



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

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CONTEXT: "Very very firm response"

Changing Dynamics

Deterrence Challenges

1. **Pakistan's Unpredictability:**
 - High-risk tolerance, revisionist goals
 - Nuclear asymmetry
2. **Proxy War Dynamics:**
 - Plausible deniability blurs accountability
 - Pakistan's historical complicity in jihadist activities
3. **Cost of Deterrence:**
 - Military action risks escalation
 - Must balance retaliation with strategic objectives
4. **Hard to Prove**

India's Evolving Strategy

- **1990s:** Strategic restraint, absorbing costs
- **Post-2008 (Mumbai Attacks):** Diplomatic & economic isolation of Pakistan
- **2016 (Uri Attack):** Surgical strikes across LoC – shift to proactive response
- **2019 (Pulwama):** Balakot airstrikes (first in undisputed Pak territory since 1971)
- **Current Approach:**
 - a. Calculated escalation to impose costs on Pakistan
 - b. Concrete Evidences implicating Pak

Escalation Dynamics

Current Govt Shifts in Counter-Terror Policy

1. **Risk Manipulation:** Active escalation instead of restraint
2. **Audience Costs:** Political pressure to retaliate against provocations
3. **Domestic Politics:** Strong public support for hardline stance

Nuclear Risks & Escalation Dynamics

- **Pakistan's Nuclear Rhetoric:** Low credibility in redlines
- **2019 vs Now:** Conventional retaliation
- **Pakistan Current Scenario:**
 - Pakistan's internal turmoil (civil-military tensions) may influence response

Geopolitical Factors

- **US Disengagement:** Declining leverage over Pakistan, muted response compared to 2019
- **China's Influence:**
 - Backs Pakistan's sovereignty demands
 - Deepening military & economic ties
- **India's Challenge:**
 - Managing dual threats
 - Leveraging US support – countering China-Pakistan axis

Nuclear Doctrine

Background

- NPT – Non-proliferation, disarmament, right to peacefully use nuclear tech
- Peaceful Nuclear Explosion in 1974
- Pokhran II in 1998 as nuclearised neighborhood & constraining non-proliferation environment

Draft Nuclear Policy

- No first use – retaliation only – Article 51
- Deterrence – Not for conventional weapons e.g. Kargil, cross border terror by Pak, China territorial incursions
- Credible Minimum – not race for size as costly
- National Security Objective: Global, verifiable, non-discriminatory disarmament
- Civilian Control



CONTEXT: "Very very firm response"

Nuclear escalation ladder

India's 'No First Use' policy states that nuclear weapons will only be used in retaliation against a nuclear attack on Indian territory or on Indian forces anywhere. A look at the India-Pakistan escalation ladder, at the top of which is a nuclear war



- Massive retaliation - unacceptable damage
- Non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states

Why NFU

- Avoid provocative signals
- No arms race
- NSG, UNSC membership
- Responsible power, disarmament goal
- Regional balance

Arguments against NFU

- Antidote to alleged conventional inferiority
- Restricts military options
- Rejected by nuclear states

What Next?

- Not written in stone
- Period of restraint, responsibility & maturity
- Non escalation but deterrence level response

Updates

How Air Defense Systems Work

Detection:

- Uses radar (electromagnetic waves) to identify threats (aircraft, drones, missiles)
- Detects distance, speed, and type of threat

Tracking:

- Satellites may aid in detecting ICBMs
- Combines radar, infrared, and laser sensors for continuous monitoring
- Handles multiple threats in cluttered environments
- Ensures accuracy to avoid targeting friendly forces

Interception:

- Neutralizes threats based on range, type, speed
- Integrated Command, Control, Communication (C3) systems

TAKING DOWN ADS

Establishing air superiority allows an Air Force to operate with a degree of impunity, and without fear of attrition in bombing, tactical air support, paratroop insertion, or supply-drop missions.

To establish air superiority over enemy territory, the enemy's air defence systems have to be neutralised. Suppression of Enemy Air Defences (SEAD) operations target enemy air defences with missiles, EW, bombs, UAVs or even ground attacks. An analysis published in 2005 found that a quarter of American combat sorties in (then) recent conflicts had been SEAD missions (Christopher Bolkcom, 'Military Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses (SEAD): Assessing Future Needs').

