



**VAJIRAM & RAVI**  
Institute for IAS Examination

# The Analyst

**CURRENT AFFAIRS** Handout

**15th December 2025**



# Railways chasing Financial Prudence

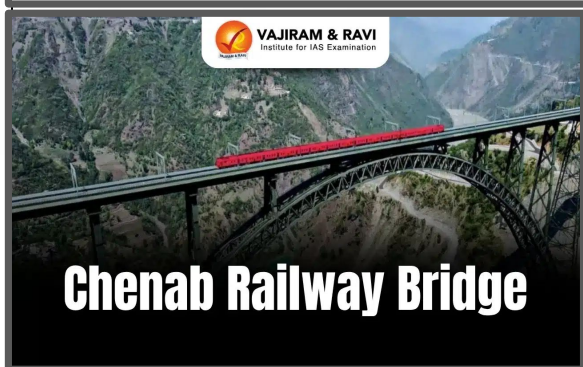
**CONTEXT:** Amid slew of railway expansion projects and diversification of revenue, a comprehensive overview of railway finances.

## Track Upgradation

- More than 31,000 km of new tracks have been laid since 2014.
- More than 45,000 km of tracks have been renewed since 2014.

## Total Capex Allocation

- 2004 - 2014: With around 3.62 lakh crore.
- Since 2014: More than 17 lakh crore.



## Need for changes

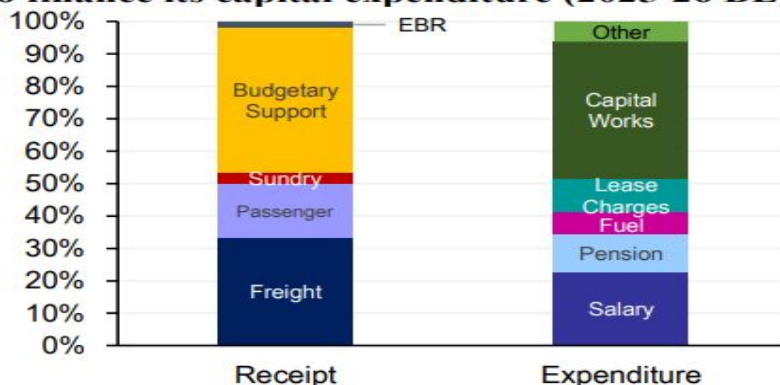
During 2023-24,

- Earning = ₹2,56,093 cr
- Revenue expenditure = ₹2,52,834 cr.
- net Revenue = 3,260 crore in 2023-24.

Major expenditure is done on Staff cost, Pension, energy consumption etc.

To increase the profit, Indian Railways (IR) has adopted **two-pronged approach**

**Figure 1: Railways' internal revenue inadequate to finance its capital expenditure (2025-26 BE)**



**Table 7: Indian Railways  
Operating Ratios for Traffic**

(in percentage)

Category of Traffic	2021-22	2022-23
Goods (Freight)	72.88	66.97
Coaching (Passengers)	237.38	180.82

Source: Indian Railways Year Book 2022-23.



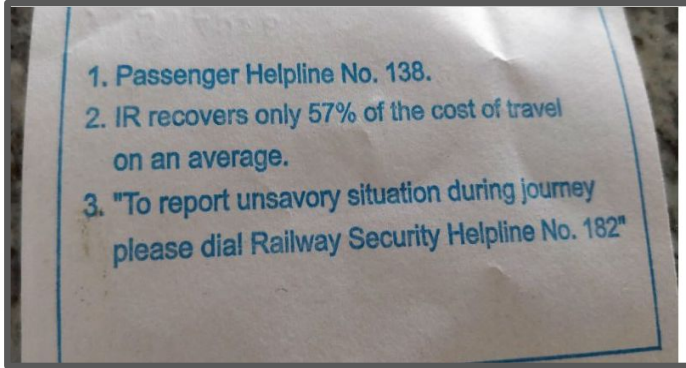


15th December 2025

# Railways chasing Financial Prudence

**CONTEXT:** Amid slew of railway expansion projects and diversification of revenue, a comprehensive overview of railway finances.

CAG (2023) flagged ₹68,269 crore losses in passenger services, offset by freight revenues.



**Figure 2: Earnings from freight operations constitute the bulk of internal revenue**



Note: BE: Budget Estimates; RE: Revised Estimates.  
Sources: Expenditure Profile, Railway Statements, Union Budget Documents, 2017-18 to 2025-26; PRS.

## Challenges with Freights:

### II. Moving Goods

IR's freight business has three well known characteristics.

1. It is the bread earner for the organisation and subsidises passenger business.
2. The rail share of freight has gone down significantly over the last 75 years from a whopping 89 per cent in 1950-51 to less than 30 per cent in the last decade.
3. Coal brings in 48 per cent of volumes and 50 per cent of revenues for IR (2022-23 data). The consistent gains from this one freight segment do not incentivise IR to diversify its goods basket.



A Maruti Suzuki vehicle being unloaded at the Sairang Railway Station in Mizoram.

## Decoding the News

### Objective

- Reduce dependence on bulk goods freight
- Cut carbon emissions by shifting automobiles from road to rail

### Key Developments

- Share of **passenger vehicles transported by Railways** increased to **~20% of national car production (FY25)** (up from ~1.7% in FY15)

### Automobile Freight Data

- **10.41 lakh cars** transported in FY25
- Expected to rise to **15 lakh cars in FY26**
- Most cars transported are **for domestic markets (~80%)**



# Railways chasing Financial Prudence



**CONTEXT:** Amid slew of railway expansion projects and diversification of revenue, a comprehensive overview of railway finances.

