



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

23rd December 2025



23rd December 2025

CONTEXT: Amid rising air pollution, legal interpretations linking environmental rights to the right to life to enforce environmental protections, emphasising the state's responsibility, is the need of the hour

Recent context:

- Given the air pollution in Delhi, Commission for Air Quality Management has amended the **Graded Response Action Plan:**
 - ◆ Made it **mandatory to close schools in Delhi** and NCR districts under **Phases 3 and 4 of the plan.**
 - ◆ State governments will now have to **stagger the timings of public offices** and municipal bodies in Delhi and NCR districts.
 - ◆ Earlier, the decision to implement these measures was at the discretion of the State government.

About GRAP:

- set of emergency measures taken to prevent further deterioration of air quality after the AQI of the Delhi-NCR region reaches a certain threshold.
- **Supreme Court in 2016 in its verdict in M. C. Mehta vs. Union of India.**
- **First notified by MoEFCC in 2017.**
- **Implementing agency:** CAQM
- CAQM relies on air quality and meteorological forecasts by the **Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology** and the **India Meteorological Department**.

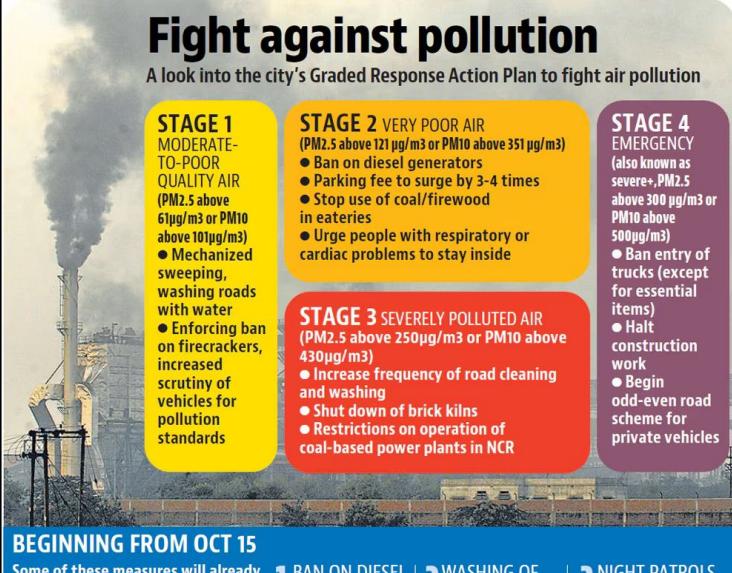
Constitutional provisions:

Right to Clean Environment under Article 21:

- **Subhash Kumar v. State of Bihar (1991):** it has held that Article 21 includes the **right of enjoyment of pollution free water and air** for full enjoyment of life.
 - state is constitutionally obliged to take steps to protect and

Fight against pollution

A look into the city's Graded Response Action Plan to fight air pollution



BEGINNING FROM OCT 15

Some of these measures will already kick in from October 15. These are:

1 BAN ON DIESEL GENERATORS | 2 WASHING OF ROADS | 3 NIGHT PATROLS AT HOT SPOTS

improve the environment so that every citizen is able to enjoy his right to pollution-free air and water, which are necessary for a meaningful life.

- **M.C. Mehta versus Union of India, 1987:** right to live in a pollution free environment as part of the fundamental right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution.
- **M.C. Mehta v. Union of India (1997):** Supreme Court issued several guidelines and
- directions for the **protection of the Taj Mahal**, an ancient monument, from environmental degradation.
- **In Vellore Citizens Welfare Forum v. Union of India (1996):** **precautionary principle:** the Court took cognisance of the environmental problems being caused by tanneries that were polluting the water resources. As a result, the Court issued several directions to deal with the problem.