Given the role of air superiority in providing a protective umbrella for ground forces, taking down enemy air defences also lays the ground for deeper ground attacks into enemy territory.



CONTEXT: "Very very firm response"

Air Defence Systems

Interception Methods

1. Fighter Aircraft:

- Agile interceptors (e.g., MiG-21, Su-35, Rafale)
- Equipped with missiles, cannons, and electronic warfare systems

2. Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAMs):

- **Long-range (e.g., S-400):** Targets ballistic missiles/aircraft
- **Medium-range (e.g., Akash, Barak):** Mobile, 50–100 km range
- **MANPADS:** Portable, cost-effective for drones/helicopters

3. Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA):

- Rapid-fire shells (1,000+ RPM) with shrapnel dispersal
- Last-ditch defense, anti-UAV role

4. Electronic Warfare (EW):

- Jams enemy radar, disrupts missiles/drones
- Deployed via land/air (e.g., EA-18G Growler)

Mains Practice Question

India-Pakistan relations continue to be shaped by the enduring threat of conflict, the evolving deterrence postures, and the modernization of air defence systems. Examine the impact of these factors on strategic stability in South Asia.



CONTEXT: Supreme Court observation

Rohingyas

- Article 1 Para. 2 of 1951 UN Convention – **'refugee'** – *"well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."*
- R vs. Secretary for the Home Department**
 - evidence of a "real & substantial danger of persecution"
- Muslim ethnic minority group
- UN – systematically denied citizenship in Myanmar since 1982
- "Rohingya" as a means to assert collective identity and historical ties to the region
- Restrictive citizenship laws

Centre's Affidavit

- Priority of Citizens
- No Right to Reside
- National Security – Illegal Entry, Fake ID, Human Trafficking, Subversion
 - Mohammad Salimullah and Anr. vs. Union of India (2021)* – rejected pleas to halt the deportation of detained Rohingya
- Altering Demography
- Refugee protocols Non-ratification
 - 1951 Refugee Convention
 - 1967 Protocol
- Foreigners Act, 1946, Passport Act, 1967 – illegal migrants
- Repatriation since 2018

Concerns about Refugee policies

- No Standardised policy
 - Geopolitical interests
 - CAA, 2019
- Legal Aid
 - NGOs FCRA licences, funding
- Detention Conditions

International Obligations

- HR Treaties
 - ICCPR
 - International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- Non-Refoulement in Indian Law
 - Article 51(c)
 - Vishaka vs. State of Rajasthan, 1997 – international norms apply in the absence of domestic laws

Suggestions

- Domestic Refugee Law
- Judiciary's role in upholding non-refoulement
- Humane detention centres with adequate resources
- NGOs to support refugee rehabilitation
- Collab with UNHCR

Mains PYQ 2014

How does illegal transborder migration pose a threat to India's security? Discuss the strategies to curb this, bringing out the factors which give impetus to such migration.

Mains Practice Question

India's approach to refugees, particularly the Rohingya crisis, reflects a complex balance between national security, humanitarian concerns, and international obligations. Evaluate India's approach in this context, with reference to constitutional provisions, legal framework, and global conventions.



Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Environment – Climate Change
Newspaper : The Hindu, Page No. 16

Background

Emissions Context

- **Per capita GHG (2023):** 2.9 tCO₂e (vs. global avg. 6.7)
 - **Comparisons:**
 - EU: 6.9 | Japan: 8.3 | US: 17.2 | Canada: 20.4
- **Historical Responsibility:**
 - Developed nations peaked earlier (EU: 1970s, US: 2000s)
 - India faces pressure for faster transition despite lower emissions

Key Initiatives

- **Energy Mix Diversification:**
 - **Non-fossil share (Feb 2025):** 47.4% (Solar: 21.8%, Wind: 10.3%, Hydro: 10%, Nuclear: 1.7%)
 - **Solar:** 55 parks sanctioned (39.9 GW target, 12.2 GW operational)
 - **Offshore Wind:** ₹7,453cr VGF for 1 GW (Gujarat/Tamil Nadu)
 - **Nuclear:** ₹20,000cr for SMRs, target 100 GW by 2047
- **Energy Efficiency:**
 - **PAT Scheme:** Saved 26 MTOE, cut 70 Mt CO₂ (2012–2023)
 - **Carbon Credit Trading:** Covers 9 sectors (e.g., Cement, Steel)
 - **UJALA Scheme:** 367 crore LEDs distributed
- **Transport Decarbonization:**
 - **FAME/PM E-DRIVE:** Subsidies for EVs, 38,000 e-buses planned
 - **Green H₂ Mission:** 5 MMT/year target by 2030