- **Maruti Suzuki:** ~50% share of rail-transported cars
- Followed by **Hyundai** and **Tata Motors**

## Policy Support

- **Automobile Freight Train Operator (AFTO) Scheme**
  - Registration fee reduced from **₹5 crore** → **₹0**
  - Minimum wagon requirement reduced (**3 rakes** → **1 rake**)

## Infrastructure

- **133 railway sidings** across the country for car loading & unloading

## Other Policy steps

- **Modern rail freight terminals** under 'Gati Shakti Multimodal Cargo Terminal (GCT)' policy
- Incentives for **commodity focused specialized wagons** such as wagons for cement, oil, steel, fly-ash, automobiles etc.
- **"Cargo Aggregator Transportation Product"** and **"Joint Parcel Product-Rapid Cargo Services"**.
- **Liberalized Automatic Freight Rebate scheme** for traffic loaded in empty flow direction,

## Way forward to improve Revenue

- **Ads & Branding** across stations/trains
- **NINFRIS Policy:** innovative commercial use of railway premises
  - *Retail & livelihood:* Khadi, handicrafts, jewellery kiosks
  - *Tech & utilities:* Online education kiosks, EV charging

## ♦ **Asset Monetisation (E-Auction)**

- Assets: **Parcel space, parking lots, ATMs, commercial areas**

## ♦ **Passenger Revenue**

- **Special trains** during peak demand
- **Higher on-board capacity**
- **New premium trains** with better facilities & rational fares

## Mains Practice Question

**Cross-subsidisation of passenger services by freight earnings has long been a feature of Indian Railways' finances. Discuss its implications for efficiency and competitiveness. Suggest reforms to reduce over-dependence on freight revenues.**  
(15 Marks, 250 words)



# Karnataka anti Hate speech Bill

**CONTEXT:** Karnataka Legislature brought Anti Hate speech Bill, allows an overview of Existing mechanism against Hate Speech

## What is Hate Speech?

- Speech targeting groups based on identity
- Threatens dignity, equality & public order
- Restricted under Article 19(2)



## What the new law says

### Key features

- **Expanded definition** of hate speech
- Curbs **Dissemination, promotion and publication**
- Covers:
  - Speech, writing, visuals, digital media,
- **Stricter punishment:**
  - Imprisonment up to **7 years**
  - Enhanced penalty for repeat offenders
- **Government powers:**
  - Content blocking
  - Online takedown orders

### Inbuilt Exception -

- 'bona fide artistic creativity, performance or other form of expression,' 'any academic or scientific inquiry; fair and accurate reporting or commentary,'

### Broad definition

The Bill seeks to define hate crime as "communication of hate speech" which includes "any expression which is made, published, or circulated, in words either spoken or written or by signs or by visible representations or through electronic communication or otherwise, in public view, with an intention to cause injury, disharmony or feelings of enmity or hatred or ill-will against person alive or dead, class or group of persons or community, to meet any prejudicial interest."

## Concerns around Karnataka's expansive Bill to tackle hate speech

- Onus to Prove innocence
- Minimum mandatory punishment
- Greater power to state government to block content
- Violates SC guidelines in Aradesh kumar case ( Section 35 )





# Karnataka anti Hate speech Bill



**CONTEXT:** Karnataka Legislature brought Anti Hate speech Bill, allows an overview of Existing mechanism against Hate Speech

## Existing Legal Framework

- BNS –Section 299 (Outrage religious feeling)
- BNS – Section 298 ( damage place of worship)
- Section 196 penalizes : promoting enmity between groups Acts prejudicial to harmony
- IT Act provisions 69 A
- Issue is enforcement, not absence of law ( 20% NCRB )

## Comparative & Judicial Perspective

- **Shreya Singhal v. Union of India (2015):**
  - Struck down Section 66A IT Act for vagueness
- **Pravasi Bhalai Sangathan case:**
  - Courts urged careful distinction between:
    - Offensive speech
    - Incitement to violence
- **2018 Tehseen Poonawalla judgment, -**
  - a. required nodal officers to prevent mob violence and lynching, reaffirming that the existing framework must be followed.

## Way Forward – Balancing FoSE & Public order

### 1. Narrow and Precise Definition

- Limit hate speech to: **Direct incitement to violence or discrimination**
- Exclude: Satire, Academic debate, Legitimate criticism

### 2. Focus on Enforcement, Not Expansion

### 3. Proportionate Punishment

### 4. Strong Judicial Oversight

## Mains Practice Question

**Freedom of speech is a cornerstone of democratic governance, but it is not absolute. In this context, critically examine the challenges posed by broad and vaguely worded hate speech laws in India. How can the State balance the need to curb hate speech with the constitutional guarantee of free expression? (15 Marks, 250 words)**