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- **Right against the adverse effects of climate change:**
 - **M.K. Ranjitsinh and Others v. Union of India and Others, 2024:**
 - Supreme Court formulated a new constitutional right to be free from the adverse effects of climate change by drawing upon **Article 21 and Article 14** of the Indian Constitution.
 - underscored the important role solar power would play in arresting the ills of climate change.
- **M.C. Mehta And Anr vs Union Of India & Ors, 1986 (Oleum Gas Leak case):**
 - **concept of 'absolute liability' was introduced** for disasters arising out of the storage, leak or use of hazardous substances.
 - imposition of legal responsibility on a party for damages caused, regardless of fault or negligence.
 - **Strict Liability Principle:**
 - a company is **not liable and need not pay compensation** if a hazardous substance escapes its premises **by accident or by an 'act of God' (Force Majeure)**.

Important Principles:

- **Precautionary principle:** In cases where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, a lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing

- cost-effective measures which could prevent environmental degradation.
- **Polluter pays principle:** those who are responsible for the pollution should bear the costs of managing it to prevent damage to human health or the environment.
 - For instance, a factory that produces a potentially poisonous substance as a by-product of its activities is held responsible for its safe disposal.

Public trust doctrine:

- **M.C. Mehta versus Kamal Nath, 1997:** Supreme Court explained the doctrine as a reflection of a social contract between the state and the people, in which the state serves as the trustee while the people or the communities own the resources. Although the state holds certain rights over said resources, it shall not utilise them for personal gains and shall be used only for the benefits of the people.
- **Radhey Shyam Sahu, 1999:** Supreme Court held that the doctrine of public trust emanates from the provisions of Article 21 of the Constitution protecting the life of the people and put the **state under the obligation to maintain public parks for the citizens.**



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Way Ahead:

- **Institutionalise Ethical environmental Governance**
 - Apply "Stewardship ethics"
 - Make EIA's more participatory & transparent.
- **Institutional reforms:**
 - Adequately staff NGT & SPCB's.
- **Ethical Corporate Practices:**
 - Make ESG reporting and green audits mandatory.
- **Educate for ecological citizenship:**
 - Use virtue ethics to inculcate habits of restraint, respect for nature.
- **Sustainable development models:**
green GDP

Mains PYQ

"The most significant achievement of modern law in India is the constitutionalisation of environmental problems by the Supreme Court." Discuss this statement with the help of relevant case laws. **(2022)**

Mains Practice Question

"The constitutionalisation of environmental concerns through a liberal interpretation of Article 21 has been a landmark contribution of the Indian Supreme Court." Critically examine this statement with reference to relevant judicial pronouncements. Also discuss how environmental ethics can be effectively realised in governance and society."

(15 Marks, 250 words)



Right to Disconnect: Drawing the line after work



CONTEXT: *The Right to Disconnect Bill* has been introduced as a private member's bill, a form of legislation that is rarely enacted.

Public Bill v/s Private member bill

Public Bill	Private Bill
1. It is introduced in the Parliament by a minister.	1. It is introduced by any member of Parliament other than a minister.
2. It reflects of the policies of the government (ruling party).	2. It reflects the stand of opposition party on public matter.
3. It has greater chance to be approved by the Parliament.	3. It has lesser chance to be approved by the Parliament.
4. Its rejection by the House amounts to the expression of want of parliamentary confidence in the government and may lead to its resignation.	4. Its rejection by the House has no implication on the parliamentary confidence in the government or its resignation.
5. Its introduction in the House requires seven days' notice.	5. Its introduction in the House requires one month's notice.
6. It is drafted by the concerned department in consultation with the law department.	6. Its drafting is the responsibility of the member concerned.

Need:

- Digital economy:** blurred the traditional boundaries between working time and personal time.
- Decline in productivity with Long Working Hours:** productivity declines significantly after 50 hours of work per week, and drops further after 55 hours. Germany and Japan further increased productivity by reducing working hours to 1,400-1,600 hours a year.
- Work-life balance:**
 - strain relationships within the family
 - prone to experience burnout, higher levels of stress and mental health problems. e.g. **Ernst & Young employee's death** in Pune due to overwork in 2024.
- Exacerbation of gender Inequalities:** disproportionate impact on women,

who often shoulder greater caring and home obligations.

