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VIDHVATH IAS KAS ACADEMY & STUDY CENTRE

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

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1. India's Tech Workforce Readiness for the AI Era

Key Highlights & Summary

- India faces a demand-supply gap of over 3.5 times for specialized artificial intelligence talent as firms deploy the technology at scale.
- BinQle estimates India will need 1.4 million AI professionals by 2026, against an available pool of $400,000$.
- Universities struggle to fill the shortfall because traditional curricula cannot keep pace with rapidly evolving technologies or provide enough real-world deployment exposure.
- Major disruptions are occurring across financial services, retail, IT, healthcare, and logistics, driven by AI applications in fraud detection, automated coding, and medical imaging.
- The shortage of specialized talent is driving up pay, with entry-level AI-Core roles commanding 2.5 to 3 times the pay of AI-Support roles.

Essential Definitions

- Artificial Intelligence (AI): The simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, especially computer systems, encompassing machine learning, natural language processing, and automated decision-making.
- Reskilling: The process of learning new skills so an employee can take on a different job, typically driven by technological disruptions and evolving industry demands.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- Article 21: The Right to Life and Personal Liberty implicitly encompasses the right to livelihood, dignified work, and continuous skill upgradation in a modern digital economy.
- Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP) Article 41: Directs the State to secure the right to work, to education, and to public assistance in cases of unemployment and underserved economic changes.
- National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: Emphasizes critical thinking, vocational integration, and emerging technology training to make India's youth globally competitive and future-ready.

Conclusion

Bridging India's AI talent deficit requires closing the gap between academic institutions and industry requirements. Proactive policy interventions, public-private partnerships, and robust continuous learning frameworks are crucial to transforming India from a traditional IT hub into a global leader in AI innovation.

UPSC Relevance

Highly relevant for General Studies Paper 3 (Economy, Science and Technology, Employment Generation, Human Resource Development) and Essay papers focusing on technology-driven economic shifts, demographic dividends, and the future of work.

2. Weak Monsoon Prompts NBFCs to Curb Rural Lending

Key Highlights & Summary

- Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) are tightening monitoring and moderating disbursements in rural areas due to deficient rainfall, El Niño conditions, and drought risks impacting farm incomes and repayment capacity.

- The 2026 southwest monsoon concluded at 87% of the Long Period Average (LPA), marking the weakest rainfall recorded since 2015.
- Macroeconomic pressures such as rising crude oil prices, geopolitical uncertainties, and accelerating food inflation (rising from 5.97% to 7.74%) are further eroding rural purchasing power.
- Major retail financiers, including Shriram Finance, have adjusted their growth guidance downwards and reported slight upticks in Stage 2 and Stage 3 stress assets across affected states like Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Telangana.
- Key vulnerable segments facing potential asset quality deterioration include microfinance, unsecured small business loans, and tractor financing, with stress expected to manifest over upcoming quarters.

Essential Definitions

- Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC): A financial institution registered under the Companies Act engaged in the business of loans, advances, and acquisition of shares, but lacking a full banking license and unable to accept demand deposits.
- Long Period Average (LPA): The average rainfall recorded over a specified region for a given period (typically 50 years), serving as a benchmark for evaluating monsoon performance in India.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 (Chapter III-B): Empowers the RBI to regulate, inspect, and supervise the registration and operations of NBFCs to ensure financial system stability.
- Priority Sector Lending (PSL) Norms: Regulatory mandates enforced by the RBI requiring financial entities to direct a specified portion of credit to vital rural sectors, including agriculture and micro-enterprises.
- Article 39(b) of the Constitution: Directs the State to ensure that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are distributed to best subserve the common good, underscoring the necessity of inclusive rural credit access.



Conclusion

The pullback in rural credit deployment by NBFCs underscores the persistent vulnerability of India's agrarian economy to climatic disruptions like El Niño. Strengthening institutional risk-mitigation frameworks, expanding climate-resilient crop insurance, and deepening formal rural credit mechanisms are imperative to insulate rural livelihoods from systemic weather shocks.

UPSC Relevance

Directly relevant to General Studies Paper 3 (Indian Economy, Agriculture, Mobilization of Resources, Indian Monsoon & Climate Impact) and General Studies Paper 1 (Geography of Monsoons), particularly regarding rural credit flow, financial inclusion, and macroeconomic stability.