# An Anomaly in stubble burning data

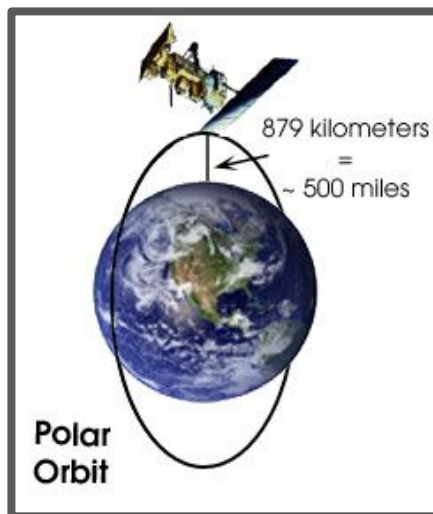
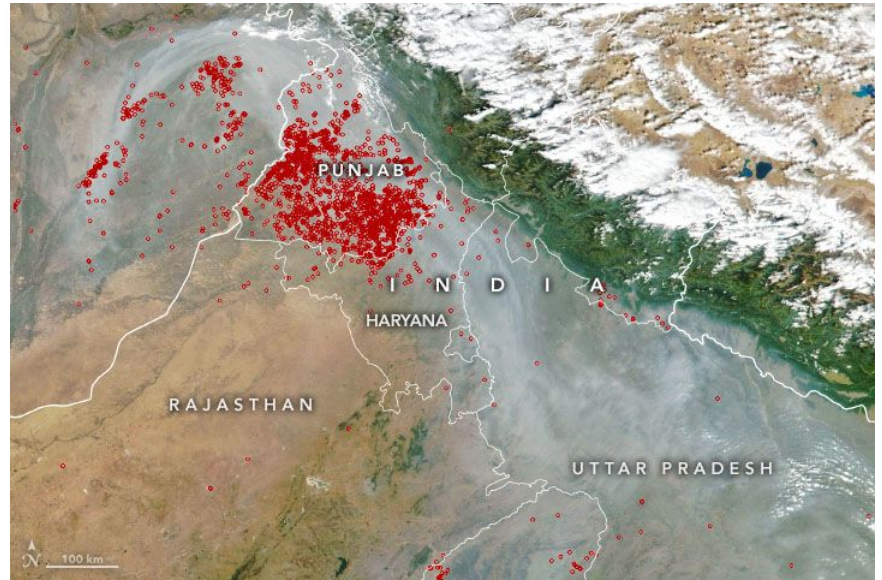
**Syllabus: GS Paper 2: Environment**  
**Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 7**

## An anomaly

### The Centre must make burnt-area estimates of stubble public

In a statement to Parliament, the Environment Ministry said that Punjab and Haryana had collectively reduced "fire incidences" by 90% in 2025 compared to 2022. This is in reference to the burning of farm stubble, a traditional shortcut to quickly shed fields of paddy remnants and prepare them for a second crop – in this case, wheat – but that has in the last decade and a half been linked to spikes in air pollution in October-November in Delhi and surrounding cities.

As part of steps to address this, the Centre and the State governments have been employing a carrot-and-stick approach – fining farmers but, simultaneously, also providing subsidised farm equipment, combined harvesters and tractors as well as incentivising them to collect stubble and sell them to thermal plants for co-firing. There is little direct evidence to show that these measures have reduced the contribution of stubble burning to Delhi's post-monsoon air quality. That would require using mass-spectrograph measures to analyse the chemical make-up of pollutants over time and trace the weightage of stubble burning. That analysis is unavailable and so the government has been using proxies such as counting whether the number of active fires visible by satellites have been declining to evaluate this metric. Since 2020 there has been a decline in fires in Punjab and Haryana, prompting the government to take credit. It turns out that this was a pyrrhic victory. When images from a different satellite were used to compute another parameter called 'burnt area' – the actual land area that had been burned – the reduction was a more gradual 30%: from about 31,500 square kilometres in 2022 to 19,700 sq.km in 2025 (as of November 25, this year), an independent research outfit has found. Using data from another set of satellites called Meteosat, unambiguous evidence emerged that farm fires had shifted towards the evening. Unlike the other satellites, which orbit the poles, this one is 'geostationary', meaning it continuously looks at the same spot. The Centre has been using fire count-reduction based on polar-satellite data, which passes through India between 10 a.m. and 1.30 p.m. Since 2022, reports had been emerging that farmers had shifted their burning towards evening precisely to avoid detection by these satellites. The Supreme Court of India, when apprised of this in 2024, had expressly told Environment Ministry bodies to ascertain 'burnt area' to gauge stubble burning trends. Moreover, given that satellites have different resolution powers, there is no knowing what the true count of fires is at present. The Centre, however, has still not made year-wise burnt-area estimates public. Being disingenuous with data will only accelerate the erosion of public confidence in the government's claim on tackling air pollution. The Centre must immediately move to address this.

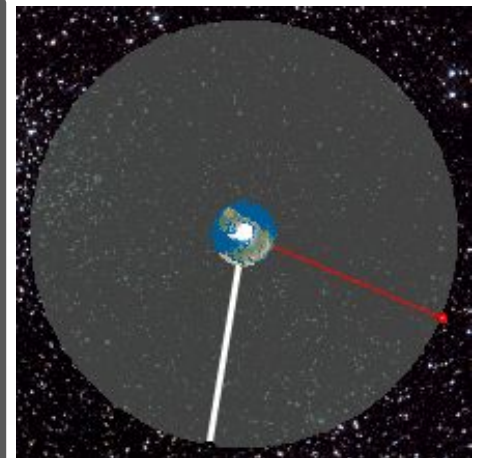


#### A. Polar-orbiting satellites

- Move **from pole to pole**, circling the Earth.
- Pass over India **only once or twice a day**.
- In India, they usually pass **between ~10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.**
- Used by the government to **count active fires** (visible flames).

##### ✦ Limitation

If a fire happens **outside this time window**, the satellite **will not see it**.



#### B. Geostationary satellites

- Stay **fixed over one location** on Earth.
- Continuously observe the **same area, 24x7**.
- Example: **Meteosat**
- Can detect **time patterns** of fires (morning, evening, night).

##### ✦ Advantage

They cannot be "avoided" by changing the timing of burning.





**Syllabus: GS Paper 2: Environment**  
**Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 7**

## Fire count

- Counts **how many fires are seen** at a given time.
- Can be misleading if:
  - Fires happen at night
  - Small fires merge into larger burns
  - Satellite resolution differs

## Burnt area

- Measures **actual land area burned** (in sq. km).
- Much **harder to manipulate**.
- Better indicator of real stubble burning.

## What are mass spectrograph measures?

A **mass spectrograph** is a scientific instrument used to **identify what substances are present in air** by measuring their **chemical fingerprint**.

