



RAMAKRISHNA MISSION - GEO IAS DAILY UPSC NEWSPAPER ANALYSIS 24 SEPTEMBER 2026



TODAY'S HIGH-PRIORITY UPSC THEMES

- SUPREME COURT, COLLEGIUM AND INSTITUTIONAL INDEPENDENCE
- NATIONAL SECURITY ACT: PREVENTIVE DETENTION AND DUE PROCESS
- GURUGRAM C&D; WASTE RULES: URBAN AIR POLLUTION AND CIRCULARITY
- DURGA E-AUTO SCHEME: GREEN MOBILITY WITH GENDER INCLUSION
- BRICS TAX COOPERATION AND THE NEW GLOBAL TAX ORDER
- KANDA EXPRESS AND ONION BUFFER: PRICE STABILISATION IN FOOD MARKETS
- AYUSHMAN BHARAT PM-JAY AT EIGHT: UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE AND PURCHASER POWER
- PROJECT RHINO AND TRANSBOUNDARY CONSERVATION
- TOKAY GECKO TRAFFICKING: WILDLIFE CRIME AND NORTHEAST CORRIDORS
- COMMERCIAL SHIPPING OFF OMAN: MARITIME SECURITY AND INDIA'S ENERGY LIFELINES

SOURCE & FRESHNESS NOTE

• Morning edition prepared from reporting available by 7:00 AM IST on 24 September 2026. The Hindu was prioritised in topic discovery but its site blocked automated access; no inaccessible article is falsely quoted. Current developments were cross-checked with Indian Express, PIB/official releases, Reuters-linked reporting and other reliable reports.



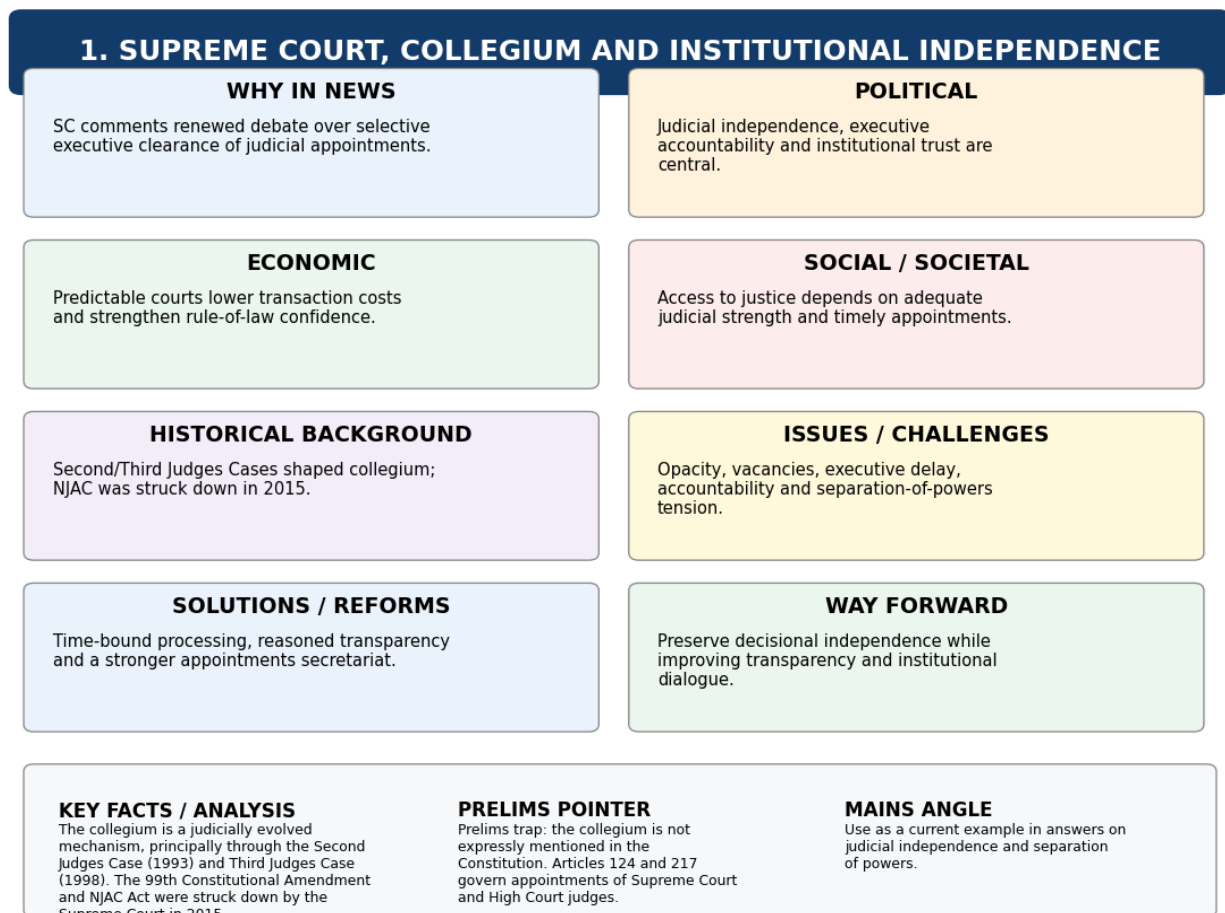
1. SUPREME COURT, COLLEGIUM AND INSTITUTIONAL INDEPENDENCE

UPSC syllabus: GS-II Constitution | Judiciary | Separation of Powers

CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

- The Supreme Court defended the collegium system while flagging the Union government's selective clearance of names recommended for judicial appointments. The immediate hearing arose in litigation concerning the 2023 law governing appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners.
- The deeper constitutional issue is institutional independence: judicial appointments, executive delay, transparency and the balance between accountability and insulation from political control.
- Abbreviations: SC = Supreme Court; CJI = Chief Justice of India; NJAC = National Judicial Appointments Commission; CEC = Chief Election Commissioner; EC = Election Commissioner.
- The collegium is a judicially evolved mechanism, principally through the Second Judges Case (1993) and Third Judges Case (1998). The 99th Constitutional Amendment and NJAC Act were struck down by the Supreme Court in 2015.
- Prelims trap: the collegium is not expressly mentioned in the Constitution. Articles 124 and 217 govern appointments of Supreme Court and High Court judges.

TOPIC-WISE UPSC INFOGRAPHIC



KEY POINTS FOR UPSC

- Use as a current example in answers on judicial independence and separation of powers.
- Distinguish constitutional appointment provisions from the judicially evolved collegium procedure.
- Critical answer should acknowledge both independence concerns and demands for transparency.

WAY FORWARD

- Create predictable timelines for processing recommendations.
- Publish more reasoned collegium resolutions while protecting legitimate privacy.
- Strengthen a professional appointments secretariat and vacancy forecasting.



- Use constitutional dialogue rather than institutional confrontation.