- Constitutional Basis:**
 - Article 21:** Right to Life and Liberty and dignity.
 - Article 42:** State's responsibility to ensure just and humane working conditions.

Key Provisions of the Bill:

- Applicability of the Bill:** all employees, whether engaged with a company or a society, who are engaged in roles **where they do not get a 'break' from their digitised professional commitments** even after official working hours.
- Definition of "Right to Disconnect":** means that while the employer may contact the worker after work hours, the **employee is not obliged to reply and shall have the right to refuse** to answer such calls.
- Exemption from disciplinary action:** prohibits an employer from taking any disciplinary action due to any reason during the employment **on the grounds that the employee exercises the right to disconnect.**
- Constitution of the Employees' Welfare Authority:** functions to ensure and promote employee welfare by adopting a nationwide **framework for out-of-work arrangements.**
- Overtime payment for out-of-work hours:** if employees volunteer to respond and work beyond the working hours, then he/she must be paid overtime.
- Employee Welfare Committees:** consisting of its employees to assist and support periodical negotiations among employers and employees.



Right to Disconnect: Drawing the line after work

23rd December 2025

CONTEXT: *The Right to Disconnect Bill* has been introduced as a private member's bill, a form of legislation that is rarely enacted.

relating to terms and conditions of outside working hours.

- **Digital Detox Centres:** by the appropriate government that provide digital detox counselling services promoting reasonable usage of the digital tools.
- **Punitive measures:** organizations will be liable to pay a penalty at the rate of '**one percent of total employees' remuneration**', making the penal provisions quite stringent for all the organizations.

Issues In the Bill:

- **Ambiguity with respect to scope of 'work':** fails to address whether such after-hours engagement falls within the legal constructs of work.
 - As a consequence, the right to disconnect operates more as a behavioural norm than a labour standard.
 - **International Practice:** European Union, employer control became a key parameter for assessing working time.
- **Given right is a mandatory labour standard or its term can be modified via a contract:** The Indian labour code contains mandatory rules, prescribing limits on working hours, and contractual terms negotiated through employer policy and agreements.
- **Rights constitutional character:** The freedom to disengage bears an evident relationship with **Article 21 of the Constitution**. Yet the Bill neither traces its constitutional lineage nor articulates how these guarantees are to be realised within the workplace.
 - unresolved whether the right to

disconnect is purely statutory or indicative of a deeper constitutional engagement between work and individual autonomy.

Way Ahead:

- **Define scope of work:** A comparative study reveals that the right to disconnect becomes effective when an employee's time is treated as working time.
- **Align with UDHR: Article 24:** 'Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.'
- **Flexible Schedules**
- **Supporting mental health:** through access to counselling, wellness programs, or mental health days

Mains Practice Question

"The Right to Disconnect Bill, 2025 seeks to address the challenges posed by excessive work-related digital communication. Examine the need for such a legislation in the context of changing work culture, mental health concerns, and work-life balance in India."

(15 Marks, 250 words)



India New Zealand wraps FTA talks

23rd December 2025

Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Economy

Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 1

AIMING TO double bilateral trade over the next five years, India and New Zealand Monday announced the conclusion of negotiations on a free trade agreement. Bilateral trade between the countries in 2024-25 was \$1.3 billion.

Officials in New Delhi said while talks have concluded, the deal is expected to be signed in 2-3 months after "legal scrubbing", a process where lawyers and trade experts from both sides finalise the agreement's text. The implementation itself

● India-New Zealand trade

	India's exports	Imports	Trade surplus
2024-25	\$711 mn	\$587 mn	\$123 mn
2023-24	\$538 mn	\$335 mn	\$203 mn
2022-23	\$547 mn	\$477 mn	\$70 mn
2021-22	\$487 mn	\$374 mn	\$112 mn

E. EXPLAINED

Diversifying exports

AT A time when a bilateral trade agreement between India and its biggest export destination, the US, remains stuck, New Delhi has managed to conclude talks with New Zealand in a record nine months. So far this year, it has signed two deals, one with Oman last Thursday, and another with the UK in May.

