



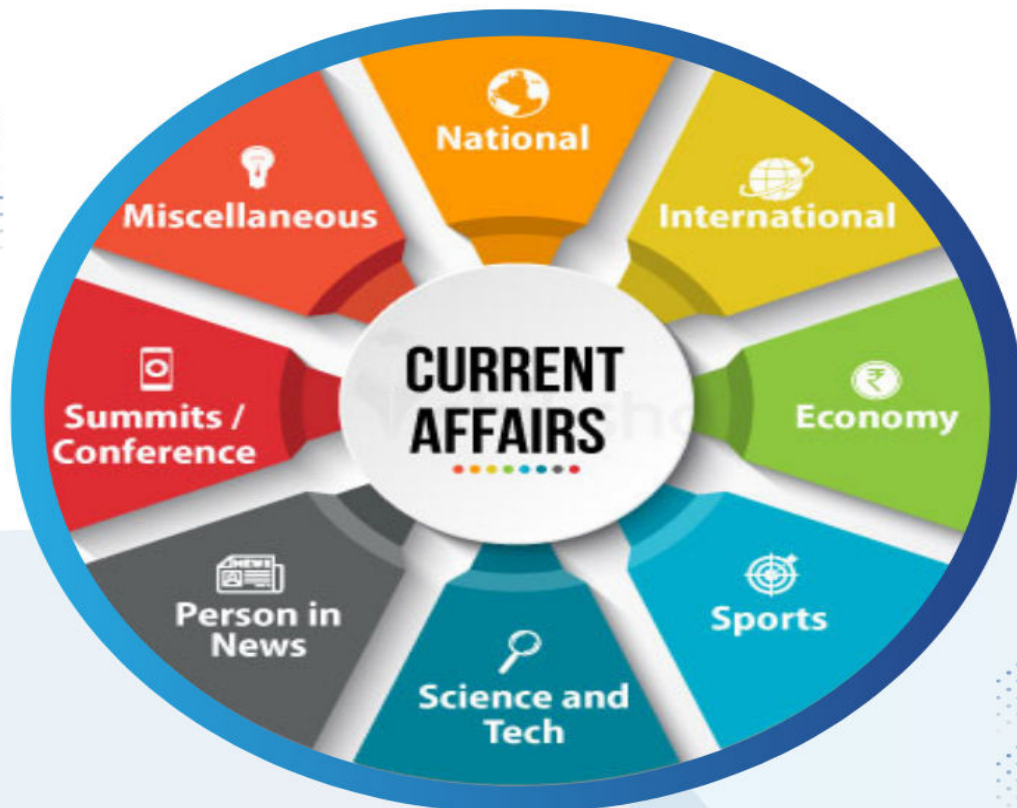
“ We help you reach for the star ”

# VIDHVATH IAS KAS ACADEMY & STUDY CENTRE

## DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

**DATE: 06/06/2026 (SATURDAY)**



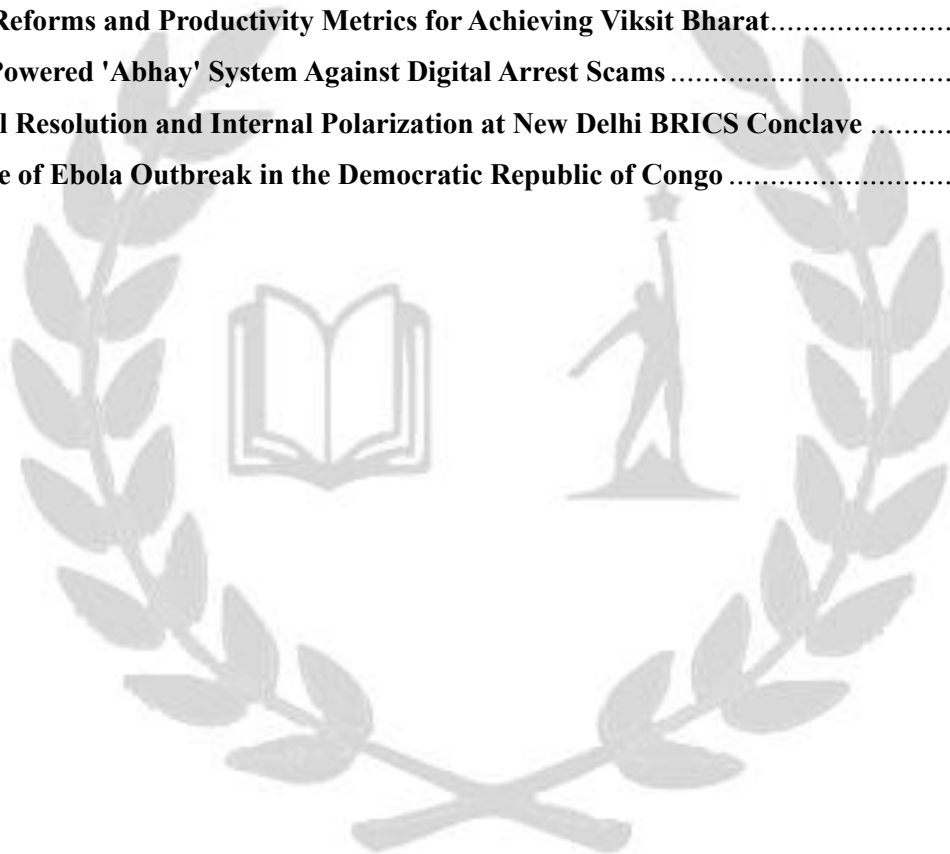
 **9972258970 & 9740702455**

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



## **Table of Contents**

<b>1. Fiscal Interventions: Scrapping FII Taxes to Support Rupee and Stabilize BoP .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Economic Performance: Provisional Estimates of GDP Growth for 2025-26 .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. Climate Adaptation: Thar Desert's Traditional Ingenuity and Canal Infrastructure .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. Wildlife Conservation: Nilgiri Tahr Population Estimation and Recovery.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5. Demography and Gender Metrics: Trends in India's Partner-Less Population.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>6. India's West Asian Geopolitical Balancing Act: Energy, Infrastructure, and BRICS Dynamics.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>7. Meteorological Triggers of Severe Pre-Monsoon Thundersqualls in Uttar Pradesh.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>8. The Geopolitical Weaponization of Global Trade and India's Strategic Imperative .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>9. Structural Reforms and Productivity Metrics for Achieving Viksit Bharat.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>10. CBI's AI-Powered 'Abhay' System Against Digital Arrest Scams .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>11. Consensual Resolution and Internal Polarization at New Delhi BRICS Conclave .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>12. Resurgence of Ebola Outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo .....</b>	<b>16</b>