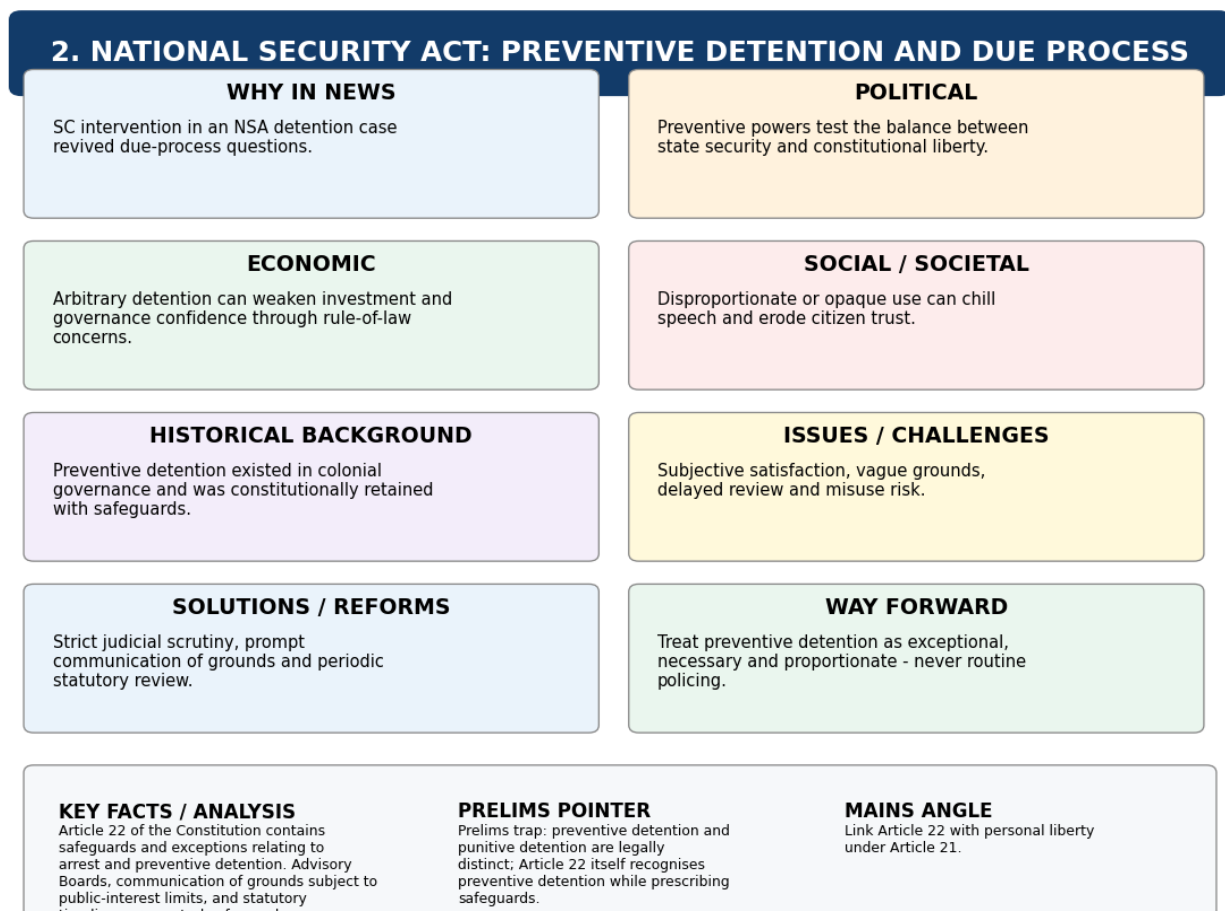
2. NATIONAL SECURITY ACT: PREVENTIVE DETENTION AND DUE PROCESS

UPSC syllabus: GS-II Fundamental Rights | Governance | Internal Security

CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

- The Supreme Court stayed an Allahabad High Court order that had quashed a student's detention under the National Security Act and imposed strictures and compensation against the district magistrate.
- Preventive detention permits detention to prevent anticipated harmful conduct rather than punish a completed offence. This makes procedural safeguards especially important.
- Abbreviations: NSA = National Security Act, 1980; DM = District Magistrate; HC = High Court; SC = Supreme Court.
- Article 22 of the Constitution contains safeguards and exceptions relating to arrest and preventive detention. Advisory Boards, communication of grounds subject to public-interest limits, and statutory timelines are central safeguards.
- Prelims trap: preventive detention and punitive detention are legally distinct; Article 22 itself recognises preventive detention while prescribing safeguards.

TOPIC-WISE UPSC INFOGRAPHIC



KEY POINTS FOR UPSC

- Link Article 22 with personal liberty under Article 21.
- Use the distinction between prevention and punishment in Prelims and Mains.
- A balanced answer should recognise legitimate security needs but insist on necessity, proportionality and review.

WAY FORWARD

- Apply preventive detention only when ordinary criminal law is genuinely inadequate.
- Ensure timely Advisory Board review and meaningful disclosure of grounds.
- Train district authorities in constitutional and evidentiary standards.



- Collect anonymised use data for legislative and judicial oversight.



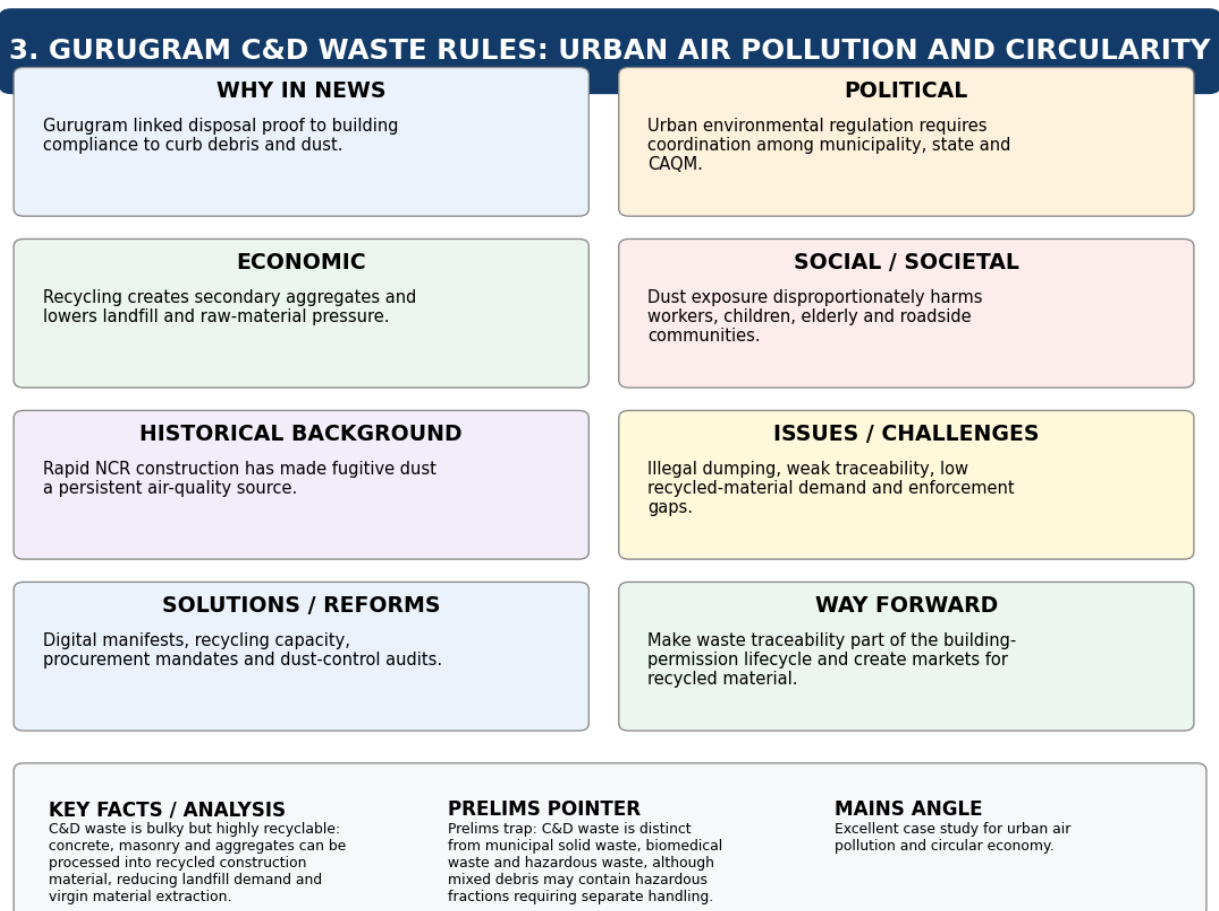
3. GURUGRAM C&D; WASTE RULES: URBAN AIR POLLUTION AND CIRCULARITY

UPSC syllabus: GS-III Environment | Urbanisation | Waste Management

CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

- Gurugram tightened construction and demolition waste compliance: for specified projects, proof of lawful debris disposal is being linked to building clearances and occupancy certification.
- The move enforces the Environment (Construction and Demolition) Waste Management Rules, 2025, Haryana policy and Commission for Air Quality Management directions.
- Abbreviations: C&D; = Construction and Demolition; MCG = Municipal Corporation of Gurugram; CAQM = Commission for Air Quality Management; NCR = National Capital Region.
- C&D; waste is bulky but highly recyclable: concrete, masonry and aggregates can be processed into recycled construction material, reducing landfill demand and virgin material extraction.
- Prelims trap: C&D; waste is distinct from municipal solid waste, biomedical waste and hazardous waste, although mixed debris may contain hazardous fractions requiring separate handling.

TOPIC-WISE UPSC INFOGRAPHIC



KEY POINTS FOR UPSC

- Excellent case study for urban air pollution and circular economy.
- Remember CAQM's NCR role and the distinction among waste streams.
- Use lifecycle regulation: generation -> segregation -> transport -> processing -> reuse.

WAY FORWARD

- Mandate digital tracking of large C&D; waste generators.
- Expand decentralised collection and recycling facilities.
- Use public procurement to create demand for recycled aggregates.



- Enforce on-site dust suppression and worker protection.