Easing access

The proposed deal will give duty-free access to a range of domestic goods and includes an FDI commitment of **\$20 billion over 15 years**

New Zealand to get

- Duty-free access to goods such as sheep meat, wool, coal and over **95%** of forestry and wood articles
- Duty concessions on items such as kiwi fruit, wine, seafood, cherries, avocados, persimmons, bulk infant formula, Manuka honey, and milk albumins
- No concessions in dairy sector

Indian professionals in skilled occupations to get temporary employment entry visa pathway and stay of up to **3 years**



Ties on track: Union Minister Piyush Goyal with New Zealand Minister Todd McClay in New Delhi on Monday. PTI

The deal is expected to be signed in the first half of 2026 and aims at doubling bilateral trade to **\$5 billion in five years**

● IN TRADE DEAL

ZERO-DUTY market access on 100% of India's exports. India has offered tariff liberalisation in 70% lines covering 95% of New Zealand-India Bilateral trade.

QUOTA of temporary employment visa for 5,000 professionals and 1,000 work and holiday visas.

DESPITE New Zealand being one of the largest exporters of dairy products, India has kept dairy in the exclusion list.



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- Benefits:**

- **New Zealand:** Access to high-tariff (over 15 per cent) & fast-growing Indian consumer market at a time of rising global trade uncertainty.
- **India:**
 - strengthens access to a high-income, rules-based Pacific market and supports its broader Indo-Pacific economic strategy.
 - This alone may not result in immediate export growth since average tariffs in New Zealand are one of the lowest in the world, at about 2.3 per cent.

- **Address non-tariff barriers:** through enhanced regulatory cooperation, transparency, and streamlined customs, sanitary and phytosanitary measures and technical Barriers to trade disciplines

Form of Economic Integration	Key Features	Distinctive Point	Example
Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA)	Reduced tariffs on selected goods among member countries	Tariff reduction is partial and product-specific , not across all goods	India–MERCOSUR PTA
Free Trade Area (FTA)	Elimination of tariffs and quotas on substantially all trade among members	Each country retains independent trade policy with non-members	ASEAN FTA, SAFTA
Customs Union	FTA + Common External Tariff (CET) against non-members	No internal tariffs + uniform external trade policy	Southern African Customs Union (SACU)
Common Market	Customs Union + free movement of factors of production (labour & capital)	Allows workers and capital to move freely across borders	European Economic Community (EEC – earlier stage)
Economic Union	Common Market + harmonisation of economic & fiscal policies	High level of integration; may include common currency	European Union (EU)



The December 19 judgment by a Supreme Court Bench placing corporate environmental responsibility inside the legal meaning of **corporate social responsibility (CSR)** reframes how the Court reads CSR in Indian company law while continuing its attempts since 2021 to reduce deaths of great Indian bustards from power infrastructure. The Bench has treated the CSR regime as an enforceable obligation rather than an undertaking at companies' discretion while also reading social responsibility to include environmental and wildlife protection through the Companies Act itself. According to the Court, a corporation as a legal person shares the duty under Article 51A(g), which means spending CSR funds on environmental measures can be framed as discharging one's constitutional obligation rather than engaging in charity. For great Indian bustards, the Court has thus strengthened the legal basis for conservationists to demand corporate financing for projects to recover species endangered by corporate activity. The Court's 2021 interim order restricted overhead transmission lines across 99,000 sq. km and required a committee-led approach to feasibility and under-grounding. In 2024, it constituted an expert committee to balance species protection with climate commitments and renewable energy build-out, which the new order has operationalised. If CSR and project-linked financing become easier to compel, they can support the recurring costs of breeding and releasing chicks and of restoring grasslands and maintaining them.