**VIDHVATH IAS ACADEMY**



## 1. Fiscal Interventions: Scrapping FII Taxes to Support Rupee and Stabilize BoP

- **Context & Policy Move:** To ease severe depreciation pressure on the Indian rupee and attract foreign capital, the Central Government has scrapped capital gains tax (both long-term and short-term) on government bond investments by Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs). Simultaneously, the Centre eliminated the withholding tax levied on interest income earned from these debt securities.
- **Macroeconomic Triggers:** The decision follows continuous capital outflows from equities and low net Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows over the last two years. Economists project India's Balance of Payments (BoP) deficit to touch 50 to 60 billion dollars in fiscal 2026-27. This tax waiver aims to draw tens of billions of dollars into government securities to bridge this external deficit.
- **Regulatory and Banking Easing:** Complementing the tax overhaul, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) relaxed external commercial borrowing norms for Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and commercial banks. These modifications allow public enterprises to raise more overseas credit and enable commercial banks to easily mobilize non-resident foreign currency deposits, strengthening forex reserves.
- **Economic Growth Backdrop:** The policy push coincides with strong domestic economic momentum. Data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) confirmed that India's GDP growth rate for fiscal 2025-26 reached an unexpectedly high 7.7%, driven by robust fixed investments, despite supply disruptions caused by external geopolitical conflicts in West Asia.
- **Constitutional & Legal Framework:** The fiscal adjustments were implemented via an executive ordinance to amend the **Income Tax Act**. Taxation on income and central securities falls under List I (Union List) entries of the **Seventh Schedule** under **Article 246**. External borrowing and macroprudential regulations are governed by the **RBI Act, 1934** and the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999.
- **Key Definitions:** \* *Withholding Tax:* A statutory tax deducted directly at the source by the payer before making an income distribution (such as interest or dividends) to a foreign investor, acting as an advance tax collection tool.
  - *Balance of Payments (BoP) Deficit:* An economic situation where a nation's total autonomous outbound financial transactions (imports, capital outflows) exceed its inbound transactions (exports, capital inflows) over a specific timeframe.
- **UPSC Relevance: GS Paper III** (Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development, and employment; Mobilization of Foreign Capital, and Capital Market Regulations). The topic offers critical material for analyzing fiscal policy responses to global volatility, currency management, and bond market internationalization.

**Conclusion:** Eliminating FII capital gains and withholding taxes on government bonds marks a decisive shift toward liberalizing India's capital account to defend the currency. While this structural waiver risks rendering domestic debt markets vulnerable to global interest rate cycles, the immediate requirement to cover a projected 60 billion dollar BoP deficit outweighs long-term volatility concerns. Ensuring steady non-debt inflows alongside these fiscal measures will be essential to sustain non-inflationary growth.

## 2. Economic Performance: Provisional Estimates of GDP Growth for 2025-26

- **Context & Core Statistics:** The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has released provisional estimates pinning India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth at 7.7% for the fiscal year 2025-26. This demonstrates a strong upward trajectory compared to the 7.1% growth

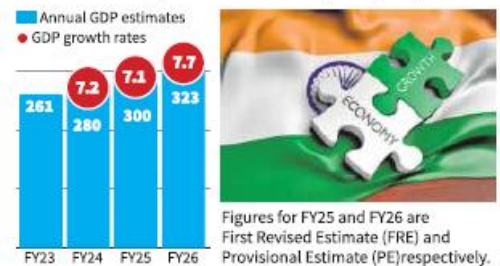


recorded in fiscal year 2024-25, with the fourth quarter (Q4) alone registering a robust expansion of 7.8%.

- **Sectoral Drivers of Expansion:** The growth momentum was driven by high-performing sectors achieving double-digit growth rates at both constant and current prices. Key drivers include manufacturing, financial services, real estate, professional services, and contact-intensive segments like trade, repair, hotels, transport, communication, and broadcasting-related storage services.
- **Provisional vs Advance Projections:** The finalized 7.7% annual growth rate reflects a marginal positive deviation from the 7.6% second advance estimates projected by the government in February 2026. This unexpected resilience highlights a robust recovery in public investments and private sector services despite lingering global macroeconomic headwinds.
- **Future Outlook and Moderation:** While current indicators show strong momentum, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) have projected a growth deceleration to 6.6% for fiscal year 2026-27. This calibrated forecast factors in tight monetary policy constraints, inflation vectors, and normalization of base effects from prior fiscal periods.
- **Constitutional & Legal Framework:** Macroeconomic data collection and estimation are anchored in **Article 246** under List I (Union List, Entry 94) of the **Seventh Schedule**, governing national statistics. MoSPI operates through the National Statistical Office (NSO), a statutory entity structured under administrative guidelines to ensure transparency in national income accounting.
- **Key Definitions:** \* *Provisional Estimates:* Initial macroeconomic computations of national income released by the government shortly after a fiscal year ends, based on actual production data and corporate indicators, subject to subsequent revisions.
  - *Constant Prices:* An economic metric where value outputs are calculated using a fixed base year's prices, effectively neutralizing the distorting impacts of inflation to measure real volumetric growth.
- **UPSC Relevance: GS Paper III** (Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development, and employment; National Income Accounting, and Macroeconomic Management). The data offers primary quantitative evidence for analyzing post-reform economic resilience, sectoral transformations, and structural growth drivers.

### Stronger estimate

India's GDP is estimated to grow by 7.7% in 2025-26, slightly faster than the 7.6% estimated in February 2026. In the chart below, the bars show annual GDP estimates (in ₹ lakh crore) and the circles indicate growth rates at constant prices (in %).