In the context of **air pollution**, *mass spectrograph measures* mean:

**Using advanced instruments to analyse the exact chemical composition of air pollutants and trace where they come from.**



SECOND WORST DECEMBER AQI SINCE 2015

## Capital sees season's worst air day

Sophiya Mathew  
New Delhi, December 14

ENGLIFIED IN a thick and acrid blanket of smog, Delhi continued to struggle to breathe as it witnessed the worst air day of the season on Sunday. The average air quality index (AQI) was recorded at 461, up from 431 a day before. This is the second worst air day in December since 2015 when the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) began AQI monitoring.

The only day, as per the CPCB, when the city's air quality was worse than this in the month of December was on December 21, 2017, when the AQI touched 469. Another time when the Capital AQI spike was higher than this — at 494 — was on November 18, 2024.

According to the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology's (IITM) Decision Support System (DSS), which analyses data, the transport sector remained the single largest contributor to Delhi's PM2.5 levels on Sunday, accounting for 13.7% of emissions. Transboundary pollution from neighbouring cities and districts also remained high, with Ghaziabad contributing 9.98%, Bulandshahr 8.88%, and Gautam Buddha Nagar 8.2% to the Capital's PM2.5 load.

Industrial emissions within Delhi accounted for 6.28%, underscoring the combined impact of local sources and regional pollution under stagnant winter conditions.

Sunday was the second

straight day of the Capital registering AQI in the 'Severe' category, which according to the CPCB, impacts healthy people and seriously affects those with existing diseases. Large parts of the National Capital Region (NCR) also continued to choke — Noida recorded an AQI of 466, Ghaziabad 459, and Greater Noida 435.

At the heart of the air pollution crisis in Delhi-NCR is a familiar pattern seen during winters in North India. As temperatures drop, the air closer to the ground becomes colder and denser, preventing pollutants from rising and dispersing.

At the same time, wind speeds remain weak, leaving emissions from vehicles, industries, power plants, construction sites and biomass burning trapped near the surface. This leads to the formation of temperature inversion, a condition in which warmer air sits above colder air near the ground, effectively sealing pollutants within a shallow layer of the atmosphere. As a result, the mixing height — the vertical space available for polluted air to disperse — shrinks sharply, often to less than a kilometre during the day and even lower at night.

With limited vertical movement and sluggish winds, the ventilation capacity of the atmosphere drops, allowing pollution to accumulate rapidly.

Experts have stressed that while such meteorological conditions are seasonal, the severity of the episode reflects persistent

### MEASURES TAKEN



Transport sector remains the highest contributor. IANS/TOI/REUTERS

CAQM flying squads inspected 136 DDA-maintained road stretches across Delhi.

FINDINGS showed dust on most stretches, MSW on 55 roads, C&D waste on 53 roads and open burning at 6 locations.

CAQM directed DDA to strengthen dust control, waste removal and prevent open burning.

MEASURES stressed include

mechanical sweeping, water sprinkling, timely dust disposal and verge maintenance.

WITH GRAP Stage IV in force, CAQM reiterated postponement of outdoor sports in November-December due to health risks.

GNCTD and NCR states have been told to ensure strict compliance and issue directions to schools and authorities, and sensitize parents.

entirely high baseline emissions across Delhi and the surrounding region.

Meteorological observations further showed unfavourable conditions. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), dense to moderate fog was reported across parts of Delhi-NCR on Sunday morning. Saffording, the city's base sta-

tion, recorded visibility as low as 200 metres at 8 am. A combination of weak surface winds and foggy conditions significantly restricted the dispersion of pollutants.

The IITM, in its Air Quality and Weather Bulletin for Delhi issued on Sunday, noted that the maximum mixing depth was around 800 metres on Sunday, while the ventilation index was estimated at just 800 m<sup>2</sup>/s, far below the threshold of 6,000 m<sup>2</sup>/s considered favourable for pollution dispersion. With average wind speeds below 10 kmph, IITM cautioned that conditions remained unfavourable for clearing accumulated emissions.

Dr Dipankar Saha, former head of the Air Laboratory Division at the CPCB, explained that total emissions across the region remain broadly similar throughout the year, but winter meteorology compresses pollution into a smaller volume of air. "The vertical and horizontal movement of air is restricted due to low mixing height, temperature inversion and weak winds. What we measure in winter is compressed pollution," he said. He stressed that there have been no effective measures taken so far over the years to tackle traffic congestion, improve public infrastructure, and road enhancement, along with the updation of emissions inventory to tackle emissions at the source.

Sunil Dahiya, founder and lead analyst at think tank Envirocatalysts, said the current spell was the result of high baseline emissions and inadequate action at source. He pointed to growing contributions from industrial clusters and coal-based power plants in Bulandshahr,

Gautam Buddha Nagar, Faridabad, Panipat and Jhajjar, particularly when winds blow from the west.

"We are relying on artificial or band-aid solutions. When temperatures drop and winds slow down, emissions within Delhi and the larger rimland remain very high," he said.

"In the absence of strict measures to curtail emissions from the power and transport sectors, this situation becomes inevitable. This will happen every time the temperature drops coincide with low wind speeds. Except during the monsoon, we remain highly vulnerable," Dahiya added. He also flagged gaps in pollution forecasting, saying the DSS relies on outdated emissions data.

Meanwhile, former DPCC additional director Dr Mohan George said emissions from construction activity, industrial belts such as Ghaziabad and Sahibabad, and biomass burning, including for livestock and domestic purposes, become more pronounced under foggy conditions. "When you have only about 800 m for dispersion during the day, and even less at night, routine emissions accumulate rapidly. Windspeed is low, and ventilation is poor. We have to control our local sources, mainly construction and biomass burning, more aggressively," he explained.