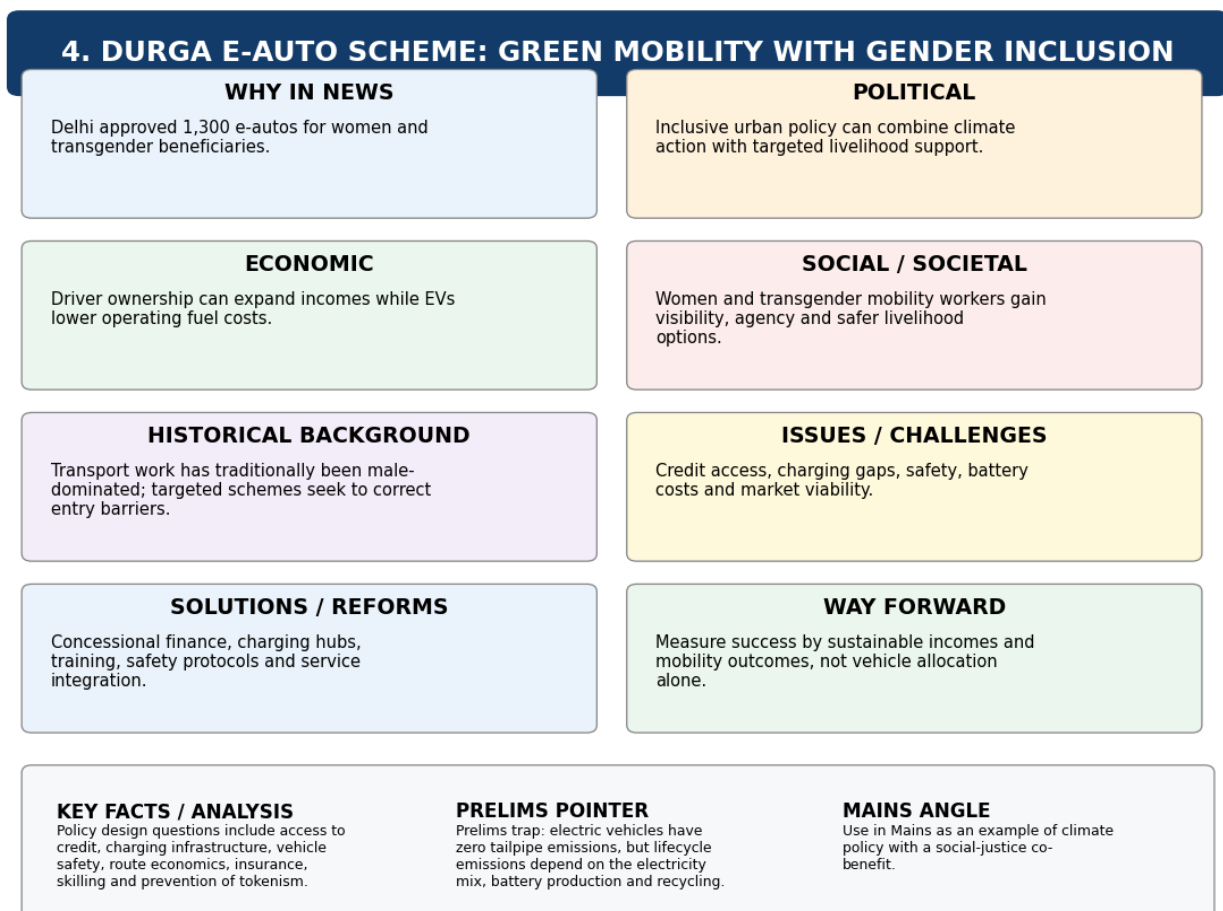
4. DURGA E-AUTO SCHEME: GREEN MOBILITY WITH GENDER INCLUSION

UPSC syllabus: GS-II Social Justice | GS-III Environment and Urban Transport

CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

- The Delhi Cabinet approved the DURGA e-auto scheme for 1,300 pink electric autos in its first phase: 1,170 are earmarked for women and 130 for transgender beneficiaries.
- The scheme combines clean mobility with livelihood creation and representation in a transport sector where women and transgender persons face barriers to entry.
- Abbreviations: EV = Electric Vehicle; e-auto = electric autorickshaw; DURGA = scheme name used by Delhi government.
- Policy design questions include access to credit, charging infrastructure, vehicle safety, route economics, insurance, skilling and prevention of tokenism.
- Prelims trap: electric vehicles have zero tailpipe emissions, but lifecycle emissions depend on the electricity mix, battery production and recycling.

TOPIC-WISE UPSC INFOGRAPHIC



KEY POINTS FOR UPSC

- Use in Mains as an example of climate policy with a social-justice co-benefit.
- Lifecycle analysis prevents simplistic claims that EVs are impact-free.
- Connect to just transition and gender-responsive budgeting.

WAY FORWARD

- Bundle vehicles with affordable credit and insurance.
- Build safe charging and rest infrastructure.
- Provide driving, digital-platform and financial-literacy training.
- Track income, safety and retention outcomes transparently.

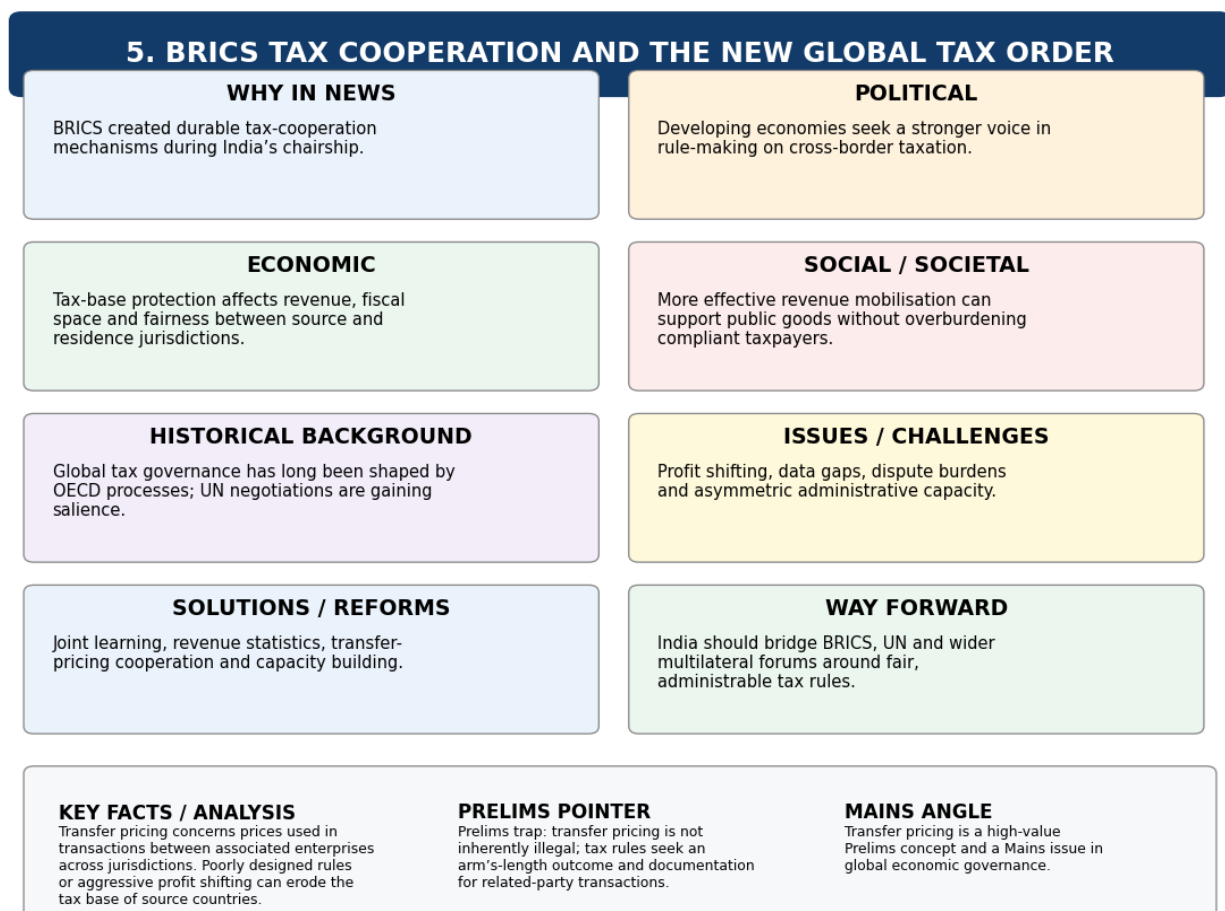
5. BRICS TAX COOPERATION AND THE NEW GLOBAL TAX ORDER

UPSC syllabus: GS-II International Relations | GS-III Economy and Taxation

CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

- At the BRICS Heads of Tax Authorities Meeting in New Delhi, India's 2026 chairship institutionalised cooperation on international taxation, transfer pricing and revenue statistics.
- Two India-led working groups were established: International Taxation and Transfer Pricing, and Revenue Statistics. A BRICS Tax Cross-Learning Lab and annual Young Tax Professionals programme were also institutionalised.
- Abbreviations: BRICS = Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa and expanded members; UN = United Nations; OECD = Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; MNE = Multinational Enterprise.
- Transfer pricing concerns prices used in transactions between associated enterprises across jurisdictions. Poorly designed rules or aggressive profit shifting can erode the tax base of source countries.
- Prelims trap: transfer pricing is not inherently illegal; tax rules seek an arm's-length outcome and documentation for related-party transactions.

TOPIC-WISE UPSC INFOGRAPHIC



KEY POINTS FOR UPSC

- Transfer pricing is a high-value Prelims concept and a Mains issue in global economic governance.
- Source-jurisdiction concerns are particularly important for developing economies.
- Use digital administration plus human capacity as complementary reforms.

WAY FORWARD

- Build interoperable but privacy-protecting tax-data systems.
- Strengthen transfer-pricing expertise in developing administrations.
- Push for fair source-country taxing rights in multilateral negotiations.



- Use comparable revenue statistics for evidence-based policy.