**Conclusion:** India's 7.7% GDP growth confirms strong domestic economic health, led by a structural pivot toward high-value services and manufacturing. However, the projected deceleration to 6.6% for the next fiscal highlights the need to transition from investment-led momentum to consumption-led stability. Sustaining high-growth trajectories will require deep structural reforms aimed at enhancing the ease of doing business, reducing regulatory compliance costs, and generating employment in non-farm sectors.

### 3. Climate Adaptation: Thar Desert's Traditional Ingenuity and Canal Infrastructure

- **Context & Climate Stress:** Deep-desert settlements in Bikaner's Pugal tehsil are battling intense heatwaves exceeding 46°C alongside acute water scarcity. This climate-induced stress has disrupted the sowing schedules of key Kharif crops, crippled livestock management, and forced local communities to rely on traditional, decentralized adaptation strategies to survive.



- **The Lifeline and Maintenance Bottlenecks:** The Indira Gandhi Canal Project (IGNCP)—the hydrological lifeline of the Thar Desert that brings Himalayan water from Punjab's Harike Barrage—recently underwent a scheduled 45-day maintenance closure to repair structural seepage. While the flow has been partially restored to 10,000 cusecs against its 18,000 cusecs capacity, the closure severely impacted agrarian livelihoods, industrial activities, and strategic Army cantonments along the international border.
- **Indigenous Heat Mitigation:** To counter extreme thermal stress, desert communities utilize vernacular architecture. Thatched roofs serve as natural air-trappers, which drop interior temperatures through evaporative cooling when sprinkled with water. Additionally, plastering mud-brick walls with a traditional composite of cow dung and clay significantly lowers structural heat gain.
- **Agrarian Shift & Groundwater Rebound:** In response to recurring droughts, farmers are expanding cultivation of drought-resistant coarse cereals like Jowar (sorghum) for secure fodder. Decades of canal water percolation have also artificially recharged local aquifers. This has caused a rise in the groundwater table, allowing villagers to dig shallow wells to supplement micro-irrigation systems like drip networks.
- **Social Safety Nets & Infrastructure Expansion:** The crisis has triggered an uptick in demand for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). Local block administrations are utilizing this labor surge to insulate open irrigation ditches and line open water channels with concrete, minimizing evaporation and transmission losses.
- **Constitutional & Legal Framework:** Water resource management is primarily a State subject under Entry 17, List II, while interstate river valleys fall under Entry 56, List I of the **Seventh Schedule** under **Article 246**. Right to water is protected as an essential facet of the Right to Life under **Article 21**. Ecological protection and climate resilience directly advance the Directive Principle under **Article 48A**.
- **Key Definitions:** \* *Western Disturbance:* An extra-tropical storm originating in the Mediterranean region that brings sudden, non-monsoonal rainfall to northwestern India, offering temporary thermal relief during peak summers.
  - *Seepage Loss:* The volumetric loss of water from unlined or dilapidated canal channels due to downward and outward percolation into the surrounding soil, lowering head-to-tail delivery efficiency.
- **UPSC Relevance: GS Paper I, II & III** (Changes in Critical Geographical Features, Water Security, Vernacular Architecture, Welfare Schemes like MGNREGS, and Climate Change Adaptation). It provides field-level evidence on community-led drought proofing, asset creation in rural employment programs, and water-stressed border management.



**Conclusion:** The adaptive responses in the Thar Desert demonstrate that technical infrastructure like mega-canal must be blended with indigenous ecological wisdom for resilient climate proofing. Relying solely on the Indira Gandhi Canal creates structural vulnerabilities during routine operational closures. Moving forward, integrating MGNREGS for extensive rainwater harvesting, sealing canal networks against thermal evaporation, and incentivizing drip irrigation are critical to securing decentralized water safety in frontier regions.



#### 4. Wildlife Conservation: Nilgiri Tahr Population Estimation and Recovery

- **Context & Demographic Growth:** The third synchronized population estimation conducted in April 2026 revealed that Tamil Nadu's Nilgiri Tahr population has reached an estimated 1,364 individuals. This marks a positive recovery trend with a 4.68% increase over the 2025 census (1,303 individuals) and a significant rise from the 2024 count (1,031 individuals).
- **Geographical Distribution & Hotspots:** The endemic ungulate is confined exclusively to the fragmented, verdant sub-alpine grasslands and shola complexes of the Southern Western Ghats across Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The Anamalai Hills hold 44.87% of Tamil Nadu's total population, with the Pollachi Forest Division recording the highest cluster of 438 individuals, followed by the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (Udhagai Division) with 313 individuals.
- **Habitat Fragmentation Concerns:** Despite demographic recovery, the census report notes that the Nilgiri Tahr's distribution is no longer contiguous. The species persists in highly isolated, scattered populations across fragmented mountain habitats stretching from the southern tip of Kanyakumari to the Nilgiri Hills in the north, increasing vulnerabilities to localized genetic isolation.
- **Ecological Significance & Population Structure:** As a specialized mountain ungulate, the species plays a vital role in nutrient cycling within high-altitude montane ecosystems. The 2026 demographic composition reveals a skewed male-to-female ratio of 55:100, where adult females constitute 38.4% of the observed population, adult males make up 34.6%, yearlings account for 15.5%, and young calves comprise 11.5%.
- **Constitutional & Legal Framework:** The Nilgiri Tahr is an endangered species accorded the highest level of statutory protection under **Schedule I** of the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**. Wildlife conservation falls under Entry 17B of the Concurrent List in the **Seventh Schedule** via the 42nd Amendment. This conservation project directly fulfills the constitutional mandate under **Article 51A(g)** (Fundamental Duty to protect wildlife) and **Article 48A** (Directive Principle for environmental protection).
- **Key Definitions:** \* *Ungulate*: A diverse group of large, hooved mammals that are predominantly herbivorous and play a critical role as primary consumers in regulating vegetative dynamics within their respective ecosystems.
  - *Synchronized Population Estimation*: A coordinated, multi-divisional census methodology executed simultaneously across overlapping forest tracts using identical parameters to eliminate double-counting and minimize statistical margins of error.
- **UPSC Relevance: GS Paper III** (Conservation, Environmental Pollution & Degradation, and Environmental Impact Assessment). The update is highly critical for Prelims (species profile, protection status, and habitat geography) and Mains (evaluating fragmented ecosystem management and the successes of state-led species recovery programs like Project Nilgiri Tahr).