(g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wild life, and to have compassion for living creatures;

However, the verdict is also a legal interpretation; it does not specify which companies must pay how much, where, when, and with what audit trail (the penalty for non-compliance will remain according to existing provisions). The Court's shift from a large-area approach, as in its 2021 order, to revised priority areas also reduces conflict with renewable energy deployments while pushing some of the onus to the accurate mapping of habitats – a problem given bustards move around and infrastructure risks can lie outside formal boundaries. The judgment improves the legal position for getting companies to pay for prevention and recovery and specifies a narrower but more detailed habitat and infrastructure plan. Whether it is sufficient will depend less on the doctrine it announces and more on whether governments and utilities can deliver the under-grounding and rerouting work at the required pace, and whether corporate funding translates to outcomes on the ground.

About CSR

- **What is it?** – It is a business model by which companies make a concerted effort to operate in ways that enhance rather than degrade society and the environment.
- It helps both improve various aspects of society as well as promote a **positive brand image of companies**.
- **Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013** makes it mandatory for the following companies having in the **immediately preceding financial year**:
 - **net worth** of rupees **five hundred crores** or more, or
 - **turnover** of rupees **one thousand crores** or more, or
 - **net profit** of rupees **five crores** or more.
- The Act mandates companies to **spend at least 2% of their average net profit in the previous three years on CSR activities**.
- **Penal Provisions:** punishable with a **fine ranging from INR 50,000 to INR 25 lakh**. The officers responsible for CSR are liable for **imprisonment up to 3 years or a fine between INR 50,000-5 lakh or both**.
- **Amendment in 2019:**
 - **Before** – if a company was **unable to fully spend its CSR funds** in a given year, it **could carry the amount forward and spend it in the next fiscal**, in addition to the money allotted for that year.
 - **Unspent Amount NOT Related to an Ongoing Project:**
 - Must be transferred **to a fund specified in Schedule VII** of the Companies Act (such as Prime Minister's National Relief Fund, Clean Ganga Fund, etc.) **within 6 months** from the end of the financial year.
 - **Unspent CSR Amount – Related to an Ongoing Project**
 - Transfer unspent amount to an **Unspent CSR Account** in a **scheduled bank**.

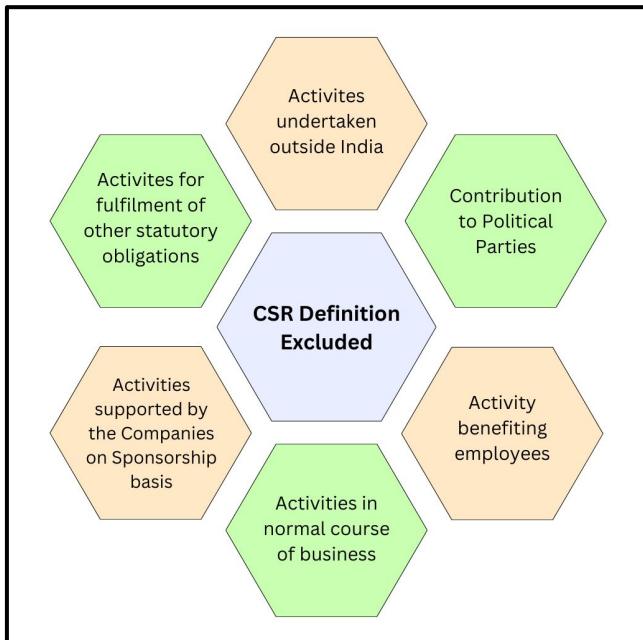


23rd December 2025

Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Environment & Economy

Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 6

- **Time limit:** Within **30 days** from the end of the financial year
- Must be **utilised within 3 subsequent financial years**
- If still unspent, transfer to a **Schedule VII fund within 30 days** after completion of the 3rd year