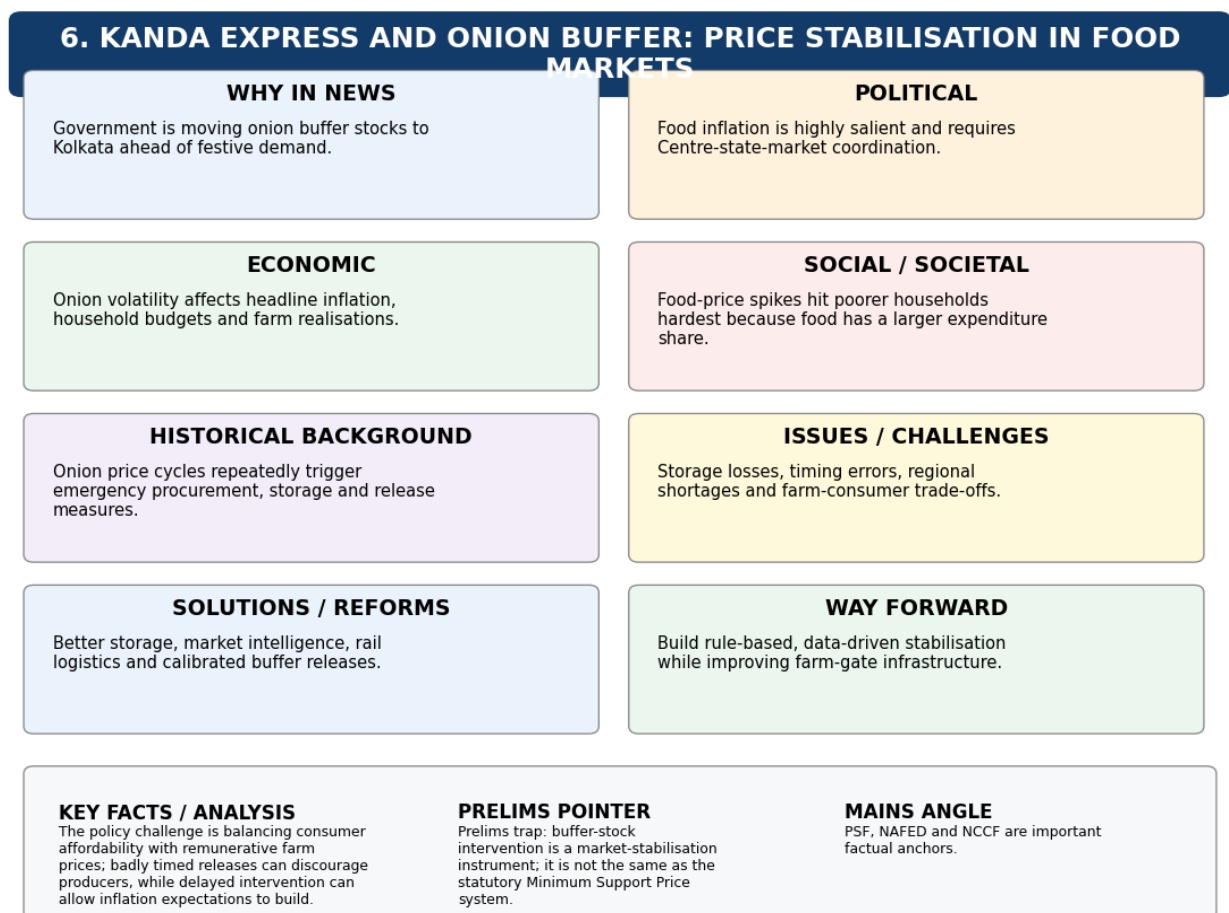
6. KANDA EXPRESS AND ONION BUFFER: PRICE STABILISATION IN FOOD MARKETS

UPSC syllabus: GS-III Agriculture | Food Management | Inflation

CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

- A Kanda Express carrying onions from the Price Stabilisation Fund buffer is scheduled to reach Kolkata on 24 September, augmenting festive-season supply. Around 1,400 metric tonnes had already been distributed in West Bengal through NAFED and NCCF channels at Rs 35 per kg.
- Abbreviations: PSF = Price Stabilisation Fund; NAFED = National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India; NCCF = National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India.
- Buffer operations seek to smooth extreme seasonal price spikes by procuring in surplus periods and releasing stocks when retail supply tightens.
- The policy challenge is balancing consumer affordability with remunerative farm prices; badly timed releases can discourage producers, while delayed intervention can allow inflation expectations to build.
- Prelims trap: buffer-stock intervention is a market-stabilisation instrument; it is not the same as the statutory Minimum Support Price system.

TOPIC-WISE UPSC INFOGRAPHIC



KEY POINTS FOR UPSC

- PSF, NAFED and NCCF are important factual anchors.
- Use onion volatility to explain supply-side food inflation.
- Distinguish buffer release from MSP procurement.

WAY FORWARD

- Improve scientific onion storage and reduce post-harvest losses.
- Use high-frequency mandi and retail data for release decisions.



- Expand rail logistics for rapid inter-regional movement.
- Keep intervention transparent and time-bound to avoid distorting farm incentives.



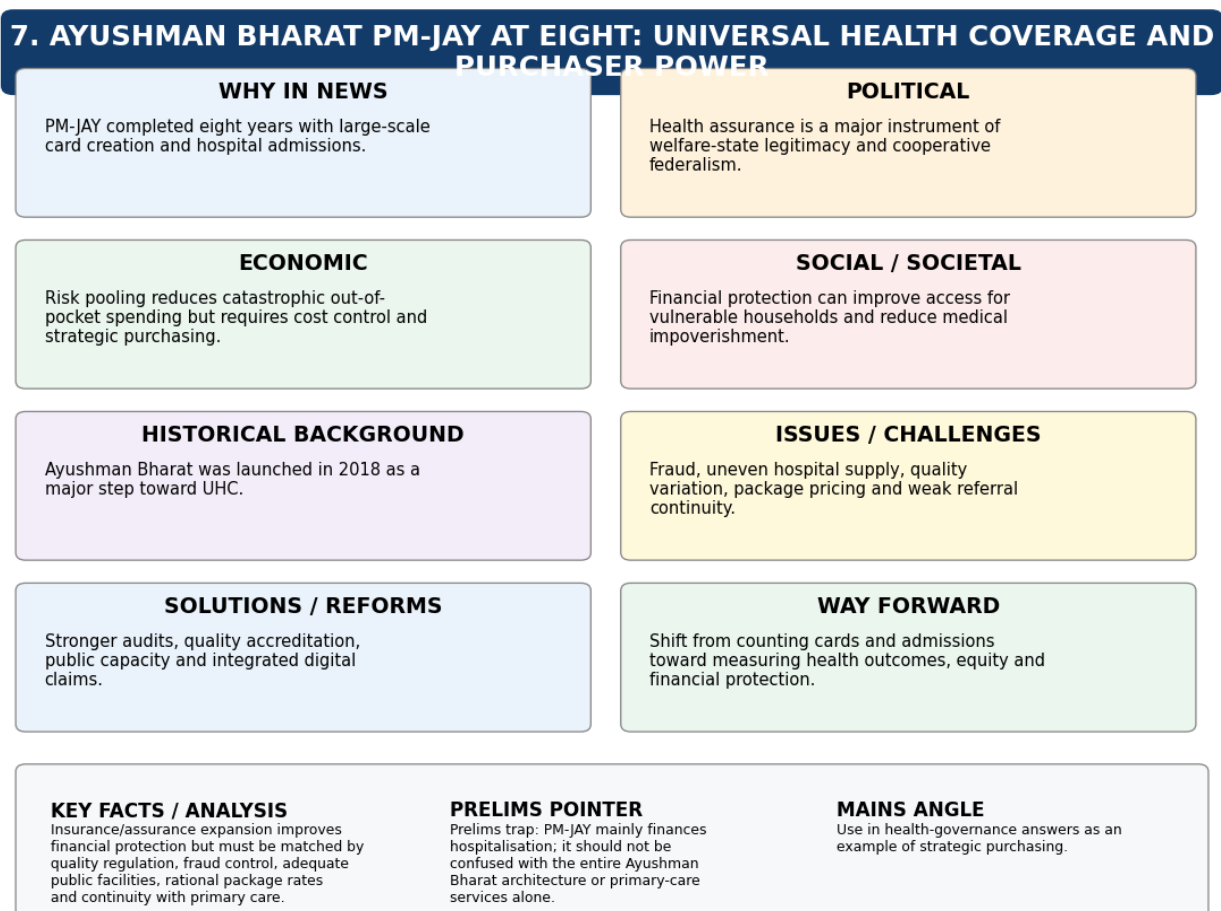
7. AYUSHMAN BHARAT PM-JAY AT EIGHT: UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE AND PURCHASER POWER

UPSC syllabus: GS-II Health | Welfare Schemes | Governance

CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

- Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana completed eight years on 23 September. Recent official data reported more than 48.5 crore Ayushman cards and about 13.25 crore hospital admissions worth roughly Rs 2.03 lakh crore through over 38,000 empanelled hospitals.
- AB PM-JAY provides eligible beneficiaries cashless secondary and tertiary hospital care, while the broader Ayushman Bharat architecture also includes primary-care and digital-health components.
- Abbreviations: AB PM-JAY = Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana; NHA = National Health Authority; UHC = Universal Health Coverage; AAM = Ayushman Arogya Mandir.
- Insurance/assurance expansion improves financial protection but must be matched by quality regulation, fraud control, adequate public facilities, rational package rates and continuity with primary care.
- Prelims trap: PM-JAY mainly finances hospitalisation; it should not be confused with the entire Ayushman Bharat architecture or primary-care services alone.

