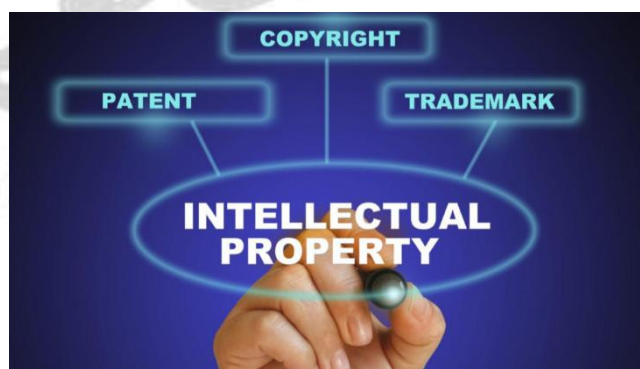
The recent high-quality online leak of the movie *Jana Nayagan* prior to its theatrical release has reignited the debate on the efficacy of India's anti-piracy laws. While digital piracy is common after OTT releases, pre-theatrical leaks represent a severe breach of the supply chain, significantly devaluing theatrical and home video rights and highlighting vulnerabilities in content protection.

### Key Highlights of the Piracy Challenge

- **Pre-Release Vulnerability:** Unlike conventional piracy that follows a digital release, pre-theatrical leaks indicate a compromise of legitimate access points, causing irreparable financial loss to producers.
- **Legal Penalties:** Under the Copyright Act, 1957, offenders face up to three years of imprisonment and fines of ₹2 lakh. The Cinematograph (Amendment) Act, 2023, has further intensified penalties, allowing fines up to 5% of a film's audited gross budget.
- **Enforcement Gaps:** Despite stringent laws, India is frequently categorized as a "notorious market" by international authorities due to perceived "anemic" responses and low conviction rates in piracy cases.
- **Technological Safeguards:** Studios employ Digital Rights Management (DRM) and forensic watermarking to deter leaks; however, pirates continue to find sophisticated ways to bypass these encrypted protections.
- **Judicial Remedies:** Filmmakers increasingly rely on "John Doe" orders and "Dynamic Injunctions" to proactively block infringing websites, though the decentralized nature of Telegram and Torrents makes complete eradication difficult.
- **Liability of Sharers:** Legal consequences are not restricted to the original leaker; authorities are increasingly targeting individuals who facilitate distribution via cloud storage links and messaging platforms.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Copyright Act, 1957:** The primary legislation for protecting creative works. Sections 63 and 63A prescribe criminal penalties for infringement.
- **Cinematograph (Amendment) Act, 2023:** Specifically introduced to curb film piracy. It prohibits unauthorized recording (camcording) and exhibition of unreleased content with strict penal provisions.
- **Information Technology Act, 2000:** Section 66 provides for punishment for computer-related offenses, often used in conjunction with copyright laws for digital piracy.





- **Article 19(1)(g):** While citizens have the right to practice any profession or carry on any trade, this is subject to "reasonable restrictions," including those protecting intellectual property rights.

### Key Definitions

- **Piracy:** The unauthorized duplication, distribution, or exhibition of copyrighted content without the permission of the legal owner.
- **John Doe Orders:** A pre-emptive legal injunction issued against unknown defendants, allowing rights holders to take immediate action against any platform found hosting leaked content.
- **Dynamic Injunction:** A court order that allows a plaintiff to add new infringing websites/URLs to an existing injunction without filing a fresh lawsuit every time.
- **Digital Rights Management (DRM):** A systematic approach to copyright protection for digital media that prevents unauthorized redistribution and restricts the ways consumers can copy purchased content.