### Skywatch

**Forecast:**  
**December 15, 2025**  
Mainly clear sky; moderate to dense fog

**MAX: 22-24**  
T°C above normal  
**MIN: 7-9**  
0.4°C above normal

• Sunrise: 7:07 am (December 16)  
• Sunset: 5:27 pm (December 15)  
• Moonrise: 3:46 am (December 16)  
• Moonset: 1:03 pm (December 15)

### AQI Tracker



## Hold classes in hybrid, online mode, schools in Noida, Greater Noida told

Express News Service  
Noida, December 14

SCHOOLS in Noida and Greater Noida, which come under the Gautam Buddha Nagar district, have been directed to conduct classes only in hybrid and online mode amid deteriorating air quality, with authorities citing serious health concerns for students as pollution levels in the district slipped into the severe-plus category. "In view of the adverse impact on the health of students, and in compliance with directions issued by the District Magistrate, Gautam Buddha Nagar, following the implementation of Stage IV measures under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), classes across all schools and coaching centres

in the district shall be conducted in online or hybrid mode from December 14 until further orders," the District Education Officer said in a notification dated December 14. The order applied to all schools recognised and affiliated to the Basic Education Council as well as other boards, including the UP Secondary Education Council, CBSE, ICSE, Sanskrit Education Council, Madrasa Board and other boards operating in the district. As per the notification, classes from pre-nursery to Class 5 will be held entirely in online mode, while students in Classes 6 to 9 and Class 10 will follow a hybrid model. "School may conduct physical classes alongside online classes wherever the latter is feasible, the order stated.





**Syllabus: GS Paper 2: Constitution**  
**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 9**

## Decoding the News : President's Rule

WHY ?

Article 355: Obligation of the Union to safeguard states from external aggression and internal disturbances. & ensure governance as per constitution

Article 356: It allows the President to take over the functions of the state government when the constitutional machinery fails.

Article 357: Empowers the President to legislate for the state by ordinance, if necessary.

Article 365: Consequences of failing to comply with or implement directions issued by the Union.

(a) assume to himself all or any of the functions of the Government of the State and all or any of the powers vested in or exercisable by the Governor<sup>1\*\*\*</sup> or any body or authority in the State other than the Legislature of the State;

(b) declare that the powers of the Legislature of the State shall be exercisable by or under the authority of Parliament;

(c) make such incidental and consequential provisions as appear to the President to be necessary or desirable for giving effect to the objects of the Proclamation, including provisions for suspending in whole or in part the operation of any provisions of this Constitution relating to any body or authority in the State:

Provided that nothing in this clause shall authorise the President to assume to himself any of the powers vested in or exercisable by a High Court, or to suspend in whole or in part the operation of any provision of this Constitution relating to High Courts.

(2) Any such Proclamation may be revoked or varied by a subsequent Proclamation.

(3) Every Proclamation under this article shall be laid before each House of Parliament and shall, except where it is a Proclamation revoking a previous Proclamation, cease to operate at the expiration of two months unless before the expiration of that period it has been approved by resolutions of both Houses of Parliament:

Impact of  
President's  
Rule :

- The **President** assumes the functions of the state government and executive powers vested in the **Governor** or other authorities.
- State **Legislature's** powers are exercised by **Parliament**, with the Council of Ministers being dissolved.
- The State Legislative Assembly **may be** suspended or dissolved.
- The President can issue **ordinances** for the state when Parliament is not in session.
- Parliament may **delegate** the authority to legislate for the state to the President or another authority



**Syllabus: GS Paper 2: Constitution**  
**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 9**

## Duration of President's Rule

- Initially, the President's Rule can be in effect for **six months**, but it can be extended for a maximum of **three years** with **periodic parliamentary approvals** every six months.
- The **44th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1978** introduced a provision allowing the extension of the President's Rule beyond one year, six months at a time, only under two specific conditions:
  - A proclamation of **National Emergency** is in effect throughout India or in the entire state or any part of it.
  - The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** certifies that general elections for the Legislative Assembly of the state cannot be conducted due to certain difficulties.
- The President of India can **revoke** the President's Rule at any time with a proclamation, and this does not require parliamentary approval.

## Past instances of President's rule

Table 16.2 Imposition of President's Rule (1951-2016)

Sl. No.	States/ Union Territories	No. of Times Imposed	Years of Imposition
<b>I. States:</b>			
1.	Andhra Pradesh	3	1954 <sup>20</sup> , 1973, 2014
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	2	1979, 2016
3.	Assam	4	1979, 1981, 1982, 1990
4.	Bihar	8	1968, 1969, 1972, 1977, 1980, 1995, 1999, 2005
5.	Chhattisgarh	--	--
6.	Goa	5	1966, 1979, 1990, 1999, 2005
7.	Gujarat	5	1971, 1974, 1976, 1980, 1996
8.	Haryana	3	1967, 1977, 1991
9.	Himachal Pradesh	2	1977, 1992
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	7	1977, 1986, 1990, 2002, 2008, 2015, 2016
11.	Jharkhand	3	2009, 2010, 2013
12.	Karnataka	6	1971, 1977, 1989, 1990, 2007, 2007
13.	Kerala	5	1956 <sup>21</sup> , 1959, 1964, 1970, 1979
14.	Madhya Pradesh <sup>22</sup>	3	1977, 1980, 1992
15.	Maharashtra	2	1980, 2014
16.	Manipur	10	1967, 1967, 1969, 1973, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1992, 1993, 200
17.	Meghalaya	2	1991, 2009
18.	Mizoram	3	1977, 1978, 1988
19.	Nagaland	4	1975, 1988, 1992, 2008
20.	Odisha	6	1961, 1971, 1973, 1976, 1977, 1980
21.	Punjab <sup>23</sup>	8	1951, 1966, 1968, 1971, 1977, 1980, 1983, 1987
22.	Rajasthan	4	1967, 1977, 1980, 1992
23.	Sikkim	2	1978, 1984