TOPIC-WISE UPSC INFOGRAPHIC



KEY POINTS FOR UPSC

- Use in health-governance answers as an example of strategic purchasing.
- Differentiate insurance/assurance from comprehensive public-health systems.
- Outcome metrics should include quality and reduced out-of-pocket expenditure, not just enrolment.

WAY FORWARD

- Strengthen fraud analytics and clinical audits.
- Expand quality public hospitals in underserved districts.



- Integrate AAM primary care with referral and follow-up pathways.
- Publish outcome, denial and grievance metrics by geography.



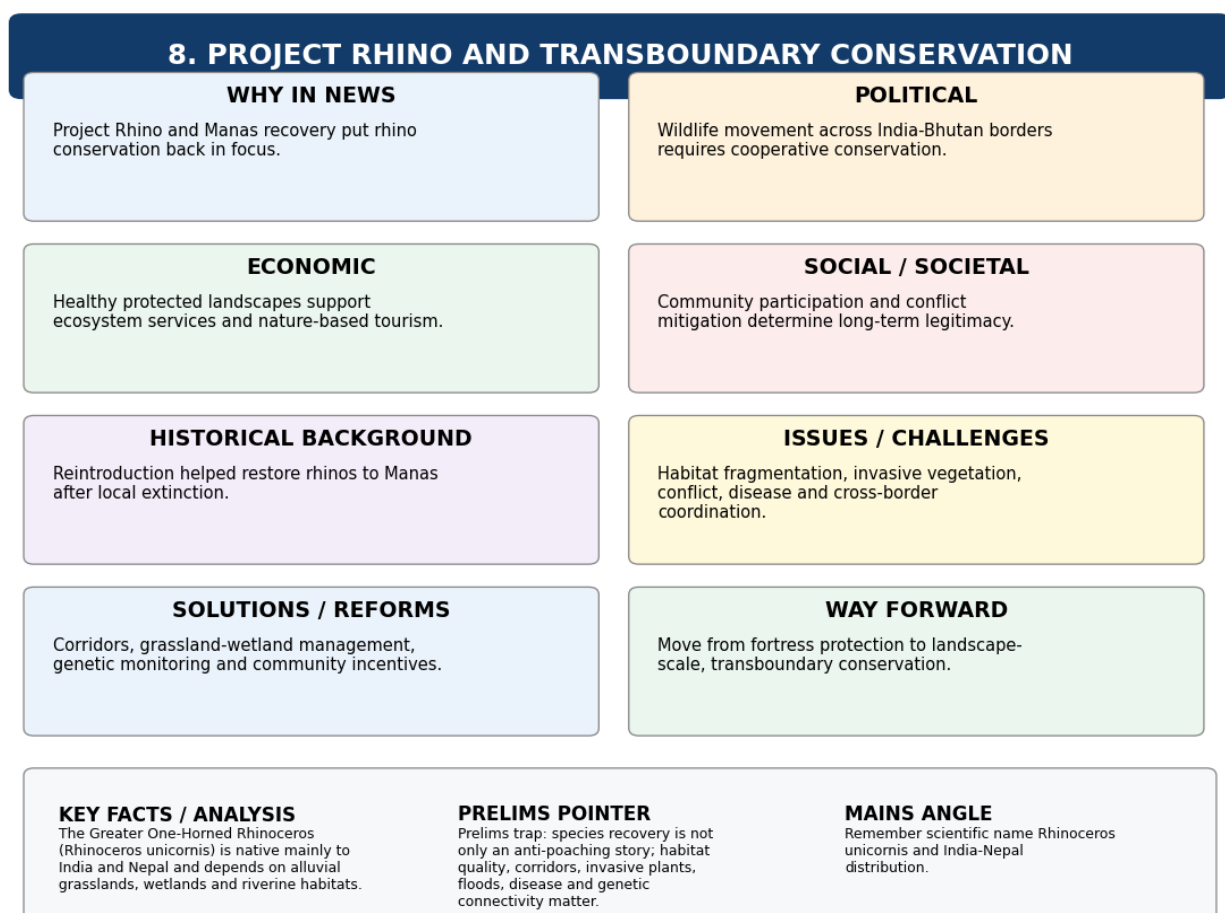
8. PROJECT RHINO AND TRANSBOUNDARY CONSERVATION

UPSC syllabus: GS-III Environment | Biodiversity | Protected Areas

CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

- India highlighted the sustained recovery of the Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros and initiated Project Rhino to support range states with protection, habitat management, genetic improvement and population research.
- Manas National Park in Assam is a major reintroduction success: its rhino population has recovered from local extinction, while cross-border movement toward Bhutan creates a new transboundary management challenge.
- Abbreviations: IUCN = International Union for Conservation of Nature; CITES = Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; PA = Protected Area.
- The Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) is native mainly to India and Nepal and depends on alluvial grasslands, wetlands and riverine habitats.
- Prelims trap: species recovery is not only an anti-poaching story; habitat quality, corridors, invasive plants, floods, disease and genetic connectivity matter.

TOPIC-WISE UPSC INFOGRAPHIC



KEY POINTS FOR UPSC

- Remember scientific name *Rhinoceros unicornis* and India-Nepal distribution.
- Map Kaziranga, Manas, Dudhwa and Valmiki landscapes.
- Use the species as an example of active wildlife management and reintroduction.

WAY FORWARD

- Secure and restore grassland-wetland mosaics and corridors.
- Create India-Bhutan protocols for monitoring transboundary movement.
- Use genetics and health surveillance to guide translocations.



- Share tourism and conservation benefits with local communities.



9. TOKAY GECKO TRAFFICKING: WILDLIFE CRIME AND NORTHEAST CORRIDORS

UPSC syllabus: GS-III Environment | Internal Security | Wildlife Crime

CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

- The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence seized 86 live Tokay Geckos in Assam and arrested two persons in a wildlife-trafficking operation. The animals were intercepted at Bandar Chalia Gaon Ground in Mariani on 22 September.
- Abbreviations: DRI = Directorate of Revenue Intelligence; WCCB = Wildlife Crime Control Bureau; CITES = Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.
- The Tokay Gecko (Gekko gekko) is a large gecko targeted for exotic-pet demand and traditional-medicine markets. It is protected under India's Wild Life (Protection) Act and listed in CITES Appendix II.
- Wildlife crime increasingly intersects with organised networks, border routes, online trade and financial crime; intelligence-sharing among customs, DRI, police and forest agencies is therefore essential.
- Prelims trap: CITES Appendix II does not mean trade is totally prohibited; it means international trade is controlled through permits to avoid threatening survival.

TOPIC-WISE UPSC INFOGRAPHIC

9. TOKAY GECKO TRAFFICKING: WILDLIFE CRIME AND NORTHEAST CORRIDORS

WHY IN NEWS

DRI seized 86 live Tokay Geckos in Assam in a trafficking crackdown.

POLITICAL

Wildlife crime requires coordination across forest, customs, police and international regimes.

ECONOMIC

Illegal trade monetises biodiversity while externalising ecological and enforcement costs.

SOCIAL / SOCIETAL

Myths about medicinal value and exotic-pet demand can drive local collection networks.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Northeast India's biodiversity and porous trade corridors have long attracted traffickers.

ISSUES / CHALLENGES

Hidden supply chains, online markets, weak conviction rates and animal-welfare risks.

SOLUTIONS / REFORMS

Intelligence fusion, forensic capacity, CITES enforcement and community awareness.

WAY FORWARD

Treat wildlife trafficking as organised transnational crime while reducing local incentives.

KEY FACTS / ANALYSIS

Wildlife crime increasingly intersects with organised networks, border routes, online trade and financial crime; intelligence-sharing among customs, DRI, police and forest agencies is therefore essential.

PRELIMS POINTER

Prelims trap: CITES Appendix II does not mean trade is totally prohibited; it means international trade is controlled through permits to avoid threatening survival.

MAINS ANGLE

Tokay Gecko scientific name: Gekko gekko.

KEY POINTS FOR UPSC

- Tokay Gecko scientific name: Gekko gekko.
- CITES Appendix II = regulated international trade, not blanket prohibition.
- Connect wildlife crime with border management and organised crime.

WAY FORWARD

- Build a shared wildlife-crime intelligence platform.
- Strengthen species identification and digital forensics at border points.
- Trace financial flows and online marketplaces linked to trafficking.



- Support community livelihoods and awareness in source landscapes.