### Conclusion

The *Jana Nayagan* leak underscores that legislation alone is insufficient without a robust enforcement mechanism and technological vigilance. While the 2023 amendment to the Cinematograph Act provides a powerful deterrent through heavy financial penalties, the global and anonymous nature of the internet requires international cooperation and faster judicial response times. Protecting the creative economy is essential for maintaining India's status as a global cinematic powerhouse.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (Polity & Governance):** Government policies and interventions; issues arising out of their design and implementation; Statutory and regulatory bodies.
- **GS Paper III (Economy & IPR):** Issues relating to Intellectual Property Rights (IPR); Cyber security; Impact of technology on the media industry.
- **GS Paper IV (Ethics):** Ethical issues in digital consumption; intellectual theft versus the "right to access" information.

## 7. Environmental Impact of Ritual Offerings and the Narmada Milk Controversy

The recent offering of 11,000 litres of milk into the Narmada River during a religious ceremony in Sehore, Madhya Pradesh, has triggered a nationwide debate on the intersection of religious freedom, public health, and environmental conservation. While culturally perceived as a "sacred offering," the scale of such rituals in an era of demographic pressure and ecological fragility presents a systemic challenge to river rejuvenation efforts and social welfare goals.

### Key Highlights of the Ritual Controversy

- **Ecological Stress:** Contrary to cultural perceptions of purity, dairy effluents possess Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) levels far exceeding domestic sewage. Large-scale milk offerings lead to rapid depletion of dissolved oxygen, suffocating aquatic life and triggering harmful algal blooms.
- **Welfare Paradox:** The 11,000 litres of milk poured into the river could have provided 44,000 glasses (250ml each) of nutrition. This is particularly significant given Madhya Pradesh's ₹700-crore Yashoda Milk Supply Scheme (2026-27) aimed at tackling malnutrition among 1.3 crore children.



- **Cumulative Pollution Load:** Analysis shows that even minimal per-capita offerings (e.g., 5ml of milk/oil) at high-footfall sites like Varanasi result in thousands of litres of pollutants and tonnes of floral waste daily, overwhelming the river's self-purifying capacity.
- **Status of Indian Rivers:** The CPCB's 2025 assessment identified 296 polluted stretches across 271 rivers. High BOD levels, sometimes 27 times the safe limit (as seen in the Yamuna), have rendered several river stretches "ecologically dead."
- **Scaling of Tradition:** Rituals evolved for sparse populations are now practiced on a massive scale, amplifying their environmental footprint. Experts argue for "site-specific caps" and waste diversion rather than mere per-capita limits.
- **Regulatory Inaction:** Despite the visible impact, enforcement by bodies like the NGT or State Pollution Control Boards remains inconsistent due to the lack of explicit regulations for "everyday ritual offerings" compared to industrial effluents.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 21:** Interpreted by the Supreme Court to include the right to a clean and healthy environment as a fundamental part of the Right to Life.
- **Article 25:** Guarantees freedom of religion, but explicitly states this right is subject to **Public Order, Morality, and Health**. This allows the State to regulate religious practices that jeopardize environmental or public health.
- **Article 51A(g):** A Fundamental Duty of every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, lakes, rivers, and wildlife.
- **Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974:** Provides the legal framework for maintaining and restoring the wholesomeness of water. It empowers boards to set standards and penalize polluters.
- **The Precautionary Principle & Polluter Pays Principle:** Legal doctrines upheld by the NGT and SC, mandating that the State must act to prevent environmental degradation even in the absence of absolute scientific certainty.

### Key Definitions

- **Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD):** The amount of dissolved oxygen needed by aerobic biological organisms to break down organic material in a water body. Higher BOD indicates higher levels of organic pollution.
- **Eutrophication:** The process by which a body of water becomes overly enriched with minerals and nutrients (like those in milk), leading to excessive growth of plants and algae and subsequent oxygen depletion.
- **Narmada Parikrama:** A traditional circumambulation of the Narmada River, considered a holy pilgrimage, which draws millions of devotees and increases the volume of ritual offerings.
- **Dissolved Oxygen (DO):** The amount of gaseous oxygen dissolved in the water, which is crucial for the survival of fish and other aquatic organisms.