**Conclusion:** The 4.68% rise in the Nilgiri Tahr population reflects the initial operational success of the Tamil Nadu Forest Department's focused conservation initiatives. However, the non-contiguous, fragmented nature of their current distribution poses long-term survival challenges, leaving small clusters vulnerable to disease outbreaks and climate-induced habitat degradation. Ensuring long-term survival will require moving beyond simple population counting toward active habitat restoration and the creation of secure ecological corridors to reconnect isolated populations across the Western Ghats.



## 5. Demography and Gender Metrics: Trends in India's Partner-Less Population

- **Context & National Trend:** Fresh demographic insights from the Sample Registration System (SRS) Statistical Report reveal that the national proportion of India's partner-less population—comprising individuals who are widowed, divorced, or separated (W/D/S)—has shrunk over the past decade. The national W/D/S population declined from 4.1% in 2014 to 3.5% in recent metrics.
- **Sharpest Declines and Regional Contrast:** The most notable reductions in W/D/S rates occurred in states like Uttarakhand (falling from 6.2% to 3.5%), Chhattisgarh (from 5.2% to 3.6%), and Delhi (from 3.6% to 2%). Northern and eastern states mirror this declining trajectory, with Uttar Pradesh at 2.2%, Jammu and Kashmir at 1.7%, and Bihar marking one of the lowest proportions at 1.5%.
- **Southern States Bucking the Trend:** Southern states exhibit a striking regional divergence. Tamil Nadu recorded a drastic surge, jumping from 5.7% a decade ago to a country-leading 7.2%. Kerala also bucked the national trend, with its W/D/S population increasing from 6.2% to 6.3%, while Telangana remained steady at 4.6%, exposing a massive geographic and cultural shift in the South.
- **Persistent Gender Chasm:** The data lays bare a severe gender divide and structural disparity, revealing that living without a partner remains an overwhelmingly female reality. Nationally, 5.4% of all Indian females carry W/D/S status compared to just 1.6% of males. This indicates that men who face marital dissolution or lose a spouse are highly likely to remarry, whereas women bear the subsequent social and economic burdens.
- **Socio-Economic Underpinnings:** Sociologists attribute the higher W/D/S rates in Tamil Nadu and Kerala to progressive human development indicators. Higher female literacy, greater financial independence, and robust social safety nets in these states have led to a higher social acceptance of divorce and separation, enabling women to exit incompatible marriages safely.
- **Constitutional & Legal Framework:** Family, marriage, and divorce laws fall under Entry 5 of the Concurrent List in the **Seventh Schedule** under **Article 246**. Marital rights and gender equality are protected under **Article 14** (Right to Equality) and **Article 15** (Prohibition of discrimination). Furthermore, **Article 21** (Right to Life and Personal Liberty) guarantees the right to live with dignity, free from marital coercion.
- **Key Definitions:** \* *Sample Registration System (SRS):* A large-scale demographic survey conducted annually by the Office of the Registrar General of India to provide reliable continuous estimates of vital statistics like birth rates, death rates, and marital status profiles.
  - *Gender Chasm (Demographic):* The systemic, statistically significant divergence between male and female populations regarding social, economic, or marital vulnerabilities within a specific geographic area.
- **UPSC Relevance: GS Paper I & II** (Social Empowerment, Role of Women and Women's Organizations, Population and Associated Issues, and Government Policies for Welfare of Vulnerable Sections). The data is critical for evaluating changing family structures, regional socio-demographic variations, and gender-responsive policy formulation.

**Conclusion:** The structural shift in India's W/D/S demographics points to a complex interplay between economic development and deeply entrenched patriarchal norms. While the national decline in partner-less individuals suggests social stability, the stark gender asymmetry proves that women remain disproportionately vulnerable to post-marital isolation. The rising figures in advanced states like Tamil Nadu and Kerala should not be viewed negatively; rather, they reflect how female literacy and financial agency empower women to choose dignity over societal pressure, necessitating state-backed legal and economic support systems tailored for single women.



## 6. India's West Asian Geopolitical Balancing Act: Energy, Infrastructure, and BRICS Dynamics

- **Strengthening Strategic Matrices with the UAE:** Amid intense security vulnerabilities in West Asia due to missile and drone campaigns targeting Gulf infrastructure, India and the UAE cemented high-level economic and defense protocols, including a framework for a strategic defense partnership, long-term LPG supply security, a ship repair cluster at Vadinar, Gujarat, a \$5 billion capital commitment, and expanding UAE participation in India's Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR) to 30 million barrels.
- **Geopolitical Push for Strait of Hormuz Navigation:** With escalating regional disruptions directly impacting global energy supply chains, Prime Minister Narendra Modi strongly called for a "free, open, and safe" Strait of Hormuz during his diplomatic engagements, emphasizing that the security of this vital global choke point remains paramount for maritime commerce and India's core economic interests.
- **Chabahar Port as a Connectivity Gateway:** Visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi highlighted the India-backed Chabahar Port as a "golden gateway" and a critical symbol of bilateral cooperation connecting South Asia to Central Asia and Europe, urging India to sustain long-term infrastructure outlays and development operations despite complex external geopolitical pressures.
- **Intra-BRICS Polarization and Deficit of Consensus:** The BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in New Delhi failed to produce a comprehensive joint declaration owing to intense friction and direct confrontation between Iran and the UAE over regional hostilities, casting a spotlight on the internal structural fractures within the newly expanded bloc and positioning India as a critical neutral mediator.
- **Indo-Russian Strategic Energy and Connectivity Alignments:** On the sidelines of the BRICS meeting, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov discussed boosting Russian energy, fertilizer, and peaceful nuclear technology supplies to India just one day prior to the expiration of the US sanctions waiver on Indian imports of Russian oil, while reaffirming joint commitment to expanding the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and implementing direct mutual settlement mechanisms.



### Key Terms and Definitions

- **Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR):** Subterranean emergency crude oil stockpiles maintained by a nation to mitigate sudden external economic shocks, energy supply blackouts, or critical maritime trade lane disruptions.
- **Strait of Hormuz:** A vital maritime chokepoint connecting the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, handling approximately one-fifth of global petroleum liquid consumption, making its security non-negotiable for international trade.
- **Sanctions Waiver:** A formal legal exemption granted by a sanctioning authority or government that permits a foreign state or entity to engage in specific commercial transactions with a sanctioned nation without triggering secondary economic penalties.



## Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 73 of the Indian Constitution:** Extends the executive authority of the Union Government to all international fields where the Parliament of India holds legislative competence, serving as the sovereign base for executing foreign treaties and strategic economic accords.
- **Seventh Schedule, List I (Union List), Entries 10 and 13:** Grants exclusive legislative powers to the Union Parliament over Foreign Affairs (Entry 10) and the specific entering into, execution, and implementation of international treaties, agreements, and conventions with foreign nations (Entry 13).
- **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982:** Codifies the international legal frameworks governing transit passage through straits used for international navigation, balancing coastal state sovereignty with global freedom of navigation.

**Conclusion:** India's parallel diplomatic maneuvers with the UAE, Iran, and Russia reflect a mature execution of strategic autonomy within a highly polarized geopolitical matrix. By reinforcing subterranean energy storage with Abu Dhabi, maintaining dialogue with Tehran over Chabahar connectivity, and expanding bilateral trade pipelines with Moscow, New Delhi is actively protecting its multi-directional energy and logistical security. The persistent volatility in West Asia demonstrates that maintaining a non-aligned, constructive reputation remains essential for preserving India's sovereign interests across key Eurasian and maritime corridors.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (International Relations):** Bilateral, regional, and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests; Effect of politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, particularly West Asian geopolitics, energy diplomacy, and bloc politics (BRICS).
- **GS Paper III (Economic Development & Security):** Infrastructure: Ports and Energy Security; Security challenges along critical maritime sea lines of communication (SLOCs); Investment models and cross-border strategic capital inflows.
- **Prelims Focus:** Geographic layout of the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, and the Strait of Hormuz; Strategic locations of Indian SPR sites (Padur, Mangaluru, Visakhapatnam, and the Vadinar infrastructure node); Structural frameworks of the INSTC and the BRICS grouping.

## 7. Meteorological Triggers of Severe Pre-Monsoon Thundersqualls in Uttar Pradesh

- **Unprecedented Intensity and Devastation:** A sequence of exceptionally violent pre-monsoon thunderstorms, locally documented as *Andhi*, swept across multiple districts of Uttar Pradesh, causing over 100 casualties and inflicting widespread structural damage through extreme localized wind velocities that peaked between 100 kmph and 130 kmph.
- **Thermal Convection and Surface Priming:** The primary catalyst for the convective cells was intense localized solar insolation, which pushed surface temperatures past the 45°C threshold across the Indo-Gangetic plains, generating a highly buoyant layer of superheated air near the ground.
- **Low-Level Moisture Influx:** Strong southeasterly wind anomalies channeled substantial, volatile moisture from the Bay of Bengal deep into northwestern Uttar Pradesh, providing the latent heat and thermodynamic fuel necessary for rapid, vertical cloud building.



- **Upper-Atmospheric Instability Trigger:** Concurrently, an active Western Disturbance originating over the Mediterranean region introduced a layer of cool, dry air into the upper troposphere, creating a steep vertical temperature gradient when positioned directly over the superheated, moist surface air.
- **Convective Cloud Collapse and Downdrafts:** This extreme thermodynamic instability triggered the rapid development of towering cumulonimbus clouds, culminating in a severe thundersquall where cold, dense upper air collapsed rapidly toward the earth, creating powerful horizontal blast effects upon surface impact.



#### 100+ Killed As Thundersquall Turns Deadly In Uttar Pradesh

Experts blame a "low-pressure bomb" triggered by Western Disturbances that gave residents no time to flee, causing deaths and massive destruction across UP.

### Key Terms and Definitions

- **Andhi (Dust Storm):** A high-intensity, convective meteorological event prevalent in northern India during the pre-monsoon months, characterized by violent squall lines, rapid downdrafts, sudden darkness, near-zero visibility, and heavy dust suspension.
- **Western Disturbance:** An extra-tropical, non-monsoonal cyclonic storm system originating over the Mediterranean Sea, Caspian Sea, or Black Sea that moves eastward under the influence of the jet stream, bringing sudden moisture and precipitation to the Indian subcontinent.
- **Nowcasting:** The methodology of issuing localized, real-time weather predictions and warnings for a very short operational window, typically extending from a few minutes up to six hours ahead of an event.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **The Disaster Management Act, 2005:** Provides the statutory institutional framework for the creation of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) to oversee rapid relief allocations, immediate ex-gratia distribution, and long-term risk reduction strategies.
- **Seventh Schedule, List II (State List), Entry 1:** Pertains to Public Order and the immediate administration of public safety, making the state administration the primary executive responder for disaster relief, resource mobilization, and localized rescue missions.
- **Article 243G and the Eleventh Schedule:** Confers executive powers and responsibilities to rural local bodies (Panchayats) regarding local infrastructure restoration, community warning distribution, and grass-roots disaster mitigation activities.

**Conclusion:** The deadly thundersqualls observed across Uttar Pradesh emphasize the intensifying nature of pre-monsoon convective phenomena in the Indo-Gangetic plain. While the India Meteorological Department possessed sufficient observation data to issue generalized warnings via its network of 2,400 stations, the rapid escalation to extreme wind speeds highlights the difficulty of predicting micro-level severity. Countering these challenges effectively will require augmenting real-time nowcasting capabilities and updating rural building safety codes to withstand high-velocity wind hazards.

### UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper I (Physical Geography):** Important Geophysical phenomena such as cyclones, storms, and convective activities; Changes in critical geographical features and the effects of such changes.



- **GS Paper III (Environment & Disaster Management):** Disaster and disaster management; Institutional responses to extreme weather hazards; Application of science and technology in mitigating environmental crises.
- **Prelims Focus:** Atmospheric dynamics behind thunderstorm lifecycles (updrafts and downdrafts); Origins and path of Western Disturbances; Distinction between cyclical cyclones and localized convective thundersqualls; Structure and mandates of the IMD and NDMA.