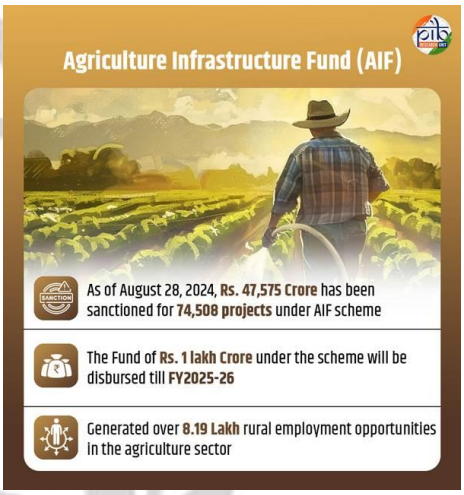
3. Extension of Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) Scheme

Key Highlights & Summary

- The Union government has extended the operational timeline of the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) scheme beyond September 30, 2026, to March 31, 2027.

- The decision aims to boost investment in post-harvest infrastructure and community farming assets to enhance storage, processing, and supply-chain efficiency.
- India currently suffers post-harvest losses of agricultural produce valued at approximately ₹1.53 trillion annually due to structural inefficiencies.
- Since its launch in 2020-21, lending institutions have sanctioned around ₹1.03 trillion for over 228,428 projects, mobilizing total investments exceeding ₹1.75 trillion.
- Top beneficiary states utilizing the AIF include Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, and Gujarat.
- Facilities such as cold storages, warehouses, and grading units created closer to farms allow farmers to store produce and prevent distress selling.

Essential Definitions



- Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF): A Central Sector Scheme offering medium-to-long term debt financing facilities for investment in viable projects for post-harvest management infrastructure and community farming assets through interest subvention and financial support.
- Interest Subvention: A subsidy provided by the government on the interest rate of a loan, reducing the overall borrowing cost for beneficiaries to make credit more affordable.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- Article 48 of the Constitution (Directive Principles of State Policy): Directs the State to organize agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines.
- Seventh Schedule (State List, Entry 14 & Concurrent List, Entry 33): Deals with agriculture, including agricultural production, supply, and distribution of foodstuffs, trade, and commerce.
- Essential Commodities Act (ECA), 1955: Regulates the production, supply, and distribution of key agricultural commodities to ensure market stability and price control.

Conclusion

Extending the AIF scheme is a vital step toward reducing post-harvest losses, enhancing farm-gate infrastructure, and improving price realization for farmers. Sustainable infrastructure development in rural areas remains paramount to ensuring food security, strengthening agricultural supply chains, and driving long-term agrarian prosperity.

UPSC Relevance

Highly relevant for General Studies Paper 3 (Agriculture, Storage, Transport & Marketing of Agricultural Produce, Supply Chain Management, Issues Related to Direct & Indirect Farm Subsidies) and General Studies Paper 2 (Government Policies and Interventions).

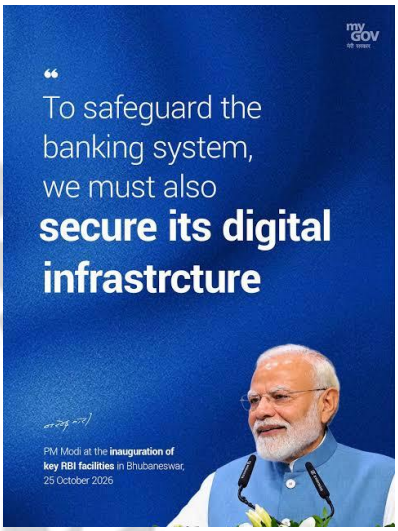
4. Protecting India's Banking System from Cyber Terrorism

Key Highlights & Summary

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Reserve Bank of India’s new Data Centre and Cybersecurity Training Institute in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

- Modern warfare increasingly targets national economies rather than relying solely on conventional military weapons, making economic infrastructure a prime target for cyber attacks.
- As India's financial strength and digital transaction footprint expand, safeguarding the banking architecture against cyber criminals and state-sponsored cyber terrorists has become critical for national security.
- The new RBI facility is designed to enhance institutional capability in data protection, real-time threat response, and continuous capacity building for cyber specialists.
- Securing core financial networks protects against non-performing asset vulnerabilities and systemic shocks that could jeopardize macroeconomic stability.