### Conclusion

The Narmada incident underscores the need to reimagine devotion in the context of ecological limits. While the law recognizes religious sentiment, constitutional jurisprudence remains clear: faith cannot override the



biological survival of ecosystems. A transition from "discretionary ritualism" to "sustainable devotion"—involving artificial tanks, milk donation to Anganwadis, and floral composting—is essential to ensure that the rivers being honored are not inadvertently destroyed by the acts of worship themselves.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III (Environment & Disaster Management):** Conservation, environmental pollution, and degradation; Environmental impact assessment.
- **GS Paper II (Polity & Governance):** Fundamental Rights (Art 21 vs. Art 25); Role of statutory bodies like NGT and CPCB.

## 8. Global Economic Outlook: IMF Growth Cuts and Recession Warnings

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its latest World Economic Outlook (WEO) released during the Spring Meetings in Washington, has downgraded global growth projections. The revision is primarily attributed to energy price volatility driven by the conflict in West Asia and subsequent supply chain disruptions. The IMF warns that an escalation of hostilities could push the global economy toward a "severe scenario," mirroring the historical lows of previous global recessions.

### Key Highlights of the IMF Outlook

- **Growth Downgrade:** Under the "reference scenario," the IMF has cut the 2026 global real GDP growth forecast to 3.1%, a 0.2 percentage point drop from the January estimates, assuming a short-lived conflict.
- **Recessionary Threshold:** The "severe scenario" projects growth plummeting to 2.0% due to an extended conflict, oil prices staying above \$100 per barrel through 2027, and major financial market dislocations.
- **Historical Context:** Growth below the 2.0% mark has occurred only four times since 1980, with the most recent instances being the 2009 global financial crisis and the 2020 pandemic-induced downturn.
- **Energy-Driven Inflation:** The report emphasizes that persistent spikes in oil and gas prices are likely to trigger tighter financial conditions, as central banks may be forced to maintain higher interest rates to curb inflation.
- **Scenario Planning:** The IMF presented three specific outcomes—weaker, worse, and severe—to help policymakers navigate the uncertainty gripping international finance and energy markets.
- **Impact on Emerging Markets:** Supply disruptions and "tight financial conditions" are expected to disproportionately affect import-dependent emerging economies, potentially widening the global developmental gap.



### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 246:** While international trade and global economic relations fall under the Union List (Entry 10 - Foreign Affairs; Entry 11 - Participation in international conferences), the domestic economic impact of global shocks requires a coordinated Centre-State response.



- **Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, 2003:** External shocks often necessitate the invocation of "escape clauses" in the FRBM Act to allow for higher fiscal deficits during periods of global recession or national security crises.
- **FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act), 1999:** A crucial tool for the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the government to manage capital flows and currency volatility resulting from global financial market dislocations mentioned in the IMF report.

### Key Definitions

- **World Economic Outlook (WEO):** A flagship report published by the IMF twice a year that provides comprehensive analysis and forecasts of global economic developments.
- **Real GDP Growth:** An inflation-adjusted measure that reflects the value of all goods and services produced by an economy in a given year, expressed in base-year prices.
- **Financial Dislocation:** A state where financial markets cease to function normally, often characterized by a lack of liquidity, extreme volatility, and a breakdown in traditional pricing models.
- **Supply Chain Disruption:** Distortions in the global network of production and distribution, often leading to shortages and cost-push inflation.

### Conclusion

The IMF's warning serves as a clarion call for "macro-resilience." For India, the risks of oil exceeding \$100 per barrel are significant, given its high import dependency. While the "reference scenario" suggests moderate growth, the "severe scenario" highlights the fragility of the post-pandemic recovery. Navigating this period will require a delicate balance between fiscal stimulus to support growth and monetary tightening to contain imported inflation, alongside a strategic focus on energy security.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III (Indian Economy):** Issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, and development; Effects of liberalization on the economy; Infrastructure (Energy).
- **GS Paper II (International Relations):** Important International institutions (IMF, World Bank) and their reports; Effect of policies of developed/developing countries on India's interests.

