"We help you reach for the star"

VIDHVATH IAS KAS ACADEMY & STUDY CENTRE

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

DATE: 21/10/2026 (WEDNESDAY)



9972258970 & 9740702455

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

Table of Contents

1. Children's Fundamental Right to Access Internet 2
2. Study of Solar Eruptions Using Aditya-L1 and Proba-3 Data 3
3. Custodial Torture and Human Rights: High Court Ruling 4
4. Union Government's Proposal for Ladakh Safeguards 5
5. Supreme Court to Hear Plea Against Preventive Detention 6
6. FSSAI Regulations on Pesticide Residues in Tea and Ban on Added Sugars in Infant Food 7
7. India's Crude Oil Import Strategy Amid West Asian Geopolitical Conflict 9
8. Go-Delhi Foundation and Draft E-Rickshaw Scheme 2026 10

VIDHVATH IAS ACADEMY

1. Children's Fundamental Right to Access Internet

Key Highlights & Summary

- The Supreme Court held that children, like all individuals, possess a fundamental right to access and use the Internet under Articles 21 and 19(1)(a) of the Constitution.
- A Bench comprising Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Vinod K. Chandran observed that blanket bans on children's online access are "unproven measures of proven disproportionality".
- The Court clarified that child safety and freedom are not mutually exclusive or conflicting concepts.
- Hostile environments and stringent digital restrictions discourage children from reporting online threats, enticements, or cyberbullying.
- Over-regulation stems from fear of parental reprisal, pushing digital safety issues into undetected zones.
- Digital empowerment through guided access, rather than outright prohibition, ensures child protection alongside educational growth.

Essential Definitions

- **Doctrine of Proportionality:** A judicial standard ensuring that state action restricting fundamental rights must be proportionate to the objective sought, avoiding excessive or arbitrary interference.
- **Digital Rights:** Rights that allow individuals to access, use, create, and publish digital media, as well as access computers and electronic devices.
- **Blanket Ban:** A complete, non-selective prohibition imposed across a group or activity without accounting for reasonable exceptions or nuanced rights.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 19(1)(a):** Guarantees the freedom of speech and expression, which inherently includes the right to express, seek, and receive information via the Internet.
- **Article 21:** Guarantees the right to life and personal liberty, expanding to include the right to digital access as an essential facet of modern education and human dignity.
- **Article 19(2):** Permits reasonable restrictions on freedom of speech and expression only on specified grounds such as public order, morality, or state security, prohibiting disproportionate state overreach.
- **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Article 13:** Recognizes the child's right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information through any media.
- **Information Technology Act, 2000:** Provisions related to cyber safety, digital infrastructure regulation, and child protection against cyber crimes.

Conclusion

The Supreme Court ruling redefines child rights in the digital age by striking a balance between cyber protection and digital liberty. Blanket bans undermine trust and impede learning, highlighting that safe digital spaces require proportional safeguards, constructive monitoring, and digital literacy rather than punitive suppression.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (Polity & Governance):** Fundamental Rights (Articles 19 & 21), Judicial Pronouncements, Welfare Schemes & Mechanisms for Vulnerable Sections (Children).
- **GS Paper III (Internal Security & Technology):** Cyber Security, Digital Infrastructure, Challenges of Internet Regulation.
- **Essay Paper:** Themes related to Digital Inclusion vs. Protection, Modern Parenting and Governance, Technology and Youth Rights.

2. Study of Solar Eruptions Using Aditya-L1 and Proba-3 Data

Key Highlights & Summary

- Scientists from the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru, and international collaborators analyzed solar eruptions using data from Aditya-L1 and ESA's Proba-3 spacecraft.
- The study combined observations from the Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC) on Aditya-L1 and the ASPIICS payload on Proba-3.
- Researchers analyzed Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs) to determine their mass, density, energetics, shape, and dynamics close to the solar surface.
- VELC provided spectroscopic observations of CME gas heated to nearly two million degrees, catching eruptions at an early stage.
- ASPIICS provided sharp imaging that allowed precise estimation of CME geometry, complementing VELC's thermal and density measurements.
- During joint observations from July to December 2025, two major CMEs (on September 14 and 16) were recorded simultaneously by both payloads.