18.	Mizoram	3	1975, 1988, 1992, 2008
19.	Nagaland	4	1975, 1988, 1992, 2008
20.	Odisha	6	1961, 1971, 1973, 1976, 1977, 1980
21.	Punjab <sup>23</sup>	8	1951, 1966, 1968, 1971, 1977, 1980, 1983, 1987
22.	Rajasthan	4	1967, 1977, 1980, 1992
23.	Sikkim	2	1978, 1984
24.	Tamil Nadu	4	1976, 1980, 1988, 1991
25.	Telangana	--	--
26.	Tripura	3	1971, 1977, 1993
27.	Uttarakhand	2	2016, 2016
28.	Uttar Pradesh	9	1968, 1970, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1980, 1992, 1995, 2002
29.	West Bengal	4	1962, 1968, 1970, 1971
<b>II. Union Territories:</b>			
1.	Delhi	1	2014
	Delhi	6	1968, 1974, 1974, 1978, 1983, 1991





**Syllabus: GS Paper 2: Constitution**  
**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 9**

## Proper Use of Article 356

- Hung Assembly after elections
- Failure to form a stable ministry
- Resignation after losing majority
- Disregard of constitutional directions
- Internal subversion / violent revolt
- Physical breakdown of governance

## Improper Use of Article 356

- No floor test conducted
- Alternative govt not explored
- Dismissal despite majority
- Loss in Lok Sabha elections
- Corruption or maladministration alone
- Political or intra-party misuse

### SC Judgement on President's rule.

**S.R. Bommai vs Union of India (1994):** The Court ruled that the President's Rule is subject to judicial review, meaning it can be challenged in court if deemed arbitrary.

**Rameshwar Prasad Case (2006):** The Supreme Court held that the recommendation for the President's Rule should be based on objective criteria and not solely on the subjective opinion of the central government.

96. Which of the following are **not** necessarily the consequences of the proclamation of the President's rule in a State ?

1. **Dissolution** of the State Legislative Assembly
2. Removal of the Council of Ministers in the State
3. **Dissolution** of the local bodies

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3



**Syllabus: GS Paper 3: S&T**

**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 14**

“Maharashtra Advanced Research and Vigilance for Enforcement of Reformed Laws (MARVEL)” to enable the State Police Force to perform law enforcement more effectively using “Artificial Intelligence”,



## What is Maha Crime OS AI ?

- An **AI-based investigation platform** for cyber and financial crimes.
- developed by **MARVEL, CyberEye** and powered by **Microsoft Azure & Foundry**.
- Integrates **advanced analytics, AI models, and open-source intelligence**.

Accepts complaints in **multiple formats** (PDFs, audio, handwritten notes). Translates content from **any language**. Analyses:

- Cyber fraud patterns
- Financial transactions
- Telecom and social media data

Identifies **interlinked crimes and networks** across regions.

- Generates **ready-made investigation plans** aligned with:
  - Maharashtra Police protocols
  - High Court & Supreme Court guidelines
- Suggests:
  - Whose statements to record
  - Which bank accounts to examine
  - What digital evidence to collect
- Reduces dependence on senior officers for routine guidance.

## **Efficiency Gains**

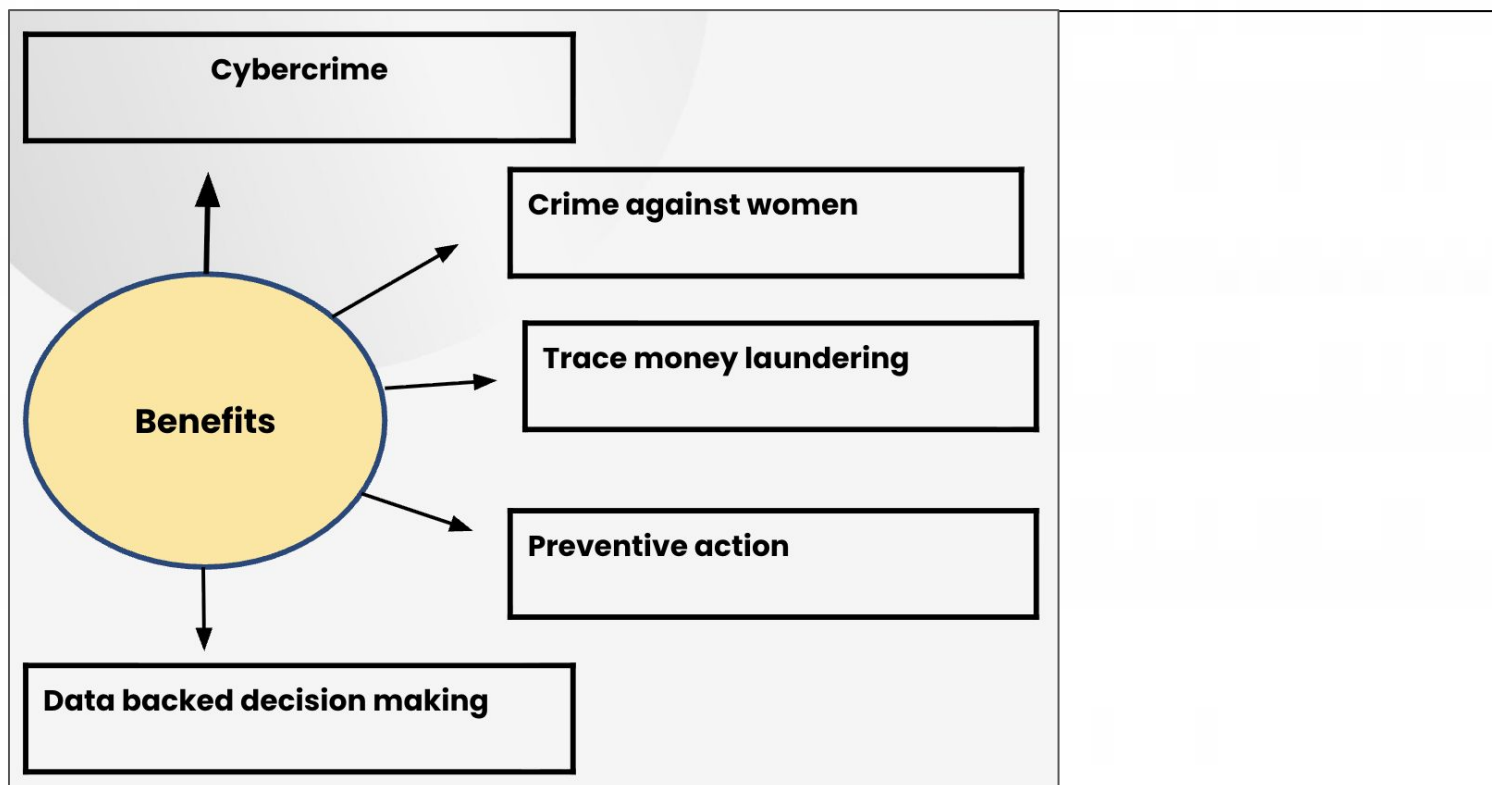
- Saves significant **time and manpower**.
- Helps officers focus on **core investigation tasks**, not paperwork.
- Improves **case preparation for courts** and compliance with due process.