## 9. Impact of West Asia Conflict on Poverty and Human Development in India

A recent assessment by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) titled 'Military Escalation In The Middle East: Human Development Impacts Across Asia And The Pacific' warns of significant socio-economic reversals in India due to the ongoing West Asia crisis. The report highlights that the escalation is not merely a regional security issue but a systemic shock to human development, threatening to push millions into poverty through inflationary pressures and supply chain disruptions.

### Key Highlights of the UNDP Report

- **Surge in Poverty Levels:** The report estimates that the conflict could push approximately 2.5 million additional people in India into poverty. The poverty rate is projected to rise to 24.2% post-crisis, up from 23.9%.
- **Human Development Reversal:** India is projected to lose approximately 0.03-0.12 years of Human Development Index (HDI) progress. This reflects the broader impact on health, education, and standards of living.



- **Energy Import Vulnerability:** India's high dependency on West Asia—sourcing over 40% of its crude oil and 90% of its LPG imports from the region—makes it exceptionally vulnerable to price shocks and supply disruptions.



- **Regional Disparity in Impact:** South Asia is expected to bear the largest share of the global poverty increase (ranging from 1.7 million to 8 million people), owing to its high population density and extreme sensitivity to food and fuel price volatility.
- **Diminished Purchasing Power:** The combination of higher freight costs, increased fuel prices, and rising input costs is straining public budgets and weakening household livelihoods across the Asia-Pacific.
- **Economic Cost to the Region:** The UNDP estimates the total military escalation could cost the Asia-Pacific region up to \$299 billion, with South Asia being the most exposed subregion to income shocks.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 38 (DPSP):** Directs the State to promote the welfare of the people by securing a social order in which social, economic, and political justice shall inform all institutions of national life.
- **Article 47 (DPSP):** Mandates the State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties.
- **Essential Commodities Act, 1955:** Empowers the Union government to regulate the production, supply, and distribution of essential commodities (like fuel and food) to prevent price gouging during international crises.
- **National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013:** Provides a legal safety net for the vulnerable population, ensuring food security during periods of inflation and income loss as described in the UNDP report.

### Key Definitions

- **Human Development Index (HDI):** A composite index measuring average achievement in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, knowledge, and a decent standard of living.
- **Income and Price Shocks:** Sudden and significant changes in income levels or the prices of goods/services, typically caused by external factors like war, which reduce the real value of household earnings.
- **LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) Dependency:** The extent to which a nation relies on imported liquefied petroleum gas for domestic energy needs, making it sensitive to maritime blockades or regional conflicts.



- **Poverty Rate Simulation:** A predictive model used by organizations like the UNDP to estimate how external variables (like oil prices) will affect the percentage of a population living below a specific income threshold.

## Conclusion

The UNDP report underscores that India's economic stability is intrinsically linked to West Asian geopolitics. While the loss of 0.12 years of HDI progress may seem small, the reality of 2.5 million more people falling into poverty signifies a massive strain on the national social security apparatus. To mitigate these impacts, India must accelerate its transition toward energy diversification and bolster its domestic safety nets to protect the most vulnerable from the cascading effects of global military escalations.

## UPSC Relevance

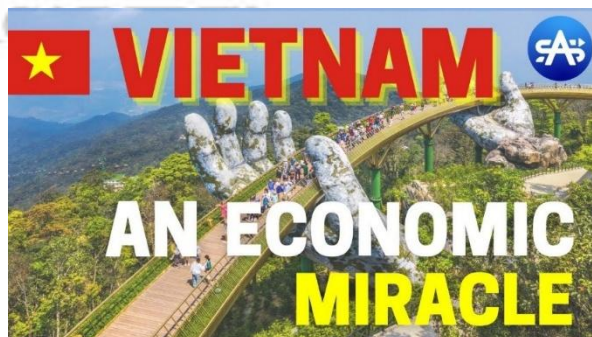
- **GS Paper II (International Relations):** Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests; West Asian crisis; Important International institutions and their reports.
- **GS Paper III (Economy):** Issues relating to poverty, hunger, and developmental planning; Energy security and infrastructure; Mobilization of resources.