Essential Definitions



- Cyber Terrorism: The deliberate, politically or ideologically motivated use of computer networks and digital tools to disrupt, damage, or compromise critical national infrastructure and economic systems.
- Critical Information Infrastructure (CII): Digital and physical assets, systems, or networks whose incapacitation or destruction would severely impact national security, economy, or public health and safety.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- Information Technology Act, 2000 (Section 66F): Explicitly prescribes punishment for cyber terrorism, covering unauthorized access or attacks on critical information infrastructure.
- Information Technology Act, 2000 (Section 70): Authorizes the government to declare specific financial networks and data repositories as Critical Information Infrastructure, establishing specialized security standards.
- National Cybersecurity Strategy & CERT-In Framework: Governs emergency computer threat response and establishes institutional mechanisms for incident reporting across financial and banking platforms.
- Seventh Schedule (Union List, Entry 36 & Entry 93): Vests exclusive legislative powers with Parliament over currency, coinage, banking regulation, and offenses against laws concerning Union subjects.

Conclusion

Modern economic security is intrinsically linked to cybersecurity. Establishing specialized facilities like the RBI's Data Centre and Cybersecurity Training Institute strengthens India's digital defense ecosystem. Protecting financial nodes ensures that economic growth remains resilient against evolving hybrid warfare tactics and global cyber threats.

UPSC Relevance

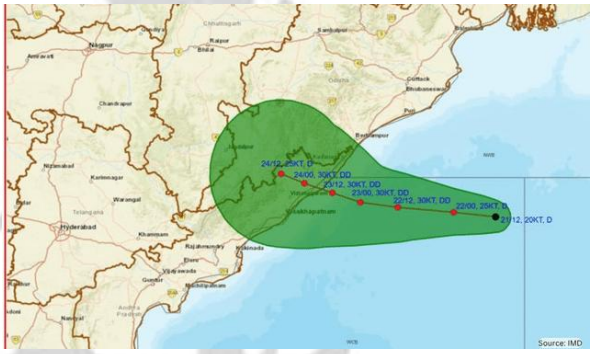
Highly relevant for General Studies Paper 3 (Internal Security, Cyber Warfare, Security Challenges & Their Management in Border & Digital Domains, Role of External State & Non-State Actors) and General Studies Paper 2 (Statutory & Regulatory Bodies, Governance).

5. A.P., Odisha on High Alert as IMD Confirms Deep Depression

Key Highlights & Summary

- The India Meteorological Department (IMD) confirmed that a weather system over the Bay of Bengal intensified into a deep depression on Sunday.
- The system is expected to further intensify into a 'very severe cyclonic storm' before making landfall on October 28.
- Andhra Pradesh and Odisha have been placed on high alert as the cyclone approaches the eastern coast.
- Authorities in Andhra Pradesh, the primary expected landfall location, initiated immediate evacuation measures for vulnerable populations in impact zones.
- Odisha state ministers have been deployed to oversee regional disaster management operations and preparedness efforts.

Essential Definitions



- Deep Depression: A intensified low-pressure atmospheric system characterized by maximum sustained surface winds ranging between 28 and 33 knots (52-61 km/h) around a central low.
- Landfall: The intersection of the center of a tropical cyclone or severe storm with a coastline, often accompanied by heavy precipitation, high wind speeds, and storm surges.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- Disaster Management Act, 2005: Provides the statutory framework for disaster response, authorizing the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) to issue binding mitigation directives.
- Article 21 of the Constitution: Guarantees the Right to Life, imposing an inherent obligation on the State to protect citizens from life-threatening natural disasters through timely evacuation and relief.
- Seventh Schedule (Concurrent List, Entry 23 & Union List, Entry 56): Establishes joint responsibility for social security and disaster relief, along with Union control over interstate water bodies and coastal navigation safety.

Conclusion

The rapid intensification of Bay of Bengal weather systems highlights India's vulnerability to extreme coastal weather events. Early warning mechanisms, prompt evacuation protocols, and active administrative oversight remain vital to minimizing loss of life and maintaining infrastructural resilience.

UPSC Relevance

Directly relevant for General Studies Paper 3 (Disaster Management, Cyclones, Climate Change & Extreme Weather Events) and General Studies Paper 1 (Physical Geography, Tropical Cyclones in the Bay of Bengal).