Essential Definitions

- **Coronal Mass Ejection (CME):** Large expulsions of plasma and magnetic fields from the Sun's corona that can disturb Earth's magnetosphere and space weather.
- **Lagrange Point 1 (L1):** A position in space where the gravitational forces of two large bodies (like the Sun and Earth) produce enhanced regions of attraction and repulsion, allowing spacecraft to maintain a stable orbit.
- **Coronagraph:** A specialized telescopic attachment designed to block out the direct light from the Sun so that nearby objects and the solar atmosphere (corona) can be observed.

VIDHVATH IAS ACADEMY

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 51A(h) of the Indian Constitution:** Fundamental Duty to develop a scientific temper, humanism, and the spirit of inquiry and reform, providing ideological grounding for space research.
- **Indian Space Policy 2023:** Encourages scientific research, international collaborations, and data sharing to advance space exploration and technology development.
- **ISRO Guidelines on Data Dissemination:** Framework governing the release and collaborative analysis of space mission payload data with academic and international institutions.

Conclusion

The joint study leveraging Aditya-L1 and Proba-3 demonstrates the immense value of multi-spacecraft observations in space weather research. By combining spectroscopic and high-resolution imaging data, scientists gain deeper insights into CME dynamics, enhancing early detection and global space-weather forecasting capabilities.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III (Science & Technology):** Indigenization of technology, achievements of Indians in science & technology, awareness in the field of Space (Aditya-L1 mission, ISRO-ESA scientific collaboration).
- **GS Paper I (Geography):** Physical geography concepts related to solar activity, space weather, solar flares, geomagnetic storms, and solar atmospheric dynamics.

3. Custodial Torture and Human Rights: High Court Ruling

Key Highlights & Summary

- The Andhra Pradesh High Court ruled in the Gade Sai Krishna custodial death case that custodial torture constitutes a calculated assault on human dignity and a degradation of human civilization.
- A Division Bench comprising Justices Ravinath Tilhari and Alapati Giridhar observed that the State possesses an inescapable duty to enforce human rights and ensure impartial inquiries into cognisable offences, even when its own officers are accused.
- The High Court ordered a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into the alleged custodial death of 25-year-old Sai Krishna, who was picked up by police personnel in Markapuram.
- The court highlighted that witnesses as well as accused persons are entitled to state protection, emphasizing that wounding human dignity sets civilizational progress backward.
- Judicial intervention highlights the necessity of independent agency investigations when state law enforcement mechanisms face conflict of interest during police violence allegations.
- The ruling reinforces judicial intolerance toward police brutality, reaffirming that state custody must ensure protection rather than extrajudicial coercion.

Essential Definitions

- **Custodial Torture:** Physical, mental, or psychological trauma inflicted on an individual by law enforcement authorities while in police or judicial custody.
- **Cognisable Offence:** An offence for which a police officer may arrest an accused person without a warrant and initiate an investigation without prior permission from a magistrate.
- **Human Dignity:** The intrinsic ethical value and fundamental worth belonging to every human being, which cannot be compromised by state authority or detention.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 21 of the Indian Constitution:** Guarantees the right to life and personal liberty, which includes protection against torture, cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment in custody (D.K. Basu v. State of West Bengal).
- **Article 20(3):** Protects individuals against self-incrimination, prohibiting state machinery from coercing confessions through custodial violence.

- **Section 176(1A) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) / Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS):** Mandates a judicial magistrate inquiry in cases of death, disappearance, or alleged rape in police custody.
- **Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993:** Establishes the National and State Human Rights Commissions to investigate human rights violations and custodial deaths independently.