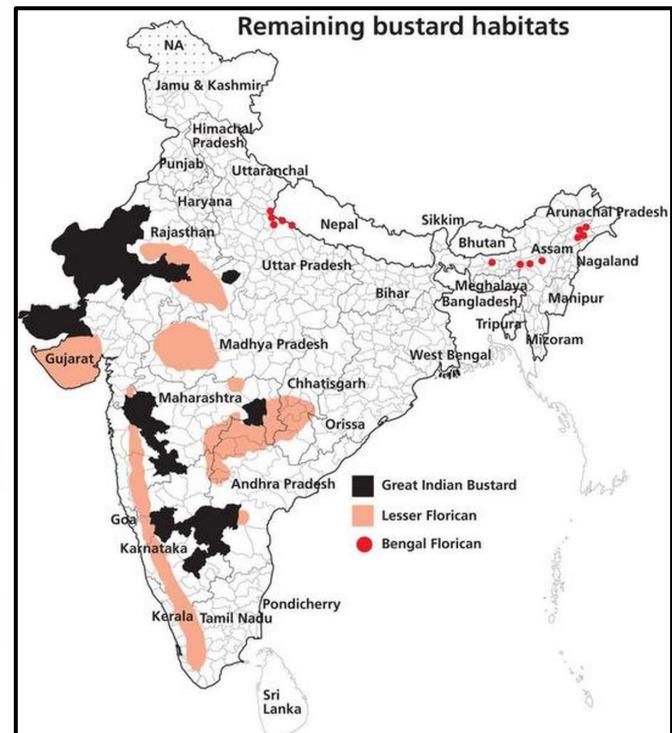


About Great Indian Bustard

- **Endemic** to the Indian subcontinent
- Among the **heaviest flying birds** in the world
- **Flagship species of grasslands**, indicating grassland ecosystem health
- **Largest bustard species in India**
 - **Other bustards:** Houbara bustard, Lesser florican, Bengal florican
- **Primarily terrestrial**; spends most time on the ground, flies occasionally
- **Diurnal**; most active during early morning and evening
- **Distribution:** current viable population of 100- 150 individuals in

India and mainly survives in the **Thar Desert of Rajasthan** that holds about 100 individuals.

- **State bird of Rajasthan**
- **Omnivores:** feed on insects, grass seeds, berries, rodents and reptiles.
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN:** Critically Endangered.
 - **CITES:** Appendix I.
 - **WPA 1972:** Schedule I.



- **Features:**
 - **Ostrich-like appearance:** Large bird with **horizontal body and long bare legs**.
 - It can easily be **distinguished by its black crown on the forehead**, contrasting with the pale neck and head.
 - The **body is brownish**, with a **black patch spotted in white**.
 - **Males have larger crowns** as compared to the females.
- **Wildlife Institute of India:**
 - **only 150 GIBs are left**, with the **maximum number in**



Corporates obligation to support cost of restoring grasslands

23rd December 2025

Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Environment & Economy

Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 6

Jaisalmer. They are **dying at the rate of 15% annually** due to collision with high voltage power lines.

- They are prone to collision due to their **poor frontal vision** and inability to see the power lines from a distance.



PYQ

Q. With reference to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) rules in India, consider the following statements: (2024)

- CSR rules specify that expenditures that benefit the company directly or its employees will not be considered as CSR activities.
- CSR rules do not specify minimum spending on CSR activities.

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



India tops global doping list

Syllabus: Prelims: International Organisations

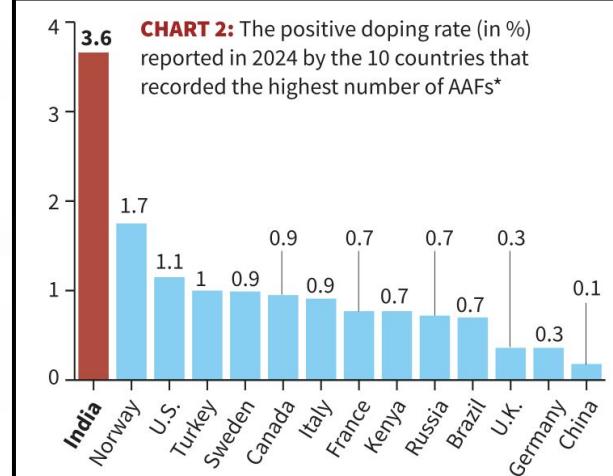
Newspaper: The Hindu, **Page No. 7**

India has recorded the highest number of doping offenders globally for the third consecutive year, according to the latest World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) report. According to the WADA's 2024 report, India recorded 260 positive doping cases from 7,113 samples (Chart 1A) – a 3.6% positivity rate (Chart 1B). This figure is more than double of any other nation's numbers, as no other country exceeded a 1.75% positivity rate in 2024.