6. Protests Escalation Over Proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project

Key Highlights & Summary

- Protests against the proposed 11,200-MW Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) turned violent in Arunachal Pradesh's East Siang district, prompting heavy security deployment and restrictions under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) in Pasighat, Mebo, and Ruksin.
- Project developer NHPC Limited engaged a public relations firm with a contract valued at nearly ₹10.91 crore to conduct multi-level outreach aimed at managing community feedback, tracking public sentiment, and countering negative discourse.
- Indigenous forums, including the Siang Indigenous Farmers' Forum (SIFF), and local villagers continue to demand the complete scrapping of the project due to serious concerns over land submergence, large-scale displacement, and loss of indigenous culture.
- The proposed megadam on the Siang River (which becomes the Brahmaputra in Assam) is currently at the pre-feasibility survey stage and is positioned by the Central Government as a strategic buffer against China's upstream dam construction on the Yarlung Tsangpo.
- Chief Minister Pema Khandu has called for open dialogue to address public apprehensions, emphasizing the need to bridge the information gap regarding project benefits and strategic importance.

Essential Definitions

- Multipurpose River Valley Project: An integrated infrastructure initiative designed for damming rivers to serve multiple objectives simultaneously, including hydroelectric power generation, flood control, irrigation, and water storage.
- Section 163 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS): A legal provision empowering a Magistrate to issue urgent orders to prohibit unlawful assemblies, restrict public movement, and prevent civil disturbance or threats to public tranquility (replacing Section 144 of the erstwhile CrPC).

Legal and Constitutional Framework



- Article 244(1) and Fifth Schedule: Grants special constitutional protections and autonomy regarding administration and land rights to Scheduled Areas and indigenous tribal communities.
- Article 371H: Contains special provisions with respect to the Governor's responsibility regarding law and order in the State of Arunachal Pradesh.
- Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (RFCTLARR): Mandates Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and informed consent from affected landowners prior to land acquisition for infrastructure projects.
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006: Requires statutory public hearings and environmental clearances under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, for large-scale river valley projects.

Conclusion

The impasse over the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project highlights the complex conflict between strategic infrastructure imperatives and ecological-tribal rights in the Eastern Himalayas. Achieving a sustainable balance requires genuine stakeholder consultation, transparent environmental assessments, and fair compensation frameworks to build local consensus without compromising national security.

UPSC Relevance

Highly relevant for General Studies Paper 3 (Infrastructure - Energy and Hydropower, Environmental Impact Assessment, Disaster Management and Security Challenges in Border Areas), General Studies Paper 2 (Government Policies and Interventions, Statutory Bodies), and General Studies Paper 1 (Geography of Northeast India and Transboundary Rivers).

7. Institutional Integrity and Public Healthcare Ethics

Key Highlights & Summary

- Former Chief Justice of India D. Y. Chandrachud highlighted the fundamental role of public institutions in modern democracy, cautioning against the erosion of institutional trust.
- Delivering the 55th Foundation Day convocation address at UCMS, Delhi, he emphasized that societal endurance relies directly on the strength and stability of its foundational institutions.
- Drawing a metaphor between human anatomy and institutional building, he noted that foundational efforts often remain invisible yet sustain the entire structural setup.
- He called upon medical graduates to reject workplace exploitation and challenge systemic norms that compromise work environments in public health infrastructure.
- The address underscored that institutional experience in public healthcare setups, such as GTB Hospital, cultivates professional excellence and social responsibility.

Essential Definitions

- Public Institutions: Established organizational frameworks, bodies, or systemic structures created by state authority to serve collective public interest, enforce social order, and provide public goods.
- Systemic Exploitation: Unfair or oppressive practices embedded within organizational structures or work cultures that take advantage of individuals through inadequate compensation or excessive work conditions.

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Legal and Constitutional Framework

- Article 21 of the Constitution: Guarantees the Right to Life, which the Supreme Court has repeatedly expanded to include the right to healthcare, dignified working conditions, and occupational safety.
- Article 47 (Directive Principles of State Policy): Enjoins the State with a primary duty to raise the level of nutrition and standard of living, and improve public health infrastructure.
- Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020: Regulates statutory standards for working environments, welfare provisions, and hours of work across professional establishments.