Conclusion

The Andhra Pradesh High Court's directive for a CBI investigation reaffirms that custodial violence strikes at the core of constitutional governance. Safeguarding fundamental rights requires absolute accountability of law enforcement officers, independent prosecution of police excesses, and structural reforms to prevent custodial torture.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (Polity & Governance):** Fundamental Rights (Articles 20 & 21), Police Reforms, Role of Judiciary, Protection of Vulnerable Sections, Functions of Statutory Bodies like NHRC.
- **GS Paper IV (Ethics & Integrity):** Ethics in Administration, Abuse of Power, Human Rights and Accountability in Law Enforcement.

4. Union Government's Proposal for Ladakh Safeguards

Key Highlights & Summary

- Ladakh Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra reiterated the Centre's commitment to developing a customized *sui generis* model to address the region's demands through special constitutional safeguards.
- Key Ladakh civil society groups, including the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), rejected the Ministry of Home Affairs' 32-page proposal, citing a departure from earlier assurances.
- The Centre proposed a two-stage approach featuring a constitutional amendment followed by regulations under Article 240 to create a directly elected Union Territory-level body.
- The proposed body aims to safeguard land, culture, environment, natural resources, employment, and local representation.



A new governance model for Ladakh

Ladakh was made a Union Territory under the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, prompting concerns from local groups about preservation of Ladakh's culture and demands for Sixth Schedule status; the Centre has proposed to insert Article 371-K into the Constitution to provide for a directly elected legislative body instead

EXPLAINER

G.R.P. Srivastava

THE GIST

- The Sixth Schedule, which is governed by Article 244(2) and 275(1) provides for the creation of Autonomous Districts. It covers Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram
- The Government has proposed to insert Article 371-K in Part XXI of the Constitution (Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions) to strike a balance between national administration and local self-government

- Regarding the Sixth Schedule demand, officials noted that it carries a specific historical and geographical context, proposing Article 371's provisions as a more flexible alternative.
- On statehood demands, administration highlighted that Ladakh currently depends completely on central funding for state expenditures and needs fiscal self-reliance.

Essential Definitions

- **Sui Generis Model:** A unique, tailored legal or administrative arrangement designed specifically to address distinct local context and political circumstances.

- **Sixth Schedule:** A constitutional framework providing administrative autonomy to tribal areas in North-Eastern states through Autonomous District Councils (ADCs).
- **Article 240:** Empowers the President of India to make regulations for the peace, progress, and good government of certain Union Territories.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 371:** Contains special provisions for specific states to preserve regional interests, custom rights, land protection, and administrative flexibility.
- **Article 240:** Enables central administration through presidential regulations in Union Territories without legislatures.
- **Fifth and Sixth Schedules:** Frameworks granting constitutional autonomy and legislative protection to tribal regions regarding local governance and culture.
- **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019:** Bifurcated the state of Jammu and Kashmir, establishing Ladakh as a Union Territory without a legislature.

Conclusion

Resolving Ladakh's political and administrative demands requires continuous dialogue between local stakeholders and the central government. Balancing fiscal sustainability, constitutional flexibility under Article 371, and regional cultural protections remains central to achieving long-term stability and democratic empowerment in the Union Territory.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (Polity & Governance):** Federalism, Constitutional Amendments, Article 371 Special Provisions, Sixth Schedule Administration, Governance in Union Territories.
- **GS Paper III (Environment & Internal Security):** Eco-sensitive region management, border area development, public administration, and strategic internal security dynamics in high-altitude frontier areas.

5. Supreme Court to Hear Plea Against Preventive Detention

Key Highlights & Summary

- The Supreme Court agreed to hear a petition filed by academician Apoorvanand Jha challenging the misuse of preventive detention and blanket prohibitory orders.
- The petitioner submitted that equating the right to peaceful assembly with a "breach of peace" is an unwarranted measure used to make preventive detentions.
- The writ petition specifically challenged the legality of prohibitory orders issued under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).
- The plea contended that a "breach of peace" requires an imminent violent or criminal act, rather than a mere call for public demonstration.
- The petitioner highlighted a routine *modus operandi* of denying permission, imposing blanket prohibitory orders, and enforcing preventive detentions.
- The court was urged to call for records from police stations and direct compensation for police personnel involved in arbitrary detentions.