## 8. The Geopolitical Weaponization of Global Trade and India's Strategic Imperative

- **Collapse of Traditional Geopolitical Boundaries:** The global arena has witnessed a profound convergence of economic strategy and national security, transforming supply chains, semiconductor ecosystems, critical mineral access, and maritime trade routes into the primary battlegrounds for 21st-century statecraft.
- **Weaponization of Economic Interdependence:** The historical consensus that global trade inherently fosters peace has fractured, replaced by a system where trade ties are repurposed as leverage; this is demonstrated by China's export restrictions on rare earth elements and the strategic deployment of punitive tariff regimes.
- **Structural Realignment and India's Centrality:** As multinational corporations aggressively de-risk from concentrated supply networks (the "China Plus One" strategy), India's vast market depth, democratic stability, and aggressive internal reforms have shifted the nation from the periphery of globalization to an indispensable manufacturing node.
- **Pillars of Domestic and Strategic Renewal:** India's enhanced global position is anchored by comprehensive domestic digitization, rapid infrastructure modernization, and an expanded diplomatic paradigm that elevates technology partnerships, critical mineral alliances, and digital public infrastructure exports into core instruments of external statecraft.
- **Strategic Autonomy via Policy Promiscuity:** To mitigate the vulnerabilities of over-reliance on single partners, India is adopting a pragmatic, multi-aligned trade posture—termed "policy promiscuity"—which prioritizes building a highly diversified portfolio of bilateral and regional economic coalitions to safeguard domestic autonomy.

### Key Terms and Definitions

- **Weaponization of Interdependence:** The strategic exploitation of asymmetric control over global economic networks (such as financial systems or supply chains) by a state to exert coercive political pressure on dependent nations.
- **Pax Silica:** A contemporary geopolitical concept suggesting that global power, stability, and strategic alliances are increasingly dictated by the control, manufacturing, and supply chains of advanced microchips and semiconductor technology.
- **Policy Promiscuity:** A pragmatic, interest-driven foreign policy approach where a nation avoids rigid, exclusive blocks, opting instead to engage simultaneously with multiple, sometimes competing, international partners based on sector-specific mutual benefits.





## Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 73 of the Indian Constitution:** Extends the executive power of the Union to all international spheres where Parliament holds legislative competence, granting the executive the authority to negotiate and enter into complex cross-border technology and economic pacts.
- **Seventh Schedule, List I (Union List), Entries 10, 13, and 41:** Vests exclusive sovereign jurisdiction in the central government over Foreign Affairs (Entry 10), the implementation of treaties and agreements with foreign nations (Entry 13), and the overarching regulation of International Trade and Commerce (Entry 41).
- **Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992:** Serves as the primary statutory instrument empowering the Central Government to formulate, develop, and alter India's Foreign Trade Policy (FTP), regulating imports and exports to enhance economic security.

**Conclusion:** The structural shift toward geo-economics offers India an unprecedented opportunity to translate international strategic demand into long-term domestic industrial capability. By moving beyond old choices between absolute self-reliance and uncalibrated global integration, New Delhi can leverage its scale to anchor global supply chains. Success will ultimately hinge on sustaining domestic structural reforms, upgrading logistical efficiency, maintaining robust institutional strength, and executing a flexible, interest-driven economic diplomacy that preserves sovereign autonomy.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (International Relations):** Effect of politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora; Bilateral, regional, and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.
- **GS Paper III (Economic Development):** Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth; Infrastructure, supply chain resilience, and technology indigenization.
- **Prelims Focus:** Conceptual understanding of Trade Deficits, Core Components of the Foreign Trade Policy, and Global Supply Chain Initiatives (e.g., SCRI); Major global groupings like BRICS, G20, and the minerals security partnership; Geographical location of critical mineral reserves.

## 9. Structural Reforms and Productivity Metrics for Achieving Viksit Bharat

- **Robust Growth and Macroeconomic Stability:** India maintains an impressive post-pandemic economic trajectory with real GDP growth reaching 6.5% in FY2024-25, supported by resilient domestic demand, low inflation, controlled fiscal consolidation, and a stable financial sector.
- **Skewed Structural Transformation and Services Bias:** India's developmental path exhibits an anomaly where the services sector drives growth without a mature manufacturing phase to absorb low-productivity agricultural labor or generate broad-based employment at scale.
- **The Missing Middle and Firm-Size Fragmentation:** The manufacturing landscape is constrained by a polarized structure consisting of numerous micro-enterprises and a few large conglomerates, lacking a competitive cohort of mid-sized firms capable of scaling production, driving exports, and integrating into Global Value Chains (GVCs).





- **Capital Misallocation and the Zombie Firm Phenomenon:** A significant portion of national credit and resources is trapped in non-viable, low-productivity "zombie firms" that underperform but survive through bank refinancing, locking up valuable capital and crowding out credit for innovative, high-efficiency enterprises.
- **Institutional Vulnerabilities in Debt Financing:** Empirical data indicates that bank-financed firms are far more susceptible to long-term zombification and relapse than equity-financed entities, highlighting institutional gaps where regulatory and financial frameworks delay timely business exits and hinder market dynamism.
- **Two-Pronged Strategy for Economic Transition:** Transitioning into a developed nation (Viksit Bharat) by 2047 requires active market dynamism that pairs ease of entry for high-productivity firms with streamlined exit pathways for inefficient ones via stronger insolvency legal frameworks and regulatory easing.

### Key Terms and Definitions

- **Viksit Bharat by 2047:** The official vision of the Government of India to transform the nation into a fully developed economy by the centenary year of its independence, necessitating sustained long-term growth and high total factor productivity.
- **Zombie Firms:** Long-standing, economically unviable enterprises that are unable to cover their debt-servicing costs from current organic revenues and survive primarily through constant debt restructuring or bank bailouts.
- **Creative Destruction:** An economic concept introduced by Joseph Schumpeter describing the deliberate process where industrial mutation continuously revolutionizes the economic structure from within, destroying the old, inefficient elements and creating new, highly productive ones.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 39(b) and 39(c) of Directive Principles (DPSP):** Mandates that the State direct its policy toward securing that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are distributed to serve the common good, and that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment.
- **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016:** The primary statutory framework designed to consolidate and amend the laws relating to reorganization and insolvency resolution of corporate persons, partnership firms, and individuals in a time-bound manner, acting as the primary legal tool to dismantle zombie firms.
- **Seventh Schedule, List I (Union List), Entries 43 and 44:** Vests exclusive legislative authority in the Parliament of India over the incorporation, regulation, and winding up of trading corporations, including banking, insurance, and financial corporations.