## 10. Vietnam's Economic Miracle: From Agrarian Roots to Global Export Hub

Vietnam has transitioned from one of the world's poorest economies in the 1980s to a global manufacturing powerhouse, sustaining a high growth rate of 8% in 2025. This "economic miracle" is characterized by a strategic pivot toward Global Value Chains (GVCs), reducing poverty from 80% in 1993 to below 5% today. For India, Vietnam serves as both a competitor and a blueprint for the "China-plus-one" strategy.

### Key Highlights of Vietnam's Export Strategy

- **Doi Moi Reforms & Market Alignment:** Initiated in 1986, these reforms shifted Vietnam toward a "socialist-oriented market economy," aligning internal deregulation with global liberalization and establishing 18 Free Trade Agreements (FTAs).
- **GVC Integration & Assembly Hub:** Vietnam utilizes a "plug-and-play" model, importing high-value components (primarily from China) for local assembly. Its foreign value-added share in exports stood at 48% in 2020, significantly higher than its ASEAN peers.
- **The Electronics Pivot:** There has been a decisive shift from agricultural exports to high-tech electronics. High-technology exports surged from 8.8% of manufactured exports in 2008 to 44.3% in 2023, anchored by giants like Samsung and Apple.
- **FDI-Led Growth:** Robust Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows, averaging nearly 5% of GDP (2015-23), have been driven by generous tax incentives (10-17% rates), tax holidays, and a stable political environment.
- **Competitive Labor Dynamics:** Vietnam maintains a compelling cost-productivity mix, with manufacturing wages at approximately \$302/month—well below China's \$654—complemented by a 5% annual growth in labor productivity.
- **China-Plus-One Beneficiary:** Rather than merely replacing China, Vietnam works alongside it, leveraging its proximity to Chinese supplier ecosystems to position itself as a credible alternative for Western markets.





## Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Socialist-Oriented Market Economy:** The fundamental economic model of Vietnam, where the state maintains a role in steering the economy while embracing market mechanisms and foreign capital.
- **Law on Investment (Vietnam):** Provides the legal framework for FDI, outlining sectors entitled to investment incentives, including high-tech, supporting industries, and socialized sectors.
- **Article 246 (India):** While Vietnam operates under a unitary one-party system, India's federal structure requires coordination between Union and State lists to create competitive manufacturing zones similar to Vietnam's SEZs.
- **Free Trade Agreements (FTAs):** Vietnam's participation in the CPTPP, EVFTA, and RCEP provides it with preferential market access that India is currently navigating through bilateral negotiations and "Atmanirbhar Bharat" initiatives.

## Key Definitions

- **China-Plus-One Strategy:** A global business strategy where companies diversify their manufacturing interests beyond China to other countries (like Vietnam or India) to reduce supply chain risks and costs.
- **Foreign Value-Added (FVA):** The part of a country's gross exports that consists of inputs produced in other countries. High FVA indicates deep integration into global assembly networks.
- **Doi Moi:** A series of economic and political reforms launched in Vietnam in 1986 with the goal of creating a "socialist-oriented market economy."
- **High-Technology Exports:** Products with high R&D intensity, such as aerospace, computers, pharmaceuticals, scientific instruments, and electrical machinery.