Essential Definitions

- **Preventive Detention:** The detention of a person without trial or conviction by a court, intended to prevent them from committing an offence or disturbing public order.
- **Breach of Peace:** A violation of public order, tranquility, or safety involving violence or an imminent threat of unlawful violent acts.
- **Prohibitory Order:** An official administrative directive issued by a magistrate restricting assembly, movement, or specific actions in a designated area to prevent public nuisance or danger.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 19(1)(b):** Guarantees the fundamental right of citizens to assemble peaceably and without arms.
- **Article 21:** Protects personal liberty against arbitrary state action and executive overreach in executing detentions.
- **Article 22:** Outlines constitutional safeguards regarding arrest and preventive detention, including limitations on period and right to representation.
- **Section 163 of BNSS (formerly Section 144 CrPC):** Empowers Executive Magistrates to issue temporary orders in urgent cases of nuisance or apprehended danger.
- **Section 170 of BNSS (formerly Section 151 CrPC):** Authorizes police to arrest without a warrant to prevent the commission of cognisable offences.

Conclusion

The Supreme Court's decision to examine executive practices surrounding prohibitory orders emphasizes the crucial balance between public order and civil liberties. Routine reliance on preventive detention and blanket restrictions risks turning exceptions into rules, highlighting the need for judicial oversight and legal accountability in preserving the right to peaceful protest.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (Polity & Governance):** Fundamental Rights (Articles 19, 21, and 22), Executive Powers vs. Civil Liberties, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), Judicial Review of Prohibitory Orders.
- **GS Paper IV (Ethics & Integrity):** Human Rights, Accountability in Law Enforcement, Ethical Dilemma between Public Order and Personal Freedom.

6. FSSAI Regulations on Pesticide Residues in Tea and Ban on Added Sugars in Infant Food

Key Highlights & Summary

- **Pesticide Residue Limits for Tea**: FSSAI proposed Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for two key pesticides in tea—acetamiprid (20 mg/kg or 20 ppm) and imidacloprid (50 mg/kg or 50 ppm).
- **Draft Regulations Published**: These changes are part of the draft Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Amendment Regulations, 2026.
- **Strict Safety Standards**: The proposed acetamiprid limit is stricter than standards in Japan (30 ppm) and the US (50 ppm), while imidacloprid limits align with Codex standards.

- **Prohibition of Added Sugars**: Under the draft Food Safety and Standards (Foods for Infant Nutrition) Amendment Regulations, 2026, FSSAI proposed prohibiting sucrose and fructose in food products meant for infants up to six months.
- **Public Health Objective**: Banning added sugars aims to address early exposure risks, promote long-term healthy dietary habits, and support exclusive breastfeeding recommendations for the first six months.
- **Agricultural Context**: India's average pesticide usage in agriculture stands at under 0.5 kg/ha, significantly lower than the global average of 2.38 kg/ha.

Essential Definitions

- **Maximum Residue Limit (MRL)**: The highest concentration of a pesticide residue legally permitted in or on food commodities and animal feeds, expressed in mg/kg or parts per million (ppm).
- **Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex)**: An international body established jointly by the FAO and WHO to develop harmonized international food standards, guidelines, and codes of practice to protect consumer health and ensure fair food trade practices.
- **Infant Nutrition Products**: Food formulations specifically designed to satisfy the nutritional requirements of infants during their early development stage.



Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006**: Empowers FSSAI to lay down science-based standards for food items and regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, and sale to ensure safe and wholesome food.
- **Article 47 (Directive Principles of State Policy)**: Mandates the State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people, and improve public health as among its primary duties.
- **Article 21 (Right to Life)**: Interpreted by judicial precedents to include the right to safe, unadulterated, and healthy food as part of a dignified right to life.

