



**VAJIRAM & RAVI**  
Institute for IAS Examination

# The Analyst

**CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout**

**19th August 2025**



# Indian Ports Bill, 2025

**CONTEXT:** Indian Ports Bill, 2025 was passed by: Lok Sabha (Aug 12, 2025) | Rajya Sabha (Aug 18, 2025)

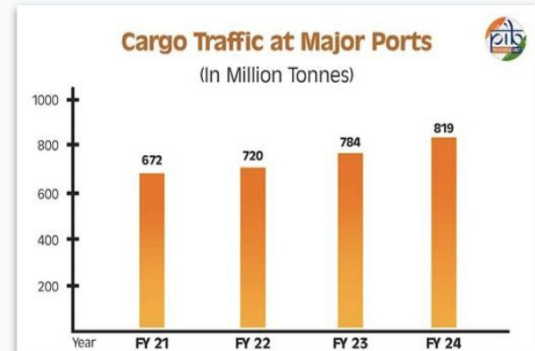
## Indian Ports Bill, 2025: Context & Background

History of India's Port Economy	Trade Partners	Region
<b>Ancient India</b> Lothal, Muziris, Arikamedu	Indo-Roman, Indo-Greek, Southeast Asian	Gujarat, Kerala, Tamil Nadu
<b>Medieval India</b> Surat, Calicut, Masulipatnam	Arabs, Persians, Chinese, Europeans	Gujarat, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh

**PYQ 2023:** With reference to ancient South India, **Korkai**, **Poompuhar** and **Muchiri** were well known as

- capital cities
- ports
- centers of iron-and-steel making
- shrines of Jain Tirthankaras

**Gateways** for India's trade  
(95% by volume, ~70% by value)



**Current governing law:**  
**Indian Ports Act, 1908**

## Indian Ports Bill, 2025: Context & Background

### Major Ports (13):

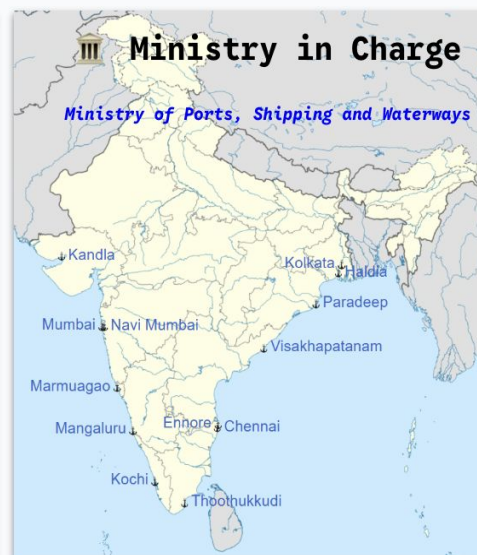
Controlled by Centre

### Non-Major Ports (217):

Administered by States

### Key Objectives

- Safety, tariffs, regulation
- Global maritime standing
- Green Ports



- Efficiency Gains:** Reduced container turnaround time to 22.57 hours in FY24.
- Fleet Expansion:** Plans to add 1,000 ships by 2047.
- Paradip Port:** India's largest port, handling 145.38 million tonnes of cargo in FY24.
- Investments:** \$82 billion allocated for port infrastructure by 2035.
- Mega Ports:** Vadhaven Port, approved at ₹76,220 crore, to boost EXIM trade.
- Shipbuilding Growth:** ₹10,500 crore invested under SBFA for 313 vessels.
- Sustainability Focus:** Panch Karma Sankalp emphasizes green shipping, digitization, and smart port development.





# Indian Ports Bill, 2025

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## UPSC PYQ (P) 2023

Consider the following pairs:

1. Kamarajar Port – first major port in India registered as a company
2. Mundra Port – largest privately owned port in India
3. Visakhapatnam – largest container port in India

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- A. Only one pair
- B. Only two pairs
- C. All three pairs
- D. None of the pairs

## UPSC PYQ (P) 2009

In India, the ports are categorized as major and nonmajor ports. Which one of the following is a non major port?

- (a) Kochi (Cochin)
- (b) Dahej
- (c) Paradip
- (d) New Mangalore

## ! Issues of Indian Ports

- **Inadequate Infrastructure:** dredging limitations, outdated equipment.
- **Major ports dominate (53%):** Mundra & Sikka (private) alone handle ~20% traffic → rising role of private ports.
- **Operational Inefficiencies:** Longer ship turnaround times, inefficient cargo handling.
- **Regulatory and Financial Barriers:** Complex regulations, lengthy project timelines, project approvals and financing.
- **Environmental Compliance Issues:** spills & non-compliance, penalties & operational disruptions.

The Indian Express

'Hard to clean once it hits shore': Scientists warn of oil spill threat after container ship sinks off Kerala

Marine biology experts said that authorities must try to contain as much oil and pollution as possible offshore, as onshore clean-up has limitations.

27 May 2025



- **Labour Issues:** shortage of skilled labour & inefficient management.

The Indian Express

Japan flags issue of steel consignments blocked at Indian ports; domestic industry also impacted by restrictions

Japanese steel consignments are being held up at Indian ports by Customs officials due to the absence of a No Objection Certificate (NOC).

27 Nov 2024



Business Standard

Port delays and red tape strain India's 10,000 steel user units: GTRI

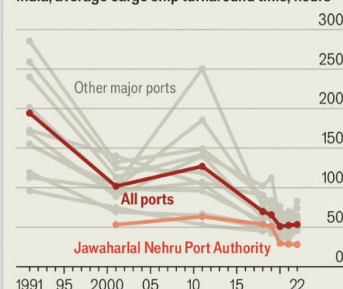
Over 10000 steel user units are facing a crisis due to prolonged port delays and burdensome regulatory requirements, and the government...