Conclusion

Preserving institutional trust and ensuring humane working conditions within public facilities are critical pillars of governance. Addressing systemic exploitation in health and public sector institutions ensures that essential services remain robust, equitable, and capable of fostering long-term social progress.

UPSC Relevance

Directly relevant to General Studies Paper 4 (Ethics, Public Service Values, Human Values, Work Culture), General Studies Paper 2 (Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Issues Relating to Poverty and Hunger), and Essay.

8. OBC Creamy Layer Criteria and Service Allocation Challenges

Key Highlights & Summary



- The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has filed a Miscellaneous Application seeking Supreme Court clarification to proceed with service allocation for 958 recommended candidates of Civil Services Examination (CSE) 2025.
- The impasse stems from the Supreme Court's judgment in 'Union of India vs Rohith Nathan', which ruled that OBC 'creamy layer' status cannot be determined solely on parental income.
- The top court held that treating similarly placed employees of private entities, PSUs, and government services differently for reservation determination amounts to hostile discrimination.
- DoPT has requested permission to execute service allocation for CSE-2025 using the pre-verdict creamy layer principles, as service allocations are difficult to reverse once finalized.
- Government estimates indicate that delays in starting the foundation course will not affect the seniority, gradation, or service conditions of the CSE-2025 candidates.
- Stakeholders including UPSC, DoPT, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and Ministry of Law and Justice examined recruitment implications across fourteen previous CSE cycles.

Essential Definitions

- Creamy Layer: A legal threshold used in Indian reservation policy to exclude relatively forward or affluent members of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) from affirmative action benefits.
- Hostile Discrimination: Differential treatment under the law that lacks a reasonable classification or rational nexus, violating the constitutional guarantee of equal protection.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- Article 14: Guarantees equality before the law and equal protection of the laws, barring arbitrary or non-rational classification among similar groups.
- Article 16(4): Empowers the State to make provisions for the reservation of appointments or posts in favor of any backward class of citizens not adequately represented in state services.
- Indra Sawhney Case (1992): Established the mandatory exclusion of the 'creamy layer' from backward classes to ensure reservation benefits reach the genuinely disadvantaged.

Conclusion

Resolving the creamy layer determination methodology is critical for ensuring constitutional fairness in public employment. Clear Judicial directives will ensure administrative clarity, eliminate legal ambiguity for civil service recruits, and uphold equity in affirmative action policies.

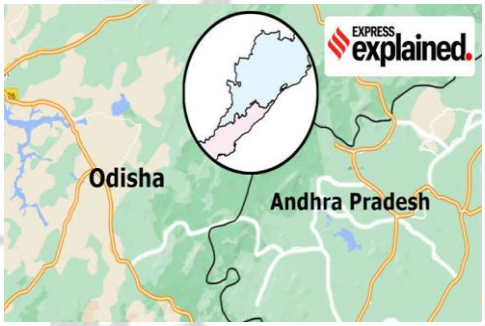
UPSC Relevance

Directly relevant to General Studies Paper 2 (Indian Constitution - Features, Fundamental Rights, Structure & Functioning of Executive and Judiciary, Statutory & Regulatory Bodies) and General Studies Paper 4 (Public Service Values and Ethics in Governance).

9. Odisha and Andhra Pradesh Inter-State Border Dispute over Kotia Panchayat

Key Highlights & Summary

- Andhra Pradesh's announcement to hold local body elections in three villages of the disputed Kotia panchayat has reignited a decades-old border conflict with Odisha.
- Former Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik criticized the ruling State government, questioning its commitment to safeguarding territorial integrity and Odia pride.
- The Odisha government is exploring fresh legal options, including a contempt petition in the Supreme Court filed by the Koraput district collector against Andhra Pradesh.



- Kotia panchayat consists of 28 villages with a population of nearly 5,000, where both states have claimed jurisdiction over 21 villages since the 1960s.
- The dispute reached the Supreme Court in 1968, which passed a status quo order, and in 2006, the court dismissed a suit on technical grounds while directing both states to maintain status quo.
- Residents in the disputed region receive dual welfare benefits from both state governments, causing administrative overlap and governance uncertainties.