VIDHVATH IAS ACADEMY

Conclusion

FSSAI's proactive regulatory updates address critical food safety concerns by aligning pesticide thresholds with global standards and protecting infant health from early metabolic risks. Stringent enforcement of these regulations will enhance regulatory clarity for producers, bolster export standards, and safeguard public health.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (Governance & Public Health)**: Regulatory oversight by autonomous bodies like FSSAI; public health mandates under Article 47; child nutrition policies.
- **GS Paper III (Agriculture & Food Safety)**: Issues related to pesticide usage in agriculture, food safety standards, compliance, and international trade benchmarks (Codex).

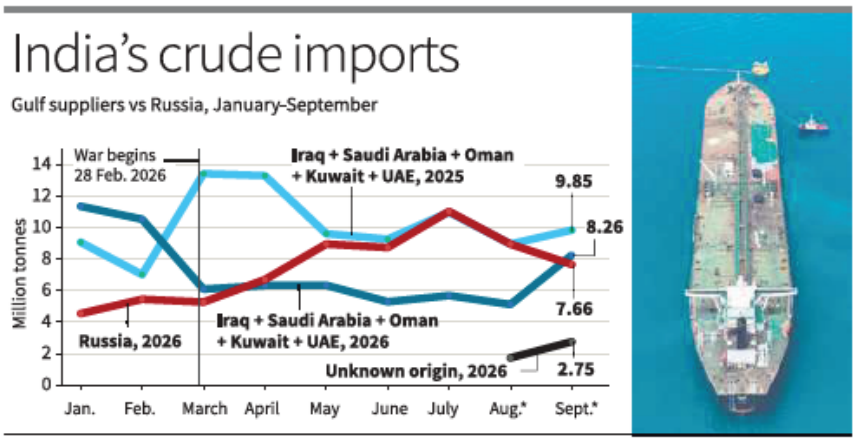
7. India's Crude Oil Import Strategy Amid West Asian Geopolitical Conflict

Key Highlights & Summary

- **Structural Shift in Maritime Trade**: The Consultative Shipping Group highlighted that conflicts over choke points like the Strait of Hormuz and Black Sea reflect structural operational shifts, as shipping routes increasingly act as instruments of geopolitical risk.
- **Surge in Iraqi Imports**: Indian imports of Iraqi crude tripled in September over August, while imports from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Oman also scaled up substantially.
- **Gulf Rebound Over Russian Oil**: Gulf crude imports reached 2.4 million barrels per day in September, crossing Russian oil shipments to India for the first time since March.
- **Diversification and Spot Purchasing**: India maintained supply stability through flexible spot purchases of over 1 million tonnes per month from suppliers like Brazil, Angola, Nigeria, Venezuela, and the U.S..
- **Bypassing Maritime Choke Points**: Exporters adapted via alternate pipelines and overland bypass routes, such as piping Saudi crude across to western Red Sea ports or using Fujairah land bypasses.
- **Escalating Gulf Risks**: Attacks on shipping intensified by late September and early October, leading to vessel sinkings and heightened maritime threat levels across the Persian Gulf and Red Sea corridors.

Essential Definitions

- **Strait of Hormuz**: A vital maritime choke point situated between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, acting as the principal transit route for a major share of the world's sea-borne crude oil.
- **Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR)**: Emergency crude oil stockpiles maintained by nations to cushion supply disruptions, market shocks, and national security risks during global energy crises.