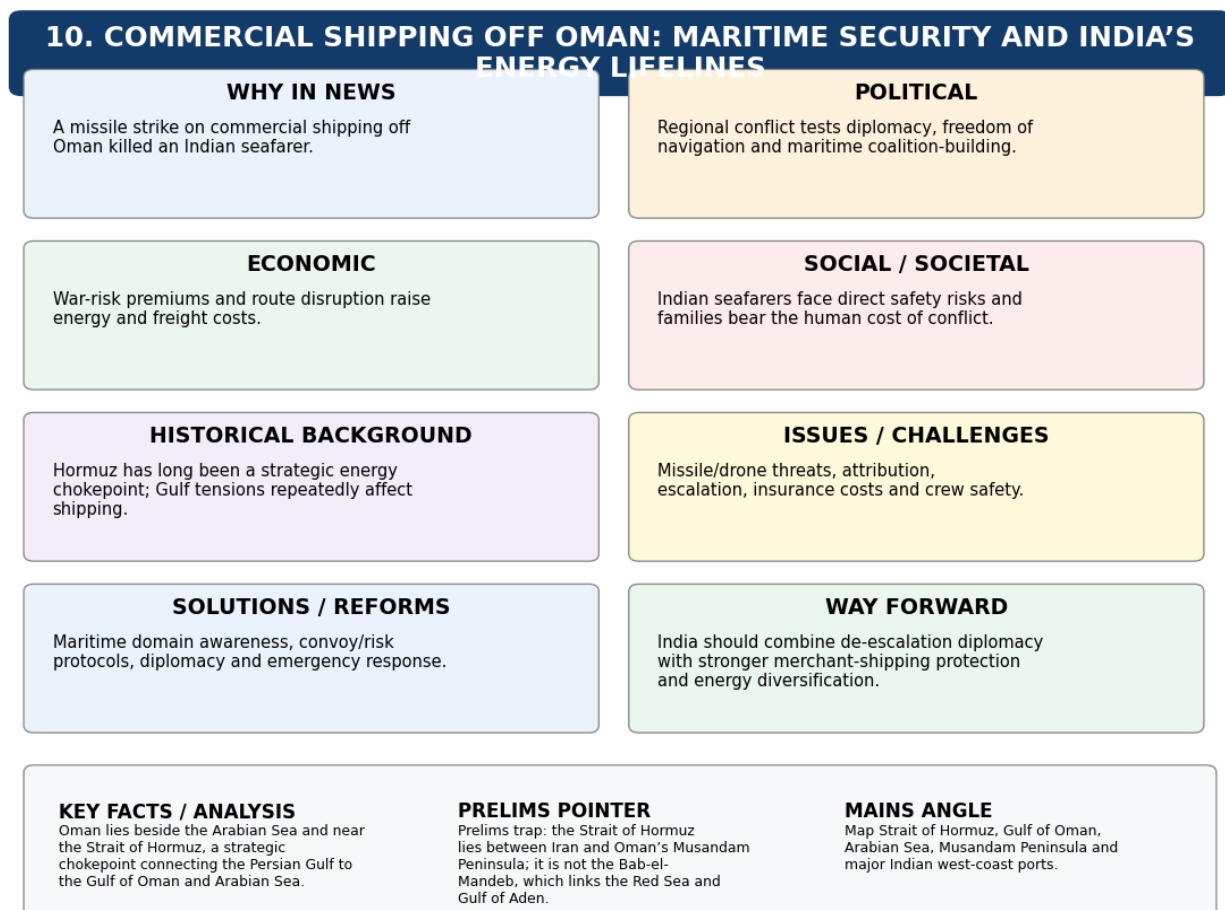
10. COMMERCIAL SHIPPING OFF OMAN: MARITIME SECURITY AND INDIA'S ENERGY LIFELINES

UPSC syllabus: GS-II International Relations | GS-III Internal Security and Energy Security

CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

- An Indian seafarer died from injuries after a missile attack on the bulk carrier MV Cape Dao off the coast of Oman. India expressed concern over continuing attacks on commercial shipping and called for dialogue and diplomacy.
- For India, shipping insecurity in the Arabian Sea and Gulf region has direct consequences for crude oil, LNG, fertiliser, container trade, insurance premiums and the safety of Indian seafarers.
- Abbreviations: LNG = Liquefied Natural Gas; EEZ = Exclusive Economic Zone; IOR = Indian Ocean Region; SOLAS = International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea.
- Oman lies beside the Arabian Sea and near the Strait of Hormuz, a strategic chokepoint connecting the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea.
- Prelims trap: the Strait of Hormuz lies between Iran and Oman's Musandam Peninsula; it is not the Bab-el-Mandeb, which links the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

TOPIC-WISE UPSC INFOGRAPHIC



KEY POINTS FOR UPSC

- Map Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, Musandam Peninsula and major Indian west-coast ports.
- Use as a live example of how geopolitics transmits into inflation and energy security.
- Differentiate Hormuz from Bab-el-Mandeb and Malacca.

WAY FORWARD

- Strengthen maritime domain awareness and information sharing.
- Issue dynamic routing and crew-safety advisories for merchant shipping.
- Diversify energy sourcing and maintain strategic reserves.



- Pursue sustained regional diplomacy for de-escalation and freedom of navigation.



EDITORIAL ANALYSIS - MAINS READY ARGUMENTS

EDITORIAL FOCUS 1 - JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS: INDEPENDENCE WITH ACCOUNTABILITY

- The latest Supreme Court observations reopen the unresolved tension between decisional independence and the opacity criticism directed at the collegium.
- A strong Mains answer should reject both extremes: executive dominance threatens separation of powers, while complete institutional opacity weakens public accountability.
- Constitutional morality requires mutual respect among institutions, timely appointments and reasoned decision-making.

WAY FORWARD

- Time-bound executive processing of recommendations.
- More reasoned and consistent disclosure by the collegium.
- Professional appointments secretariat with vacancy forecasting.
- Institutional dialogue without public confrontation.

EDITORIAL FOCUS 2 - PREVENTIVE DETENTION: SECURITY CANNOT NORMALISE EXCEPTIONAL POWER

- Preventive detention is constitutionally recognised but intrinsically exceptional because liberty is curtailed without a completed criminal conviction.
- The administrative standard of subjective satisfaction cannot become a substitute for relevant material, procedural fairness and judicial review.
- The ethical issue is proportionality: state capacity should first use ordinary criminal law where it is adequate.

WAY FORWARD

- Record specific reasons why ordinary law is insufficient.
- Ensure prompt review and meaningful communication of grounds.
- Build accountability for mechanical or mala fide detention orders.
- Periodically review preventive-detention statutes and usage data.

EDITORIAL FOCUS 3 - URBAN GREEN TRANSITION MUST ALSO BE A JUST TRANSITION

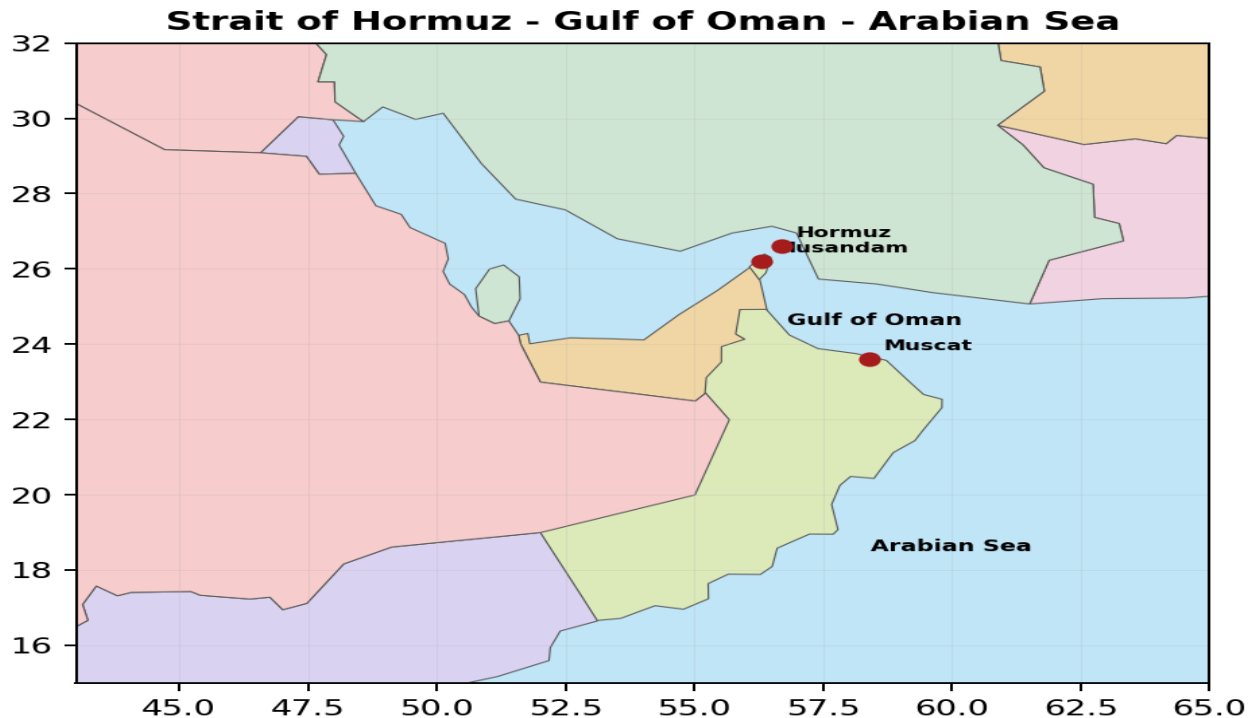
- The DURGA e-auto scheme shows that climate policy can be designed to redistribute opportunity, not only reduce emissions.
- Targeted asset access can overcome historical entry barriers, but durable empowerment depends on income viability, credit, safety and infrastructure.
- This is a useful governance lesson: count outcomes such as earnings, retention and safety rather than only sanctioned vehicles.