## Conclusion

Vietnam's success illustrates that rapid industrialization is achievable through deep integration into global supply chains rather than isolated manufacturing. By specializing in final assembly and attracting "anchor" multinational investors, Vietnam has bypassed traditional developmental hurdles. For India to match this trajectory, it must improve its "ease of doing business," streamline customs, and effectively leverage its own labor-cost advantage to integrate more deeply into the electronics and machinery GVCs.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III (Economy):** Effects of liberalization on the economy; Changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth; Global Value Chains (GVCs).
- **GS Paper II (International Relations):** Bilateral, regional, and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests; India vs. SE Asian economies.

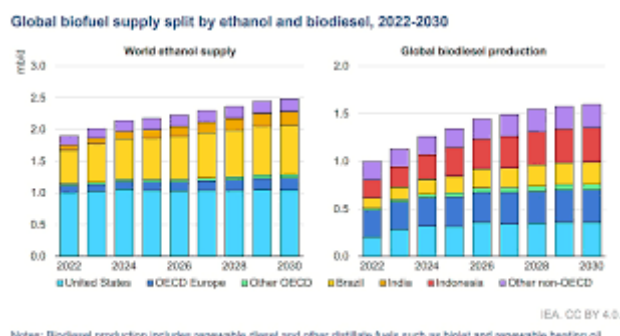
## 11. Geopolitical Volatility and the Global Oil Market: IEA's Revised Outlook

The International Energy Agency (IEA) has significantly revised its global oil market forecasts, predicting a contraction in both supply and demand for 2026. This downward revision is a direct consequence of the escalating conflict in West Asia, which has disrupted traditional oil flows and dampened global economic sentiment. The shift from a projected growth of 640,000 barrels per day (bpd) to a decline of 80,000 bpd marks a critical turning point in global energy dynamics.



## Key Highlights of the IEA Report

- **Demand Contraction:** For the first time in recent projections, the IEA expects global oil demand to fall by 80,000 bpd in 2026, reversing previous expectations of steady year-on-year growth.
- **Supply Chain Disruptions:** The ongoing war in West Asia has upended maritime logistics and infrastructure, leading to a sharp reduction in reliable oil supply forecasts from the region.
- **Economic Headwinds:** High energy prices and geopolitical uncertainty are acting as a drag on global GDP growth, which in turn suppresses industrial and consumer demand for petroleum products.
- **Revision Magnitude:** the current forecast represents a massive swing of 720,000 bpd compared to the January projections, highlighting the extreme volatility of the current energy landscape.
- **Inventory Constraints:** Disrupted flows are forcing a reliance on strategic reserves and commercial inventories, tightening the market despite the overall drop in demand.
- **Accelerated Transition:** The IEA suggests that the high-cost environment and supply insecurity may inadvertently accelerate the global shift toward renewable energy and electric mobility.



## Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Entry 53, List I (Union List):** The Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution grants the Union government exclusive power over "Regulation and development of oilfields and mineral oil resources; petroleum and petroleum products."
- **Petroleum Act, 1934:** The primary Indian legislation regulating the import, transport, storage, and production of petroleum and other inflammable substances.
- **The Energy Conservation Act, 2001:** Provides the legal framework for enhancing energy efficiency, which becomes a national priority during global supply shocks.
- **Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) Policy:** Managed by ISPRL under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, this policy governs the maintenance of emergency oil stockpiles to ensure energy security during international crises.

## Key Definitions

- **International Energy Agency (IEA):** An autonomous intergovernmental organization based in Paris, established in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis to help its members respond to major disruptions in oil supply.
- **Barrels Per Day (BPD):** A standard unit of measurement for the rate of production or consumption of oil; one barrel is approximately 159 litres.
- **Oil Outlook:** A predictive analysis of future trends in oil production, consumption, and pricing based on current geopolitical and economic data.
- **West Asia War Impact:** The multi-dimensional effect of regional conflict on energy security, including physical infrastructure damage and increased risk premiums in global trade.