Norway documented the second-highest proportion of positive cases at 1.75%, followed by the U.S. at 1.15% (Chart 2). In terms of

gimes. China, for example, conducted over 24,000 tests in 2024 (Chart 3), more than triple India's volume, yet reported fewer than one-fifth of the violations.

CHART 3: The number of doping tests conducted in 2024 by the 10 countries that recorded the highest number of AAFs*



The findings have come at a time when India is positioning itself as a credible global sporting host. The country is preparing to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games, seen as a stepping stone towards its larger ambition of hosting the 2036 Olympics.

India's National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) has defended its record, arguing that higher numbers reflect improved detection rather than rising drug use. In a

However, global comparisons suggest that India's problem is not merely one of testing volume. Several countries with comparable or higher testing numbers continue to report far lower positivity rates.



India tops global doping list

23rd December 2025

Syllabus: Prelims: International Organisations

Newspaper: The Hindu, **Page No. 7**

TABLE 4: The total number of samples collected, total AAFs, and the corresponding positivity rate across the 10 sports that recorded the highest number of AAFs* in India

Sport	Total Samples	Total AAFs	Positivity rate (in %)
Athletics	1,862	76	4.1
Weightlifting	664	43	6.5
Wrestling	414	29	7
Powerlifting	54	17	31.5
Boxing	413	17	4.1
Kabaddi	181	10	5.5
Bodybuilding	12	8	66.7
Judo	186	6	3.2
Wushu	111	5	4.5

order". In response, the Indian Olympic Association constituted a new anti-doping panel in August.

The government has also moved to tighten the legal framework. Parliament recently passed the National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill, 2025, incorporating changes sought by WADA to bring India's anti-doping regime in line with global standards. The Bill prohibits doping in sports, and provides a framework for testing, enforcement, and adjudication of violations.

The National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill, 2025:

- Seeks to amend the **National Anti-Doping Act, 2022**.
- Gives effect to the **UNESCO convention against doping in sports**.
- **Aligns India's anti-doping laws with World Anti-Doping Agency requirements:**
 - **Operational Independence for NADA:** The **National Anti-Doping Agency** will function without direct government oversight to address WADA's concerns over autonomy.
 - **Changes in the National Anti-Doping Board:** The Board remains but *without powers to oversee NADA or influence its operations*, ensuring compliance with global anti-doping norms.

About WADA

- It was established in 1999 as an international independent agency to lead a collaborative worldwide movement for doping-free sport.
- **Role:** To develop, harmonize and coordinate anti-doping rules and policies across all sports and countries.
- Its activities include scientific and social science research; education; intelligence & investigations; development of anti-doping capacity; and monitoring of compliance with the World Anti-Doping Program.
- **Headquarter:** Montreal, Canada.

Governance Structure of World Anti-Doping Agency

- **Foundation Board (Board):** It consists of 42-member and it is the agency's highest policy-making body, is jointly composed of representatives of the Olympic Movement (the IOC, National Olympic Committees, International Sports Federations, and athletes) and representatives of governments from all five continents.
- **Executive Committee (ExCo):** It consists of 16-member to which the Board delegates the management and running of the agency, including the performance of all its activities and the administration of its assets.



Syllabus: Prelims: Defense and security

Newspaper: The Hindu, **Page No. 12**

About "ANJADIP"

- **Third** of eight **Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft** to Indian Navy.
- Indigenously designed and built by **Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers** (GRSE), Kolkata.
- The ASW SWC ships have been designed and constructed as per the **Classification Rules of Indian Register of Shipping**.
- Under a **Public-Private-Partnership** of **GRSE with M/s L&T Shipyard, Kattupalli** thus demonstrating the success of collaborative defence manufacturing.
- These ships at approx. **77m** length, are the **largest Indian Naval Warships** propelled by Water Jets and are equipped with state of the art **Lightweight Torpedoes, indigenously designed Anti-Submarine Rockets and shallow water SONAR**, enabling effective detection and engagement of underwater threats.