WAY FORWARD

- Bundle asset support with credit, insurance and training.
- Build safe charging and rest infrastructure.
- Integrate beneficiaries into high-demand mobility nodes.
- Publish gender-disaggregated livelihood outcomes.

MAP PRACTICE - ORIGINAL, MULTICOLOUR & LABELLED

Strait of Hormuz - Gulf of Oman - Arabian Sea



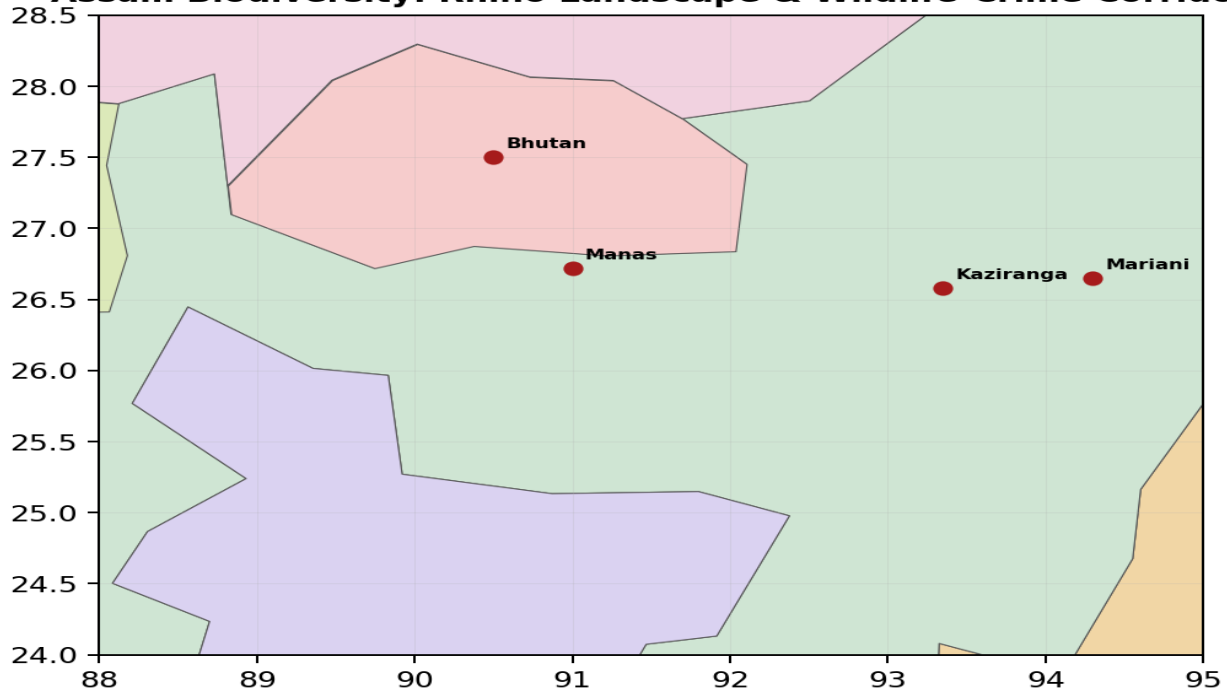
MAP TASK

- Locate every labelled place without notes.
- Add one neighbouring country/state or water body.
- Write one current-affairs trigger and one static fact beside each.

Assam Biodiversity: Rhino Landscape & Wildlife-Crime Corridor



Assam Biodiversity: Rhino Landscape & Wildlife-Crime Corridor

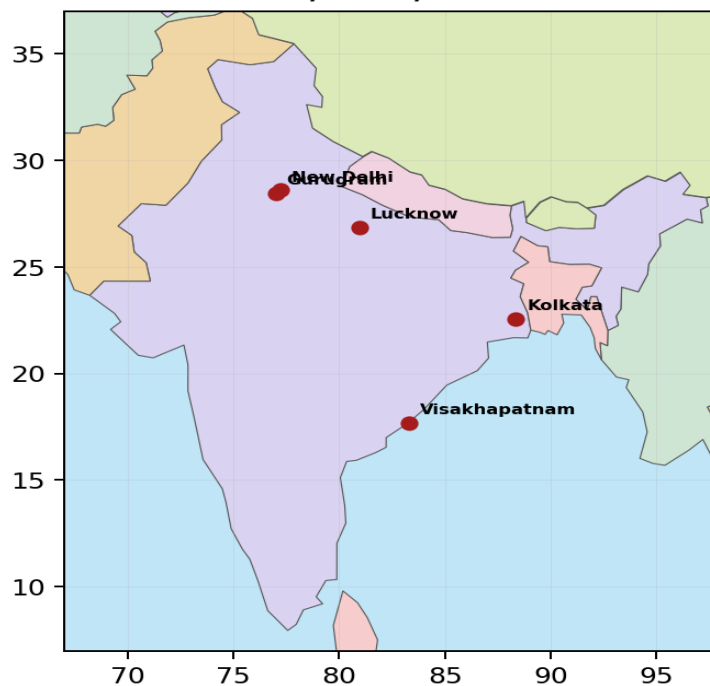


MAP TASK

- Locate every labelled place without notes.
- Add one neighbouring country/state or water body.
- Write one current-affairs trigger and one static fact beside each.

India Map Practice: Governance, Food, Urban & Asset-Monetisation News

India Map Practice: Governance, Food, Urban & Asset-Monetisation News



MAP TASK

- Locate every labelled place without notes.



- Add one neighbouring country/state or water body.
- Write one current-affairs trigger and one static fact beside each.



PRELIMS PRACTICE - 10 MCQs WITH DETAILED SOLUTIONS

Q1. With reference to the collegium system in India, which statement is correct?

- (a) It is expressly created by Article 124
- (b) It evolved through Supreme Court judgments
- (c) It was created by the NJAC Act
- (d) It applies only to subordinate courts

ANSWER: (b)

- The collegium is a judicially evolved mechanism, especially through the Second Judges Case (1993) and Third Judges Case (1998). Articles 124 and 217 contain constitutional appointment provisions but do not use the term collegium.

Q2. Article 22 of the Constitution is most directly associated with:

- (a) Freedom of religion
- (b) Protection against arrest and detention in certain cases
- (c) Right to constitutional remedies only
- (d) Cultural and educational rights

ANSWER: (b)

- Article 22 deals with safeguards relating to arrest and detention and also contains special provisions concerning preventive detention.

Q3. The Commission for Air Quality Management primarily concerns:

- (a) Western Ghats
- (b) National Capital Region and adjoining areas
- (c) Coastal Regulation Zones
- (d) Himalayan glaciers

ANSWER: (b)

- CAQM is a statutory body dealing with air-quality management in the National Capital Region and adjoining areas, making it relevant to construction dust and other regional pollution sources.

Q4. Which is the most accurate statement about electric vehicles?

- (a) They have zero lifecycle emissions
- (b) They have zero tailpipe emissions but lifecycle emissions depend on power and batteries
- (c) They emit more tailpipe NOx than diesel vehicles
- (d) They do not require mineral inputs

ANSWER: (b)

- Battery electric vehicles have no tailpipe emissions, but lifecycle emissions depend on electricity generation, battery manufacturing, materials and recycling.

Q5. Transfer pricing refers to:

- (a) Price of a government security
- (b) Pricing of transactions between associated enterprises
- (c) Retail inflation targeting
- (d) Customs valuation of all imports only

ANSWER: (b)

- Transfer pricing concerns prices used in transactions between related or associated enterprises, often across jurisdictions. The concept is legal; rules seek an arm's-length result and prevent base erosion.

Q6. The Price Stabilisation Fund is used primarily to:

- (a) Finance judicial infrastructure
- (b) Moderate price volatility in selected food commodities
- (c) Fund defence imports
- (d) Set MSP for all crops



ANSWER: (b)

- PSF supports market interventions such as procurement and calibrated release of selected commodities to moderate extreme price volatility. It is distinct from MSP.

Q7. AB PM-JAY primarily provides:

- (a) Universal cash pension
- (b) Cashless secondary and tertiary hospital care for eligible beneficiaries
- (c) Only primary-school nutrition
- (d) Crop insurance

ANSWER: (b)

- PM-JAY is the hospital-care financial protection component of Ayushman Bharat. The broader Ayushman Bharat architecture also includes primary-care and health-system initiatives.

Q8. The Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros is mainly native to:

- (a) India and Nepal
- (b) India and Sri Lanka
- (c) India and Indonesia only
- (d) Bhutan and Myanmar only

ANSWER: (a)

- Rhinoceros unicornis is mainly found in India and Nepal, especially in alluvial grasslands and riverine habitats.

Q9. Tokay Gecko is listed in CITES Appendix II. This means:

- (a) All international trade is automatically prohibited
- (b) International trade is regulated through permits to avoid threatening survival
- (c) It is not covered by wildlife trade rules
- (d) Only domestic trade is regulated by CITES

ANSWER: (b)

- Appendix II covers species for which international trade must be controlled through a permit system so that trade is compatible with conservation.