## Conclusion

The IEA's revised outlook underscores the vulnerability of the global energy architecture to regional conflicts. For India, which imports over 80% of its crude oil, this report is a warning of impending fiscal pressure and the need for enhanced energy diplomacy. While falling demand might suggest lower prices in the long run, the immediate supply-side disruptions ensure that energy security remains a critical component of national strategic planning.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III (Economy & Infrastructure):** Energy sector; mobilization of resources; impact of global events on India's growth and fiscal deficit.
- **GS Paper II (International Relations):** Role of international agencies (IEA); West Asian geopolitics and its impact on Indian interests.

## 12. India's Solar Surge: Second Largest Global Market by 2026

The National Solar Energy Federation of India (NSEFI) has projected that India is on track to emerge as the world's second-largest solar market in terms of annual installations by 2026. This trajectory is supported by the fastest-ever addition of 50GW of capacity within just 14 months, pushing India's total installed solar capacity beyond the 150GW milestone. Amidst a projected slowdown in other major markets like the US and EU, India's acceleration positions it as a global leader in the renewable energy transition.

### Key Highlights of India's Solar Expansion

- **Unprecedented Installation Pace:** India achieved its latest 50GW addition in just 14 months (reaching 150GW by March 2026), a massive acceleration compared to the 11 years required for the first 50GW.
- **Global Ranking Shift:** By 2026, India is expected to secure the second spot globally in annual solar installations, trailing only China, as demand surges across the commercial and industrial (C&I) sectors.
- **Segment-Specific Drivers:** Growth is increasingly decentralized; the C&I segment reached double-digit annual installations (~10GW) for the first time, while Distributed Renewable Energy (DRE) is projected to comprise 35% of capacity by 2030.
- **Manufacturing Self-Reliance:** Domestic module manufacturing capacity is set to soar to 190GW by 2027, supported by the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme and the Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM).
- **Strategic Energy Integration:** The next phase (2026 onwards) will focus on "integrated clean energy," combining solar with double-digit energy storage capacity to ensure grid stability during non-solar hours.
- **Policy Catalyst Effect:** Flagship programs like PM Surya Ghar (targeting 1 crore households) and the Green Energy Open Access rules have unlocked vast retail and corporate demand for clean power.



## Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 48A (DPSP):** Mandates the State to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country.



- **Article 51A(g):** Establishes the Fundamental Duty of citizens to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, lakes, and rivers.
- **Energy Conservation Act, 2001 (Amended 2022):** Empowers the government to specify energy consumption standards and introduces the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme to incentivize renewable adoption.
- **Electricity Act, 2003:** Section 86(1)(e) mandates State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs) to promote cogeneration and generation of electricity from renewable sources.
- **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme:** A legal and fiscal framework providing financial incentives to domestic manufacturers based on incremental sales from products manufactured in India.

### Key Definitions

- **Distributed Renewable Energy (DRE):** Small-scale power generation (like rooftop solar) located close to where it is consumed, reducing transmission losses and empowering local users.
- **C&I Segment:** Commercial and Industrial consumers who transition to solar power to reduce operational costs and meet Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or sustainability targets.
- **Virtual Power Purchase Agreement (VPPA):** A financial contract where a buyer pays a fixed price for renewable energy, but the energy is sold into the grid rather than delivered directly to the buyer's facility.
- **Green Energy Open Access:** A policy allowing consumers with a load of 100kW or more to purchase green power directly from any developer, bypassing traditional DISCOM monopolies.

### Conclusion

India's rise to the second position in the global solar market marks a transition from a "policy-driven" to a "market-led" growth model. While utility-scale projects provided the initial 100GW, the future of India's energy security lies in rooftop solar and industrial adoption. To sustain this momentum into 2026 and beyond, the focus must now shift to strengthening upstream supply chains—specifically the manufacturing of polysilicon and wafers—to ensure complete indigenous control over the solar value chain.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III (Economy & Infrastructure):** Energy sector; sustainable development; mobilization of resources; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.
- **GS Paper II (Governance):** Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.