Objectives

- Facilitate greater resource flows
- Prevent Greenwashing
- Consistency with Viksit Bharat @2047
- Cover technologies, measures, projects and activities aligned to:
 - ✓ **Mitigation**
 - ✓ **Adaptation**
 - ✓ Support transition of **hard-to-abate sectors**

Sectors

- **Power, Mobility, and Buildings** in the context of climate mitigation and adaptation co-benefits
- **Agriculture, food and water security** will be in the context of climate adaptation and resilience.
- Addressing transition, in line with country circumstances, in **hard-to-abate sectors**.

Principles

- a) Consistency with stated position on Climate Action and development priorities
- b) Do no significant harm to other objectives of the climate finance taxonomy
- c) Focusing on pathways and trajectories in the country context
- d) Interoperability and consistency
- e) Support Transitional Activities
- f) Promoting the use of Indigenous technologies
- g) Be science-based and transparent
- h) Proportionality - Support for MSMEs



Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Environment – Climate Change
Newspaper : The Hindu, Page No. 16

Sectoral Breakdown

1. Power Sector

- 39% of India's GHG emissions (2020)
- Key Goals:
 - Scale capacity to 777 GW by 2030 (from 470 GW in 2025)
 - Mix: Renewables (solar, wind, bio), nuclear, green hydrogen, storage
- Initiatives:
 - Advanced Ultra Super Critical tech
 - Nuclear Energy Mission: SMRs, 100 GW by 2047

2. Mobility

- 13.28% of energy-sector emissions (2020)
- Policies:
 - FAME, Ethanol Blending, Metro/BRTS
- Transition:
 - Short-term reliance on fossil fuels
 - Investment in low-carbon tech (e.g., EVs, hybrids)

3. Buildings

- Energy-efficient urban growth
- Policies/Tools:
 - ECBC 2017, Eco Niwas Samhita, GRIHA certifications

4. Agriculture, Food & Water Security

- Challenges:
 - 55% irrigated land; 85% small farmers vulnerable to climate shocks
 - Climate finance for agri-resilience
- Solutions:
 - R&D – climate-resilient crops, precision irrig
 - Private investment in post-harvest infra

5. Hard-to-Abate Sectors

- Iron & Steel, Cement
- Challenges:
 - High emissions from energy/processes
 - Capital-intensive transition
- Solution:
 - low-emission tech (e.g., carbon capture)
 - Avoid stranded assets; include more sectors (e.g., aluminium) later



Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Environment – Climate Change
Newspaper : The Hindu, Page No. 16

To direct investment towards clean-energy projects and infrastructure better adapted to weather threats from climate change, the Finance Ministry has made public a draft document, “Framework of India’s climate finance taxonomy”.

Climate finance taxonomy, the report said, is a “tool to identify activities consistent with India’s climate action goals and transition pathway.” The objective of this taxonomy is to encourage investment in climate-friendly technologies and activities, thus enabling India to be Net Zero by 2070 but simultaneously encouraging long-term access to reliable and affordable energy.

The taxonomy should prevent “green-washing” and be consistent with the developmental goal of ‘Viksit Bharat’. The draft note

The climate taxonomy document aims to classify a range of activities and sectors as “climate supportive” or “climate transition”. The former include activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce emissions intensity (emissions per unit of GDP), adaptation solutions that reduce the risks of adverse impacts of climate change and, research and development needed to meet these aims. Climate supportive activities would include those that improve emissions intensity reduction in sectors where cutting absolute emissions are challenging with the available technology – this could mean in the so-called “hard to abate” iron, steel and cement sector.