Essential Definitions

- Inter-State Boundary Dispute: A territorial disagreement between two or more federating units of a country over the administrative jurisdiction and geographical demarcation of border areas.
- Status Quo Order: A judicial directive requiring the parties involved in a dispute to maintain existing conditions and refrain from altering the administrative or physical status of a contested area.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- Article 131: Grants the Supreme Court original and exclusive jurisdiction in disputes between the Government of India and one or more States, or between two or more States.
- Article 3: Empowers Parliament by law to form new States, alter the areas, boundaries, or names of existing States.
- Article 263: Provides for the establishment of an Inter-State Council to inquire into and advise upon disputes arising between States.

Conclusion

The recurring friction over the Kotia panchayat highlights the need for institutional mechanisms to settle long-pending inter-state boundary disputes. Strengthening dialogue through bilateral joint mechanisms and activating constitutional bodies like the Inter-State Council are essential for ensuring cooperative federalism and effective governance in border regions.

UPSC Relevance

Directly relevant to General Studies Paper 2 (Functions and Responsibilities of the Union and the States, Issues and Challenges Pertaining to the Federal Structure, Inter-State Disputes, and Constitutional Bodies).

10. Starlink Incident Highlights Structural Challenges in India's Political Economy

Key Highlights & Summary

- Elon Musk's public accusation against domestic telecom incumbents highlights the complex relationship between global market entrants, domestic conglomerates, and regulatory state interventions in India.
- Post-1991 economic liberalisation reduced license-permit raj barriers but retained state control over key resources like spectrum, leaving entry conditions vulnerable to incumbent advantage.
- Unlike American industrial history where state intervention promoted technological disruption alongside antitrust enforcement, developing economies face persistent risks of wealth and market concentration.
- Regulatory oversight in critical sectors like satellite broadband involves national security compliance, spectrum management, and data sovereignty that apply uniformly across foreign and domestic entities.



- Commercial entities including Starlink, Reliance Jio, and Eutelsat OneWeb await final regulatory clearances, emphasizing the necessity for strong institutions to sustain fair market competition.
- The incident demonstrates how modern globalization has become increasingly conditional, politicized, and driven by high-stakes negotiations between state authority and private capital.

Essential Definitions

- Political Economy: The interdisciplinary study of how economic theory, political institutions, legal frameworks, and state power interact to influence market structures and wealth distribution.
- Market Entry Barrier: Structural, legal, regulatory, or economic obstacles that hinder new firms from entering an industry and competing effectively against established incumbents.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- Competition Act, 2002: Mandates the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to prevent practices having an adverse effect on competition, promote market openness, and protect consumer interests.

- Telecommunications Act, 2023: Provides the statutory framework for regulating telecommunication services, spectrum allocation mechanisms, and national security oversight in India.
- Article 19(1)(g): Guarantees the fundamental right to practice any profession, trade, or business, subject to reasonable restrictions imposed by the state under Article 19(6) in the public interest.
- Article 39(c) (Directive Principles of State Policy): Directs the State to ensure that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment.

Conclusion

The evolving dynamics in India's satellite communication market highlight the delicate balance between protecting domestic strategic interests and fostering dynamic market competition. Strengthening institutional regulatory frameworks and maintaining non-discriminatory policy implementation are vital to building a competitive digital economy while safeguarding national security priorities.

UPSC Relevance

Directly relevant to General Studies Paper 3 (Indian Economy - Industrial Policy, Infrastructure, Liberalization, Cyber Security & Communication Networks) and General Studies Paper 2 (Government Policies & Interventions, Regulatory Bodies, Statutory Frameworks).

11. Addressing Soil Health Deterioration and Agricultural Subsidies Reform

Key Highlights & Summary

- The Union Minister for Agriculture launched the "Khet Bachao Abhiyan" to correct the imbalanced use of chemical fertilizers that harms soils, pollutes groundwater, and degrades air quality.
- Imbalances in NPK (Nitrogen, Phosphate, Potash) application have worsened since the Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) introduction in 2010, driving the N:P:K ratio to 10.5:4.1:1 against the ideal 4:2:1 normative baseline.