**Conclusion:** India's current economic momentum provides a strong baseline, but relying primarily on consumption and services growth creates structural vulnerabilities. Reaching the status of a developed nation requires shifting focus from raw GDP expansion to total factor productivity within manufacturing. Overcoming the drag of non-viable firms through robust financial reforms and swift insolvency processes will free up trapped national capital, helping India transition from a fragmented manufacturing base into a dynamic, scale-driven global production hub.



## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III (Economic Development):** Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development, and employment; Inclusive growth and issues arising from it; Government budgeting and industrial sector reforms.
- **GS Paper II (Governance & Policies):** Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.
- **Prelims Focus:** Concepts of Real vs. Nominal GDP, Total Factor Productivity (TFP), and Capital-Output Ratio; Core structural features and targets of the IBC, 2016; Main findings and recommendations on manufacturing from the Economic Survey 2025-26.

## 10. CBI's AI-Powered 'Abhay' System Against Digital Arrest Scams

- **Institutional Response to Cyber Fraud:** The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has launched an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered verification helpbot named "Abhay" to allow citizens to instantly authenticate the legitimacy of any legal notice or summons purported to be issued by the agency.
- **Countering the Menace of Digital Arrests:** The system is explicitly engineered to neutralize the rapidly growing threat of "digital arrest" scams, where organized cyber criminals impersonate law enforcement officials to extort massive sums of money from unsuspecting citizens.
- **Modus Operandi of Fraudulent Surveillance:** In a typical digital arrest scam, perpetrators use forged official documents, letterheads, and deepfake video configurations to trap victims, subsequently forcing them into a sham legal process and continuous video surveillance under the threat of immediate detention.
- **Absolute Lack of Legal Validity:** The CBI officially clarified that the concept of a "digital arrest" has absolutely no legal existence, statutory backing, or procedural precedent anywhere within the framework of Indian criminal jurisprudence.
- **Public Accessibility and Real-Time Redressal:** Designed as a decentralized public safety tool, the "Abhay" helpbot is accessible to the general public 24/7 through the CBI's official web portal, acting as a direct verification shield before any financial or personal compliance is initiated by a citizen.

## Key Terms and Definitions

- **Digital Arrest Scam:** A highly organized form of cyber extortion where fraudsters falsely accuse a victim of involving themselves in illegal activities (such as money laundering or narcotics trade) and manipulate them into remaining confined under continuous digital surveillance.
- **Helpbot:** An automated software application powered by conversational AI designed to interact with users, process specific verification inputs (such as reference numbers or document data), and provide instantaneous factual verification.
- **Cyber Extortion:** The illegal act of coercing individuals or entities into transferring financial assets or sensitive information under the threat of digital sabotage, social exposure, or fabricated legal prosecution.





## Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 21 of the Indian Constitution:** Guarantees the Protection of Life and Personal Liberty, stating that no person shall be deprived of their life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law; digital arrest scams directly violate this right through illegal confinement and psychological coercion.
- **Section 66D of the Information Technology Act, 2000:** Prescribes strict punitive measures and imprisonment for cheating by personation by using any communication device or computer resource, which forms the primary legal basis for prosecuting online impersonators.
- **Sections 319 and 318 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023:** Covers the offenses of "Cheating by Personation" (Section 319) and general "Cheating" (Section 318), replacing the older provisions of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) to address modern deceptive practices.
- **Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946:** The foundational statutory framework that governs the constitution, jurisdiction, and investigative powers of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) as India's premier federal investigating agency.

**Conclusion:** The deployment of the AI-powered 'Abhay' system by the CBI represents a critical transition from purely reactive criminal investigation to proactive technological deterrence in cyber governance. By exposing the absolute illegality of 'digital arrests' and providing an instantaneous public verification platform, the state is effectively placing a check on cyber crime syndicates. To ensure this digital shield remains effective, the technological roll-out must be backed by expansive public awareness campaigns and a robust cross-border framework for prosecuting digital financial fraud.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III (Internal Security & Technology):** Cyber security challenges; Role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges; Basics of cyber security; Money-laundering and its prevention; Application of AI in law enforcement.
- **GS Paper II (Governance & Polity):** Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies; Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.
- **Prelims Focus:** Mandate and statutory origin of the CBI under the DSPE Act, 1946; Core functions of the 'Abhay' portal; Relevant sections of the IT Act, 2000 and BNS, 2023 relating to cyber impersonation; Understanding that "digital arrest" holds zero legal validity in India.

## 11. Consensual Resolution and Internal Polarization at New Delhi BRICS Conclave

- **Consensus on Palestinian Statehood:** The BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi achieved an absolute consensus on the Palestine issue, issuing a unified declaration calling for the creation of an "independent, sovereign, and viable State of Palestine" based on the pre-1967 borders, encompassing both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank under the Palestinian Authority, with East Jerusalem as its designated capital.
- **Support for Sovereign International Integration:** The expanded bloc explicitly recorded its collective backing for the State of Palestine's full sovereign membership within the United Nations, framing it as an essential component of an enduring two-state solution aligned with international law, UN Security Council decisions, and the historic Arab Peace Initiative.





- **Absence of a Joint Comprehensive Statement:** Due to acute, unresolved bilateral friction among key member states regarding West Asian security paradigms, the conclave failed to generate a standard consensus-based Joint Declaration, issuing instead a "Chair's Statement and Outcome Document" that openly acknowledged the existence of differing regional views.
- **Direct Geopolitical Confrontation Between Iran and UAE:** Diplomatic proceedings at Bharat Mandapam exposed severe fissures between Iran and the United Arab Emirates, with Iran accusing the UAE of providing critical logistical assistance to external militaries via domestic bases, while the UAE registered structural objections to the draft language concerning military containment in the Gaza Strip.
- **Strategic Disputes Over Maritime Chokepoints:** Deep policy divisions emerged regarding regional maritime infrastructure, with Iran resisting specific consensus language that condemned hostile disruptions across the Red Sea and the Bab Al-Mandab Strait, while concurrently asserting sovereign territorial authority alongside Oman over the highly volatile Strait of Hormuz.