**August and September 2026 figures are Kpler ship-tracking data, converted at 7.33 barrels per tonne. All others data, including the 2025 figures for August and September: Ministry of Commerce and Industry trade statistics (TradeStat), HS27090010. Unknown origin is a Kpler category; it has no TradeStat equivalent*

VIDHVATH IAS ACADEMY

- **Choke Point**: A narrow geographical passage along critical international maritime trade routes where shipping traffic is highly concentrated and vulnerable to military blockades or security disruptions.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 73 of the Constitution**: Pertains to the executive power of the Union, extending to matters with respect to which Parliament has power to make laws, including international trade, commerce, and foreign affairs.
- **The Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and Other Maritime Zones Act, 1976**: Regulates India's maritime jurisdiction, resource exploitation, and security rights over surrounding maritime zones.

- **UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea)**: Governs international maritime rights, freedom of navigation, innocent passage, and standard conduct in international straits and high seas.

Conclusion

India's dynamic pivot toward diversified crude sources demonstrates effective strategic autonomy and pragmatic energy risk management amid volatile West Asian geopolitics. Sustaining long-term energy security will require further expansion of Strategic Petroleum Reserves, robust diplomatic engagements across alternative oil-producing nations, and enhanced security mechanisms along crucial international sea lanes of communication.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (International Relations)**: West Asian geopolitics, impact of maritime conflicts on Indian national interests, strategic autonomy, and foreign policy response.
- **GS Paper III (Energy Security & Economy)**: Crude oil supply chain resilience, energy import diversification strategies, import bill management, and security of critical Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs).

8. Go-Delhi Foundation and Draft E-Rickshaw Scheme 2026

Key Highlights & Summary

- **₹50-Crore Startup Corpus Approved**: The Delhi Cabinet cleared setting up the Go-Delhi Foundation with an initial outlay of ₹50 crore to encourage local innovation and entrepreneurship.
- **Institutional Ecosystem Synergy**: The foundation will link Delhi's ~21,000 DPIIT-recognized startups with educational institutions, research units, prototyping facilities, and incubation networks.
- **Section 8 Company Structure**: Established as a not-for-profit entity under the Companies Act, 2013, it will offer incubation, product testing, certification, and mentorship support.
- **Fleet Cap on E-Rickshaws**: The draft Delhi E-Rickshaw (Registration and Operation) Scheme, 2026 proposes capping total registered e-rickshaws in the capital at 2.5 lakh.
- **Operational Limits and Aggregators**: Registration stops at the 2.5 lakh mark; individual residents are limited to 5 e-rickshaws, while entities owning over 25 units will be classified as aggregators.
- **Traffic & Environmental Management**: The capping draft aims to curb urban traffic congestion, road safety risks, and vehicle proliferation while driving Yamuna river cleanliness awareness.

Essential Definitions

- **Section 8 Company**: A non-profit company registered under the Companies Act, 2013 formed to promote commerce, art, science, sports, education, research, social welfare, or environmental protection, applying profits solely toward its object.
- **Prototyping Facility**: Specialized technical infrastructure providing early-stage hardware or software design, rapid modeling, and testing capabilities for commercial product development.
- **Fleet Aggregator**: An entity that manages or operates a collection of commercial vehicles under a unified operational network or platform.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 239AA of the Constitution**: Special constitutional provisions regarding the National Capital Territory of Delhi, defining governance, executive power, and legislative powers of the Legislative Assembly.
- **The Companies Act, 2013 (Section 8)**: Legal framework governing non-profit companies operating without dividend distribution to members.
- **The Motor Vehicles Act, 1988**: Grants State Governments powers to regulate, license, and restrict registrations of last-mile commercial transport vehicles to preserve public safety and road capacity.

Conclusion

The twin initiatives reflect a balanced governance approach targeting sustainable startup incubation alongside urban mobility regulation. Channeling institutional support to tech enterprises while placing structured caps on electric transport ensures innovation thrives alongside well-regulated public infrastructure.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (Governance & Urban Local Bodies)**: Institutional mechanisms for urban governance, regulation of public transport systems, and administrative measures for traffic management.
- **GS Paper III (Economy & Innovation)**: Promotion of startup ecosystem, DPIIT recognition, entrepreneurship financing models, and sustainable last-mile urban transport.

VIDHVATH IAS ACADEMY