- The ship will strengthen Navy's Anti-Submarine, coastal surveillance and mine laying capabilities.
- **The ship derives its name from Anjadip Island located off coast of Karwar, Karnataka**, underscoring India's commitment to safeguarding its expansive maritime domain.
- Anjadip's delivery is yet another milestone in the Indian Navy's quest for indigenous shipbuilding upholding the Government's vision of '**Atma Nirbhar Bharat**' with over **80% indigenous** content.
- The ship stands as a testament to growing domestic defence manufacturing ecosystem and reducing dependency on imports.



Places in News: Venezuela

Syllabus: Prelims: Places in News

Newspaper: The Hindu, **Page No. 14**

The “active pursuit” in the Caribbean Sea was happening a day after the Coast Guard seized its second vessel off Venezuela in two weeks.

U.S. President Donald Trump announced on December 16 a blockade of “sanctioned oil vessels” sailing to and from Venezuela, demanding the return of allegedly stolen U.S. assets in the oil-rich South American country.

Mr. Trump has also deployed a large navy armada in the Caribbean with a stated mission of combatting drug trafficking. Caracas, however, says it is a pressure campaign to oust President Nicolas Maduro.

The targeting of tankers comes as Mr. Trump has ordered the Defence Department to carry out a series of attacks on vessels in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific Ocean that his administration alleges are smuggling fentanyl and other illegal drugs into the United States and beyond.

About Venezuela

- **Location:** northern coast of South America.
- **Bordering Countries:** Guyana to the east, Brazil to the south, and Colombia to the southwest and west.
- **Maritime boundaries:** Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean.
- **Capital:** Caracas
- **Natural Resources:** world's largest oil reserves and a large amount of gas reserves, as well as huge quantities of coal, iron ore, bauxite, and gold.



23rd December 2025

Q1. Regarding the Right to a Clean Environment in India, consider the following statements:

1. The Supreme Court has interpreted the Right to Life under Article 21 to include the right to enjoy pollution-free air and water.
2. Judicial directions for the protection of the Taj Mahal from environmental pollution were issued under Article 49 of the Constitution.
3. The State has a constitutional obligation to protect and improve the environment to enable citizens to enjoy a meaningful life.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Answer: b

Q2. With reference to different forms of economic integration, consider the following statements:

1. In a Free Trade Area, member countries eliminate tariffs on substantially all internal trade but retain independent trade policies with non-member countries.
2. A Customs Union differs from a Free Trade Area in that it involves a common external tariff against non-member countries.
3. Free movement of labour and capital is a feature of an Economic Union but not of a Common Market.
4. Preferential Trade Agreements involve partial and product-specific tariff reductions rather than the elimination of tariffs across all goods.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: a

Q3. Regarding the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in India, consider the following statements:

1. Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013, makes CSR expenditure mandatory for companies meeting specified thresholds of net worth, turnover, or net profit.
2. Companies covered under CSR provisions are required to spend at least 2% of their average net profits of the preceding three financial years on CSR activities.

3. Failure to comply with CSR provisions may attract monetary penalties and imprisonment for officers responsible.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Answer: c

Q4. With reference to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), consider the following statements:

1. It was established under the joint initiative of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and national governments.
2. It publishes the World Anti-Doping Code, which is legally binding on all countries that have ratified the UNESCO Convention against Doping in Sport.
3. Its headquarters are located in Montreal, Canada.
4. It directly conducts doping tests on athletes participating in international sporting events.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: a

Q5. Venezuela does not share its land boundary with which of the following countries?

- a) Ecuador
- b) Brazil
- c) Guyana
- d) Columbia

Answer: a





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