### Key Terms and Definitions

- **Chair's Statement and Outcome Document:** A diplomatic fallback mechanism utilized in international forums when deep polarization prevents a universal consensus; it records areas of agreement while attributing contentious segments to the summary of the presiding Chair rather than the whole body.
- **Pre-1967 Borders:** The territorial boundaries existing prior to the Six-Day War of June 1967, defining the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip as the recognized geographic base for a future sovereign Palestinian state.
- **Two-State Solution:** The primary framework of international diplomacy aimed at resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by establishing two distinct, independent states living side by side in mutual security, peace, and economic cooperation.

### Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 51 of the Indian Constitution (Directive Principles):** Explicitly instructs the State to promote international peace and security, maintain just and honorable relations between nations, foster respect for international law and treaty obligations, and encourage the settlement of international disputes by arbitration.
- **Seventh Schedule, List I (Union List), Entries 10 and 13:** Allocates absolute legislative and executive jurisdiction to the Union Government over Foreign Affairs (Entry 10) and the formal execution and implementation of international treaties, conventions, and multilateral agreements (Entry 13).
- **United Nations Charter, Article 4:** Governs the formal admission of any peace-loving state into full UN membership, requiring a recommendation from the UN Security Council and a two-thirds majority vote within the UN General Assembly.

**Conclusion:** The outcome of the New Delhi BRICS meeting illustrates the complex challenges facing the newly expanded intergovernmental platform. While the unified position on Palestinian statehood demonstrates that the bloc can find common ground on long-standing Global South issues, the inability to issue a Joint Statement due to deep Iran-UAE polarization reveals significant internal friction. For India, acting as a neutral mediator within its own capital highlights the delicate balance required to manage competing interests while advancing structural multi-polarity.



## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (International Relations):** Bilateral, regional, and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests; Effect of politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, particularly West Asian geopolitical developments and bloc diplomacy.
- **GS Paper III (Security & Infrastructure):** Security challenges and their management in maritime domains; Importance of international sea lines of communication (SLOCs) and global chokepoints to national economic security.
- **Prelims Focus:** Geography of West Asian chokepoints including the Strait of Hormuz, Bab Al-Mandab, and the Red Sea; Evolution and expansion criteria of the BRICS grouping; Core tenets of the Arab Peace Initiative and relevant UN resolutions.

## 12. Resurgence of Ebola Outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo

- **Epidemiological Surveillance Shock:** The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) has officially confirmed a new outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in the northeastern Ituri province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), recording 65 fatalities out of 246 suspected cases.
- **Identification of a Rare Non-Zaire Strain:** Preliminary laboratory sequencing conducted by the Institut National de Recherche Biomédicale (INRB) identified the causative pathogen as the Bundibugyo strain; this non-Zaire variant presents a severe operational hurdle as existing prequalified vaccines primarily target the Zaire strain.
- **Geopolitical and Conflict-Driven Complications:** The epicenter of the outbreak—spanning the Mongwalu, Rwampara, and Bunia health zones—coincides with intense regional militia clashes, internal displacement, and dense mining-related mobility, heavily disrupting public health containment and contact-tracing efforts.
- **Cross-Border Transmission Vulnerability:** Due to high population flows across international borders, the virus has already threatened adjacent national boundaries, with Uganda confirming an imported case in Kampala, prompting emergency high-level regional coordination meetings involving the DRC, Uganda, and South Sudan.
- **High Case Fatality and Supportive Care Imperatives:** With a historic case fatality rate fluctuating between 25% and 90% across species, health agencies are mobilizing optimized supportive care protocols, personal protective equipment (PPE) distribution, and safe, dignified burial teams to halt transmission chains.

## Key Terms and Definitions

- **Ebola Virus Disease (EVD):** A severe, often fatal hemorrhagic illness in humans caused by infection with an RNA virus belonging to the *Filoviridae* family, genus *Orthoebolavirus*.
- **Bundibugyo Ebolavirus:** One of the six identified species of the virus; it causes Bundibugyo virus disease in humans, possessing distinct genetic structures that render Zaire-specific medical countermeasures ineffective.
- **Genomic Sequencing:** A laboratory technique used to determine the exact nucleic acid sequence of a viral genome, enabling epidemiologists to track mutations, identify specific viral strains, and trace transmission lineages during an outbreak.



## Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 21 of the Indian Constitution:** Guarantees the Protection of Life and Personal Liberty, under which the Supreme Court of India has expanded the right to health, clean environment, and disease protection as fundamental sovereign obligations of the state.
- **The Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897:** The core statutory framework in India empowering the Central and State Governments to take special measures and prescribe regulations to prevent the outbreak or spread of dangerous epidemic diseases at ports of entry and domestically.
- **International Health Regulations (IHR), 2005:** A legally binding instrument of international law under the World Health Organization (WHO) that requires member states, including India, to report specific public health emergencies of international concern (PHEIC) and strengthen global biological surveillance.

**Conclusion:** The re-emergence of the non-Zaire Bundibugyo Ebola strain within a conflict-ridden zone of the DRC exposes structural vulnerabilities in global health defense. The lack of an approved vaccine for this specific variant emphasizes that international biomedical research must prioritize multivalent countermeasures over strain-specific solutions. Containing the geographic spread of the virus will depend entirely on combining strict border screening with localized, cross-border health operations capable of operating safely amid active regional insecurity.

## UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III (Science & Technology / Environment):** Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, Robotics, Nanotechnology, and Biotechnology; Issues relating to intellectual property rights; Public health crises and zoonotic disease spillovers.
- **GS Paper II (International Relations & Governance):** Institutional frameworks of global health bodies like the WHO, Africa CDC, and the implementation of international health laws; Government policies governing domestic epidemic management.
- **Prelims Focus:** Structural differences between DNA and RNA viruses; Distinct species of *Orthoebolavirus* (Zaire, Sudan, Bundibugyo, Reston, Taï Forest, Bombali); Geographical mapping of the DRC, Ituri province, and surrounding East African border nations; Institutional role of Gavi and GISAID in pandemic monitoring.