**Syllabus: GS Paper 3: S&T**

**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 14**



**Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Environment**  
**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 4**

## Prelims Pointers : E. Coli Bacteria

- It is commonly known as E. coli, is a type of bacteria that can be found in the **intestines** of humans and animals.
- It is a **rod**-shaped bacterium of the **Enterobacteriaceae** family.
- While most strains of E. coli are harmless and even beneficial, some strains can cause illness and infections.
- Some kinds of E. coli can cause **diarrhea**, while others cause **urinary tract infections**, respiratory illness and pneumonia, and other illnesses.
- **Transmission:** It can be transmitted to humans through **contaminated food, water, or contact** with fecal matter from infected individuals or animals.
- The most familiar strains of E. coli that make you sick do so by producing a toxin called Shiga.
- This toxin damages the lining of your small intestine and causes diarrhea.

After taking samples of various food products, the department banned the sale and use of Ajwa packaged water, allegedly finding the samples contaminated and unfit for consumption. In an order issued by the department, it said the lab tests found the packaged water contaminated with E. Coli and Coliform bacteria.

"The sample was sent for analysis to National Food Testing Laboratory, Ghaziabad, wherein the sample has been declared as unsafe due to the presence of E. Coli and Coliform bacteria," an order by the department read. "Now, therefore, in exercise of powers conferred, and in the interest of Public health and consumer safety, the sale, storage and distribution or display of Ajwa Packaged Drinking water is strictly prohibited....," it said.

This comes a month after another packaged water brand, Snowdrop, was banned. Officials had said they found arsenic contamination in that

which was allegedly found to be contaminated with sulphite levels above the permissible limits.

Two days ago, ruling National Conference legislator Tanvir Sadiq raised concerns, saying the eggs sold in the market were contaminated with carcinogenic nitrofurans and nitroimidazole residues.

"Deeply concerned by reports of nitrofurans and nitroimidazole residues being detected in eggs. Drugs that are strictly banned in food-producing animals because of their carcinogenic and toxic effects," Sadiq said in a post on X and urged the J&K Health Minister and Consumer Affairs Minister to order sampling and testing of eggs.

The Food Safety Department has intensified market checking of food products after it found that "rotten" and unlabelled meat was supplied to the Valley. While the recovery of large quantities of such meat from the Valley triggered a storm and raised concerns

- **Nitrofurantoin**

- Nitrofurantoin is an antibiotic primarily used for the treatment and prevention of uncomplicated lower urinary tract infections (UTIs), such as cystitis.

- **Nitroimidazole**

Nitroimidazole is a class of synthetic antimicrobial agents used to treat infections caused by anaerobic bacteria and certain parasites (protozoa). Metronidazole is the most well-known example of this class





# Food adulteration in Kashmir



**Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Environment**  
**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 4**

**39. In India, the use of carbofuran, methyl parathion, phorate and triazophos is viewed with apprehension. These chemicals are used as**

- (a) pesticides in agriculture
- (b) preservatives in processed foods
- (c) fruit-ripening agents
- (d) moisturising agents in cosmetics

23. Consider the following statements :

1. The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 replaced the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954.
2. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is under the charge of Director General of Health Services in the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

## About Food Safety and Standards Authority of India

- It is an **autonomous body** established under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**, Government of India.
- It has been established under the **Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006**, which is a consolidating statute related to food safety and regulation in India.
- FSSAI is responsible for **setting food standards**, regulating the **manufacture, storage, distribution, sale, and import of food**, and ensuring the availability of **safe and wholesome food** for human consumption.
- It **lays down the science-based standards for food articles** and regulates their manufacturing and distribution processes.
- **Functions:**
  - **Standards Development:** FSSAI formulates standards for various food products, ensuring they are safe for consumption.
  - **Food Safety Management Systems:** It provides guidelines for businesses to implement effective food safety management practices.
  - **Licensing and Registration:** FSSAI manages the licensing process for food businesses, ensuring they comply with food safety regulations.
  - **Surveillance and Monitoring:** Regular inspections and audits are conducted to assess compliance with food safety standards.
  - **Consumer Awareness:** Initiatives to educate the public about food safety, hygiene, and nutrition are a key focus area.



**Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Security**  
**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 1**

## Sahyog Portal – A Public Good

- **Launched:** October 2024 by the **Union Home Ministry**, and maintained by the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C).
- **Purpose:** A centralised channel (which connects central agencies, state police, and online intermediaries to combat cybercrime) for issuing takedown notices to intermediaries.
- **Legal basis:** Section 79(3)(b), **IT Act, 2000** – intermediaries lose “safe harbour protection” if they fail to act upon government notices of unlawful content.
- **Operational data:**
  - 65 intermediaries and nodal officers onboarded by April 2025.
  - 130 takedown notices issued (Oct 2024 – Apr 2025) to platforms including Google, YouTube, Amazon, Microsoft.

“international news organisations and prominent X users”.

A senior industry executive said the blocking orders may be more as companies also receive such orders through email, in cases where the Sahyog portal is down.

The I4C also revealed that more than 118 intermediaries have been onboarded to Sahyog, which suggests an expanding universe of platforms required to comply with state-issued takedown demands. The blocking orders were sent by Central, state and Union Territory (UT) agencies.

According to data shared by I4C with the Karnataka High Court earlier this year, between March 2024 and March 2025, the I4C had sent 426 such notices to various intermediaries, directing to block more than 1.1 lakh links and accounts for sharing unlawful content.

The difference in the volume of such blocking orders — from nearly one a day between March 2024-25 to more than six daily between October 2024-25 — suggests that the portal has aided government agencies in

taking down more online content that they deem unlawful.

The Indian Express had previously reported that nodal officers from 33 states and UTs, along with representatives from seven Central agencies, had been onboarded to Sahyog.

The Home Ministry, Meta, Google, Microsoft, Apple, Amazon and Telegram did not respond to requests for comment from The Indian Express on the takedown orders, including the grounds under which they were issued.

The blocking orders, issued in the form of notices, are sent under Section 79(3)(b) of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000. Under this section, online intermediaries can lose their safe harbour protections if they fail to block access to flagged content. These protections afford social media platforms legal immunity from hosting user-generated content.

These orders fall outside Section 69(A) of the IT Act, which has been commonly used to issue online censorship

directives but is limited to national security and public order-related offences.

The Sahyog portal was operationalised in October 2024 as a single window platform for government agencies to issue blocking orders under Section 79 (3)(b). Before the platform existed, such orders had to be sent directly to individual online platforms by agencies via email.

Earlier this year, X had sued the Government over blocking orders sent under Section 79(3)(b) of the IT Act, arguing that the Centre was trying to establish a “parallel” content blocking regime, and had also called Sahyog a “censorship portal”. In September, the Karnataka High Court ruled in favour of the Central Government in the case, which X plans to appeal further.

In October, the IT Ministry amended the IT Rules to specify that blocking orders under Section 79(3)(b) could only be issued by senior officials at the Centre and states, and introduced additional safeguards, such as monthly reviews.





15th December 2025

# Sahyog Portal

**Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Security**  
**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 1**

## Decoding the News : IT Rules, 2025

- **Scope:** Rules target deepfakes & synthetic content (SGI)
- **Labelling:** AI content must carry permanent identifiers/metadata
- **User Disclosure:** SSMLs to obtain & verify AI-content declarations
- **Takedowns:** Transparent, accountable removal process
- **Authority:** Orders only by Joint Secretary / DIG level
- **Reasoned Notice:** Written order with legal basis & exact URL/ID
- **Oversight:** Monthly Secretary-level review for proportionality



**Q1. With reference to Earth observation satellites, consider the following statements:**

1. Polar-orbiting satellites move from pole to pole and pass over India only once or twice a day.
2. Polar-orbiting satellites are capable of continuously monitoring fire incidents over a given region throughout the day.
3. Geostationary satellites remain fixed relative to a specific location on Earth and can observe the same region around the clock.
4. Geostationary satellites are more suitable than polar-orbiting satellites for identifying diurnal patterns of fire occurrences.

**Which of the statements given above are correct?**

- a) 1, 3 and 4 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

**Answer: a**

**Q2. Consider the following statements with reference to the constitutional provisions:**

1. Article 355 imposes a duty on the Union to protect States against external aggression and internal disturbance.
2. Article 356 can be invoked when a State fails to comply with or give effect to the directions issued by the Union.
3. Article 365 provides that failure of a State to comply with Union directions may be treated as a ground for the proclamation of President's Rule.

**How many of the above statements is/are correct?**

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

**Answer: c**

**Q3. With reference to Maha Crime OS AI, consider the following statements:**

1. It is an AI-based investigation platform designed to assist law enforcement agencies in probing cyber and financial crimes.

2. It is a national-level platform developed and operated by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
3. It can analyse cyber-fraud patterns by correlating financial, telecom and social media data.

**How many of the above statements is/are correct?**

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

**Answer: b**

**Q4. With reference to Escherichia coli (E. coli), consider the following statements:**

1. All strains of E. coli are pathogenic and cause gastrointestinal illness in humans.
2. Certain pathogenic strains of E. coli cause disease by producing Shiga toxin, which damages the lining of the small intestine.
3. E. coli infections can be transmitted to humans through contaminated food and water as well as contact with faecal matter.

**Which of the statements given above are correct?**

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

**Answer: c**

**Q5. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) comes under the administrative jurisdiction of:**

- a) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- b) Ministry of Home Affairs
- c) Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare
- d) Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilisers

**Answer: a**







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