Q10. The Strait of Hormuz connects the Persian Gulf with the:

- (a) Red Sea
- (b) Gulf of Oman
- (c) Mediterranean Sea
- (d) Bay of Bengal

ANSWER: (b)

- The Strait of Hormuz connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and onward to the Arabian Sea. Bab-el-Mandeb instead connects the Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden.



MAINS MODEL ANSWERS - COMPLETE STRUCTURED FORMAT

GS-I MODEL ANSWER

Syllabus/PYQ linkage: World geography; strategic location of chokepoints; resource geography
15 Marks | 250 words

Question demand: analyse the issue multidimensionally, add a current example and end with a balanced reform-oriented conclusion.

Question: Why does the Strait of Hormuz remain one of the world's most consequential maritime chokepoints? Discuss its significance for India.

INTRODUCTION

The Strait of Hormuz is a narrow maritime passage between Iran and Oman's Musandam Peninsula linking the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea. Its importance arises from the concentration of Gulf energy exports and the limited alternatives available during crises.

GEOGRAPHICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Its narrowness, proximity to major Gulf producers and connection to the Arabian Sea make it a classic chokepoint. Shipping disruption can quickly affect tanker movement, freight rates and insurance premiums.

ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE

Oil and LNG flows through the wider Gulf system influence global energy prices. Even a perceived risk can raise war-risk insurance and transport costs before physical supply falls.

INDIA DIMENSION

India imports substantial energy from the Gulf and has millions of citizens working in West Asia. West-coast ports, fertiliser supply, remittances, merchant shipping and seafarer safety are therefore linked to regional stability.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Diversification can reduce exposure but cannot fully eliminate the global price shock from a major Gulf disruption. Maritime security must therefore be complemented by diplomacy and strategic reserves.

WAY FORWARD

Diversify suppliers and fuels; maintain strategic petroleum reserves; strengthen maritime domain awareness; protect merchant shipping; expand long-term LNG arrangements; and sustain de-escalation diplomacy with all regional actors.

CONCLUSION

Hormuz demonstrates how physical geography can convert regional conflict into a global economic shock. For India, geography, energy security and diplomacy are inseparable.



GS-II MODEL ANSWER

Syllabus/PYQ linkage: Judiciary; separation of powers; constitutional bodies and governance

15 Marks | 250 words

Question demand: analyse the issue multidimensionally, add a current example and end with a balanced reform-oriented conclusion.

Question: Judicial independence and judicial accountability are complementary rather than competing constitutional values. Examine in the context of India's judicial appointments system.

INTRODUCTION

Judicial independence protects adjudication from political pressure, while accountability sustains legitimacy in a constitutional democracy. India's collegium debate persists because the appointments system must secure both values simultaneously.

CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS

Articles 124 and 217 govern appointments to the Supreme Court and High Courts. The collegium evolved through the Second and Third Judges Cases; the NJAC framework was struck down in 2015 for compromising judicial independence.

WHY INDEPENDENCE MATTERS

Courts review executive and legislative action, protect fundamental rights and arbitrate federal disputes. Executive dominance over appointments can create incentives for conformity or perceived bias.

WHY ACCOUNTABILITY MATTERS

Opaque criteria, limited public reasons, uneven representation and delays can weaken confidence. Independence cannot mean immunity from transparent institutional standards.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The choice is not between executive control and an unreformed collegium. The constitutional objective is an appointments process where no political branch can dominate, but selection criteria and timelines are more predictable.

WAY FORWARD

Adopt transparent eligibility and diversity matrices; publish reasoned collegium resolutions subject to privacy; create a professional secretariat; forecast vacancies; set timelines for executive processing; and institutionalise respectful consultation.

CONCLUSION

A credible system must protect judges from political dependence while protecting the institution from avoidable opacity. Independence gains strength, not weakness, from principled accountability.



GS-III MODEL ANSWER

Syllabus/PYQ linkage: Environment; pollution; waste management; sustainable urbanisation

15 Marks | 250 words

Question demand: analyse the issue multidimensionally, add a current example and end with a balanced reform-oriented conclusion.

Question: Construction and demolition waste should be treated as a resource-flow problem rather than merely a municipal-cleanliness problem. Analyse.

INTRODUCTION

Rapid urban construction generates large volumes of concrete, masonry, soil, metal and mixed debris. When dumped illegally, C&D waste creates dust, blocks drains and consumes scarce landfill space; when segregated and processed, much of it can re-enter the construction economy.

ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION

Unmanaged debris increases fugitive particulate pollution, damages water bodies and encourages extraction of virgin sand and aggregates. Recycling reduces both disposal pressure and raw-material demand.

ECONOMIC DIMENSION

Secondary aggregates and recycled products can create local circular-economy markets. However, demand remains weak when specifications and procurement rules favour virgin materials.

GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES

Municipalities often lack reliable generation data, transport traceability and processing capacity. Fragmented responsibility allows waste to disappear between demolition sites and final disposal.

CURRENT EXAMPLE

Gurugram's move to link disposal proof with building permissions and occupancy certification illustrates lifecycle regulation: compliance follows the project from generation to lawful processing.

WAY FORWARD

Use digital waste manifests; require on-site segregation; expand processing facilities; mandate recycled-content procurement where technically suitable; price illegal dumping properly; and enforce dust-control and worker-safety norms.

CONCLUSION

C&D policy becomes effective when cities stop viewing debris as an unwanted end-product and instead manage it as a traceable material stream within a circular urban economy.



GS-IV MODEL ANSWER

Syllabus/PYQ linkage: Ethics in governance; proportionality; accountability and rule of law

15 Marks | 250 words

Question demand: analyse the issue multidimensionally, add a current example and end with a balanced reform-oriented conclusion.

Question: Exceptional state powers demand exceptional standards of ethical restraint. Discuss with reference to preventive detention.

INTRODUCTION

The state sometimes requires preventive powers to avert serious threats before harm occurs. Yet detention without a completed criminal conviction places liberty at exceptional risk, making ethical restraint and procedural integrity indispensable.

VALUES INVOLVED

Rule of law requires authority to act within clear legal limits. Proportionality demands the least restrictive effective measure. Accountability requires reviewable reasons. Dignity and fairness require that a person is not treated merely as an administrative risk.

ETHICAL RISKS

Preventive detention can become routine policing, substitute for weak investigation or be used against unpopular speech. Subjective satisfaction can drift into arbitrariness if material is stale, irrelevant or mechanically reproduced.

ADMINISTRATIVE DILEMMA

Officials must protect public order but also remember that extraordinary powers have lower evidentiary thresholds than criminal conviction. This creates a special duty to test necessity rather than seek convenience.

ETHICAL SAFEGUARDS

Use ordinary criminal law wherever adequate; record specific reasons; communicate grounds promptly within lawful limits; ensure independent review; periodically reassess necessity; and impose consequences for mala fide or mechanical orders.

WAY FORWARD

Training should combine legal doctrine with ethics of proportionality. Governments should publish anonymised detention statistics and legislatures should periodically review whether exceptional statutes remain necessary and appropriately designed.

CONCLUSION

Security and liberty are not ethical opposites. A constitutional state proves its strength by using coercive power precisely, temporarily and accountably.



PLACES IN NEWS - CURRENT + AUGUST-SEPTEMBER REVISION

Place	UPSC relevance
Straits of Hormuz / Gulf of Oman	Strategic chokepoint; shipping attacks, energy security and Arabian Sea geography.
Manas National Park, Assam	Rhino reintroduction success and India-Bhutan transboundary movement.
Mariani, Assam	Location of DRI Tokay Gecko seizure; wildlife trafficking corridor.
Kolkata, West Bengal	Kanda Express onion buffer-stock destination on 24 September.
Gurugram, Haryana	C&D; waste enforcement and NCR air-quality governance.
New Delhi	BRICS Tax Heads meeting; judicial and Election Commission developments.
Lucknow / Varanasi / Kanpur / Prayagraj / Gorakhpur	Bharat Taxi cooperative mobility rollout in Uttar Pradesh.
Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh	RINL land e-auction investor outreach and asset monetisation.
Ceuta & Melilla	August-September revision: Europe-Africa boundary and migration geography.
Bhote Koshi / Rasuwa, Nepal	August-September revision: Himalayan flash-flood and transboundary climate risk.
Elephanta Island, Maharashtra	August-September revision: UNESCO heritage and coastal/maritime context.
Vizhinjam, Kerala	August-September revision: deep-water transshipment and Indian Ocean sea lanes.

FINAL QA CHECK

- 10 current-affairs topics; each has a dedicated infographic immediately below the article.
- Every infographic includes political, economic, social, historical, issues, solutions, Way Forward, plus Prelims and Mains pointers.
- 10 four-option Prelims MCQs with detailed explanations.
- Four complete structured model answers: GS-I, GS-II, GS-III and GS-IV.
- Original multicolour maps; no empty placeholders.
- Approved Ramakrishna Mission and GEO IAS logos preserved; visible watermark logos on content pages.