- Soil Health Card testing across 96 lakh samples in 2025-26 revealed that 72% of soils are low in nitrogen, 52% in organic carbon, 42% in boron, and 37% in zinc.
- Over-application of nitrogen causes nitrous oxide emissions (273 times more potent than carbon dioxide) and leads to nitrate leaching into groundwater across 502 districts, triggering risks like blue baby syndrome.
- Fiscal pressure is rising, with the fertilizer subsidy budget for 2026-27 projected at ₹1.71 lakh crore, which could escalate to ₹2.5-3 lakh crore due to geopolitical disruptions in key trade corridors like the Strait of Hormuz.
- Policy recommendations urge shifting from input price subsidies to direct benefit transfers (DBT) on a per-hectare basis, expanding PM-PRANAM, promoting fertigation, and implementing 4R nutrient stewardship (right source, rate, time, and place).

Essential Definitions

- Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS): A policy regime where a fixed rate of subsidy is announced on secondary and micronutrient fertilizers, allowing market prices of phosphatic and potassic fertilizers to fluctuate while keeping urea prices strictly controlled.
- 4R Nutrient Stewardship: An agricultural management framework focusing on applying the right fertilizer source at the right rate, right time, and right place to maximize crop uptake and minimize environmental loss.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- Article 48 (Directive Principles of State Policy): Enjoins the State to organize agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines to boost agricultural productivity.
- Article 47 (DPSP): Directs the State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people, and improve public health, including preventing environmental contamination of water bodies.
- Essential Commodities Act (ECA), 1955: Grants statutory powers to the central government to regulate the supply, distribution, and price movement of essential agricultural inputs, including fertilizers.
- Fertilizer Control Order (FCO), 1985: Regulates the quality, distribution, and sale of fertilizers across India under Section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act.

Conclusion

Sustaining agricultural productivity requires moving away from distorted price signals toward balanced nutrient management and direct support mechanisms. Integrating digital farmer IDs, expanding bio-fertilizers, and rewarding ecological farming practices are essential to restore soil health and secure long-term national food security.

UPSC Relevance

Directly relevant to General Studies Paper 3 (Major Crops & Cropping Patterns, Land Reforms, Direct & Indirect Farm Subsidies, Environmental Degradation, and Food Security) and General Studies Paper 2 (Government Policies & Interventions).

12. Judicial Propriety, Free Speech, and the Boundaries of Extrajudicial Commentary

Key Highlights & Summary

- Recent remarks by Supreme Court Justice Ujjal Bhuyan at a NALSAR event regarding voting rights, voter deletions, and procedural safeguards have reignited debates over extrajudicial commentary on sub judice matters.
- Critics, including former Chief Justice B.R. Gavai and former judges, argued that judicial propriety prohibits sitting judges from publicly discussing active legal controversies.
- Supporters note that Justice Bhuyan's core legal propositions largely align with established doctrines, such as the Supreme Court's ruling upholding the statutory requirement for notice and inquiry before voter deletion.
- The Restatement of Values of Judicial Life (1997) bars judges from entering public debates or commenting on matters pending or likely to arise for judicial determination.

- Comparative international frameworks, including the Bangalore Principles and the U.S. Supreme Court Code of Conduct, permit scholarly and educational lectures on law while cautioning against commenting on the merits of pending cases.

Essential Definitions

- Sub Judice: A legal term denoting a matter that is currently under trial or active consideration by a court of law, restricting public or extrajudicial discussion concerning its merits.
- Restatement of Values of Judicial Life: A set of ethical principles adopted by the Full Court of the Supreme Court of India in 1997 to guide judicial conduct, impartiality, and public interactions.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- Article 14: Guarantees equality before the law and equal protection of the laws, protecting citizens against arbitrary state action or mass disenfranchisement.
- Article 326: Governs elections to the House of the People and Legislative Assemblies on the basis of adult suffrage, establishing the constitutional foundation for voting rights.
- Representation of the People Act, 1950 (Section 22): Outlines the statutory procedure, mandatory notice, and inquiry requirements for any correction or deletion of entries in electoral rolls.

Conclusion

Balancing judicial independence with institutional restraint remains a vital necessity in a constitutional democracy. While extrajudicial discourse enriches legal education and public debate, maintaining a clear boundary between academic commentary and pre-judging matters sub judice is essential to preserving public trust in the judiciary.

UPSC Relevance

Directly relevant for General Studies Paper 2 (Indian Constitution - Structure, Organization, and Functioning of the Judiciary, Judicial Review, Judicial Accountability and Ethics) and General Studies Paper 4 (Ethics, Integrity, and Aptitude - Judicial Ethics and Public Service Values).

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