Syllabus: GS Paper 2: Governance
Newspaper : Indian Express, Page No. 13

- ILO: Child Labour = work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity and, that is harmful to their physical and mental development
- ILO: 10 mn working children in India
- Sectors in India - Brick kilns, carpet weaving, garment making, domestic service, unorganised sectors, agriculture
- SDG 8 - eradication in all forms

Constitutional Provisions

- Article 21A
- Article 23
- Article 24
- Article 39
- Article 45

Statutes

- Factories Act, 1948 - <14 in factories
- Mines Act, 1952 - <18 in mines
- RTE, 2009
- Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016
 - No employment <14
 - 14-18 not in hazardous



Worst forms of labour: The most harmful forms of child labour involve work in dangerous industries or occupations. Children from disadvantaged religious or caste backgrounds, as well as those from impoverished households, are more likely to be involved in hazardous work. Abuse and mistreatment by employers, especially in factories, is widely reported. This includes physical and verbal abuse, low wages, and a lack of access to health services, even when children suffer accidents or injuries. Lack of proper hygiene, sanitation and clean water leads to children becoming easily susceptible to infectious diseases. Working with toxic materials causes long-lasting, sometimes irreversible, illnesses. Sectors that require urgent attention to address the worst forms of child labour include the production of matches and fireworks, glass, and leather products, as well as work in brick kilns, coal mines, and construction, among others.



Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Indian Economy
Newspaper : The Hindu, Page No. 17

Predatory Pricing	Limit Pricing
Setting prices extremely low to drive competitors out of the market.	Setting prices low enough to discourage new entrants but not necessarily below cost.
The objective is to eliminate existing competitors from the market.	The objective is to prevent potential competitors from the entering the market.
Predatory pricing is temporary, until competitors are driven out.	Limit pricing is sustained over a longer period to deter new entrants.
It involves a high financial risk due to short run losses.	It involves a low financial risk as price may remain profitable.
Consumer may gain short-term benefit from lower prices but may face potential long-term harm from reduced competition.	Consumer may benefit from persistent low prices, without significant long-term negative impacts.
It is often considered illegal and anti-competitive.	It can be legal if not proven to be anti-competitive.
It is more effective in markets with high barriers to re-entry.	It is more effective in markets with moderate barriers to entry.
<p>competition, the Competition Commission of India has notified new definitions for various costs it will use to judge whether a price charged by a company for a product or service is predatory or not.</p> <p>According to the Competition Act 2002, predatory pricing is where a product or service is priced below its cost – which is to be determined through regulations like the one just issued – with the aim to reduce competition and eliminate competitors.</p>	<h3>Competition Commission of India</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition Act, 2002 • Goal - 'level playing field' to the producers, welfare of consumers • Eliminate practices having adverse effects on competition, ensure freedom of trade in the markets • Mandate: implement Competition Act, 2002 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ prohibits anti-competitive agreements and abuse of dominant position by enterprises; ◦ regulates mergers and acquisitions (M&A) which can have an adverse effect on competition • Composition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ 1 chairperson, 6 additional members ◦ All members appointed by the Central Government • Headquarters: New Delhi
<p>keholder comments. It is after reviewing these comments and incorporating some of the changes suggested that the final version has been notified.</p> <p>According to the latest notification, the "cost of a good or service would be assumed to be its average variable cost", which is the</p>	<p>total variable cost divided by total output during a particular period. Here, the total variable cost refers to the total cost (including everything that goes into the production of that good or service) minus the fixed cost and fixed overheads attributable to the product. However, in line</p>



Syllabus: GS Paper 2: Issues relating to Education
Newspaper : The Hindu, **Page No. 12**

What is It?

- Right to teach/learn without external interference
- Includes freedom of research, instruction, and publication
- Must follow scholarly norms (e.g., evidence-based teaching)
- UNESCO (1950): Pursuit of knowledge "wherever truth may lead"
- Humboldtian model: Unites research & teaching in free inquiry

Historical Context

- Medieval Europe: Church-controlled education, persecution of dissent
- Soviet Union (1930s): Banned "bourgeois pseudoscience" (e.g., genetics)
- Ancient Nalanda/Taxila: Flourished under royal patronage & open exchange

Modern Challenges

- **Political & Institutional Pressures:**
 - Columbia vs. Harvard: Differing stances on academic freedom
 - Funding agencies influence research priorities
 - University rankings prioritize publications over intellectual freedom
- **"Publish or Perish" Culture:**
 - Peter Higgs: Nearly lost job due to low output before Nobel win
 - Peer pressure stifles long-term, unconventional research

Global Dynamics

- Democracy: Judiciary & elections act as checks on interference
- Autocracies: Restrict "undesirable" fields e.g., Soviet sociology & genetics
- Patronage Dependency: Ancient universities relied on rulers' support



Nipah Virus

Syllabus: GS Paper 2: Health
Newspaper : The Hindu, Page No. 6

- zoonotic illness - transmitted via animals
- Organism causing is RNA virus of the family Paramyxoviridae, genus Henipavirus - closely related to Hendra virus
- First appeared in domestic pigs - dogs, cats, goats, horses and sheep
- Transmission
 - through fruit bats or 'flying foxes' - natural reservoir hosts of the Nipah and Hendra viruses
 - present in bat urine and potentially, bat faeces, saliva, and birthing fluids
- Symptoms
 - encephalitic syndrome marked by fever, headache, drowsiness, disorientation, mental confusion, coma, and potentially death

NIPAH VIRUS (NiV) INFECTION IS A NEWLY EMERGING ZOOZINOSIS THAT CAUSES SEVERE DISEASE IN BOTH ANIMALS AND HUMANS



NiV first identified in 1998 during an outbreak in Malaysia



Fruit bats are natural hosts of NiV

PREVIOUS OUTBREAKS IN INDIA

Jan-Feb, 2001 **Siliguri (WB)**

Cases: 66

Deaths: 45

68%

April, 2007 **Nadia (WB)**

Cases: 5

Deaths: 5

Fatality rate

100%

HOW IT IS TRANSMITTED



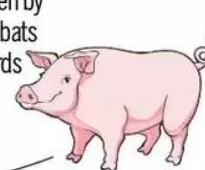
Through contact with other NiV-infected people



By consuming fruits eaten by infected bats and birds



Natural host:
Fruit bats



Transmission of NiV to humans may occur after direct contact with infected bats and pigs



Q1. Regarding India's "No First Use" (NFU) nuclear policy, consider the following statements:

1. It commits India to use nuclear weapons only in retaliation to a nuclear attack.
2. The policy allows for nuclear retaliation even in case of a chemical or biological attack.
3. India has legally codified the NFU policy through an Act of Parliament.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: b

Q2. Regarding the 1951 Refugee Convention, consider the following statements:

1. India is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol.
2. The Convention defines who qualifies as a refugee and outlines their rights and the legal obligations of states.
3. Despite not being a party to the Convention, India has hosted and protected various refugee groups.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: b

Q3. Regarding Child Labour in India, consider the following statements:

1. The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 2016 prohibits all forms of child labour for children below 14 years.
2. The Act allows children to help in family enterprises after school hours or during vacations.
3. The Right to Education Act, of 2009 makes free and compulsory education a fundamental right for children aged 6 to 18.
4. India is a signatory to the ILO's Convention on Worst Forms of Child Labour.

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

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) Only Three
- d) All Four

Answer: c

Q4. Regarding the Competition Commission of India (CCI), consider the following statements:

1. It is a statutory body established under the Competition Act, of 2002.
2. It aims to eliminate practices having adverse effects on competition, protect consumer interests, and ensure freedom of trade.
3. It has both regulatory and adjudicatory functions.
4. The Chairperson and Members of the Commission are appointed by the President of India.

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. Regarding the Nipah virus, consider the following statements:

1. It is a zoonotic virus that can spread from animals to humans.
2. Fruit bats are considered the natural hosts of the Nipah virus.
3. There is an approved vaccine available for the Nipah virus in humans.
4. Human-to-human transmission of the Nipah virus is not possible.

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

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) Only Three
- d) All Four

Answer: b





VAJIRAM & RAVI

Institute for IAS Examination

A unit of Vajiram & Ravi IAS Study Centre LLP

9-B, Bada Bazar Marg, Old Rajinder Nagar,
New Delhi - 110060 • Ph.: 41007400, 41007500

New No. 62, P Block, 6th Avenue, Anna Nagar,
Chennai - 600040 • Ph.: 044-4330-2121

Visit us at : www.vajiramandravi.com