18 Nov 2024



### Shipshape

India, average cargo ship turnaround time, hours



Source: Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways



# Indian Ports Bill, 2025

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## Key Provisions of Bill

**Repeals** the Indian Ports Act, 1908.

**Recognises statutory bodies**

**Tariff & transparency:**

- MSDC → guidelines on tariffs & data collection.
- SMBs → fix tariffs for non-major ports.

**Dispute Resolution Committees**

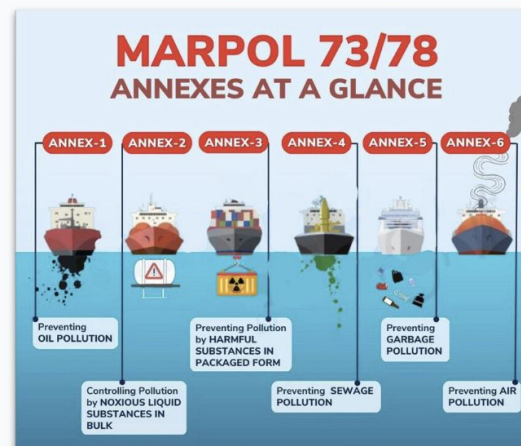
**Environment & Safety**

- **MARPOL & Ballast Water Management Convention.**
- **Pollution control & disaster management plans** → audited by Centre.

**Offences & Penalties:**

- Mix of **decriminalisation (fines)** + **new offences (imprisonment/fines)**.

**PM Gati Shakti**



**Port obligations:**

- Waste reception facilities
- Pollution-control plan
- Disaster/emergency preparedness plan
- Seafarer welfare facilities

**Central govt audits** → ensure compliance.

## Key Institutions under the Bill

### State Maritime Boards

- For **non-major ports**.
- **Functions:**
  - ✓ Develop port infra
  - ✓ Licensing & tariffs
  - ✓ Safety & environment compliance

### Dispute Resolution Committees

- At **state level** → disputes b/w ports & stakeholders.
- Appeals → High Court only.

### Maritime State Development Council

- Chaired by **Union Minister (MoPSW)**.
- Members → coastal state ministers + Navy/Coast Guard reps.
- **Functions:**
  - Tariff transparency guidelines
  - Data collection & dissemination framework
  - National perspective plan





# Indian Ports Bill, 2025

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## Comparison: 1908 Act vs 2025 Bill

	1908 Act	2025 Bill
<b>Scope</b>	Ports & navigable rivers	Expands to aircrafts on water
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	Majors → Centre; Non-majors → States	Same
<b>Statutory Bodies</b>	None	MSDC + SMBs + DRCs
<b>Port Management</b>	Conservator, harbour master, health officer	Same + conservator adjudicates penalties
<b>Tariffs</b>	Majors → Centre; Non-majors → States	Majors → Board of Port Authority; Non-majors → SMBs
<b>Obligations</b>	Safety, navigation	+ Waste management, disaster plans, seafarer welfare
<b>Pollution</b>	No ballast/rubbish	Compliance with MARPOL + Ballast Water Convention

## Critical Issues in 2025 Bill

### 1. Federal Tensions

**Concurrent List** Conflict wrt non-major port regulation  
**DRC Appeals:** Directly to High Court

### 2. Implementation Challenges

No clarity on funding/autonomy for ports labeled "**mega**."  
Health officers can inspect ships **without BNSS protections** (witnesses, written reasons).

### 3. Economic Impact

**Pros:** Boosts port efficiency, attracts private investment (e.g., Adani Ports, DP World).

**Cons:** MSMEs compliance costs.

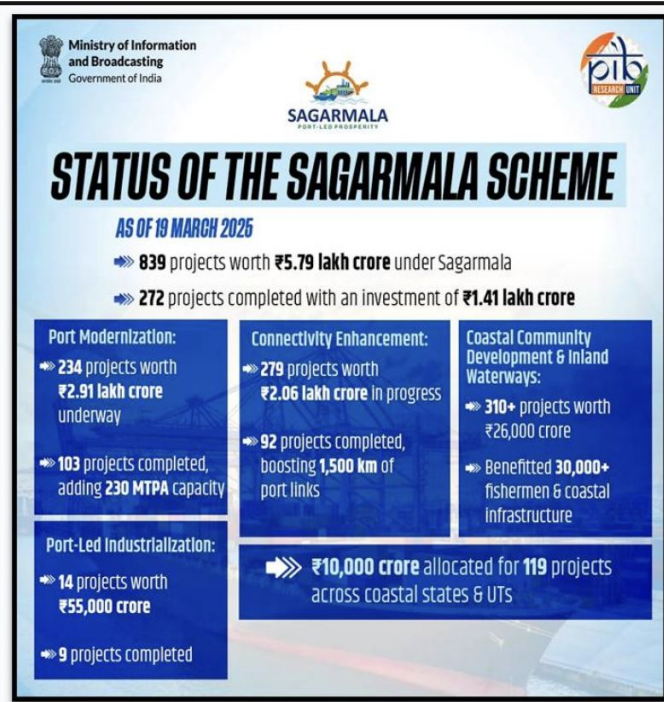


# Indian Ports Bill, 2025

**CONTEXT:** Indian Ports Bill, 2025 was passed by: Lok Sabha (Aug 12, 2025) | Rajya Sabha (Aug 18, 2025)

## Other key initiatives

- **Maritime India Vision 2030**  
[₹3,00,000 – 3,50,000 Crore]
- **Sagarmala** Programme
- **National Logistics Policy, 2022**
  - Unified Logistics Interface Platform
  - Logistics Data Bank
- **Coastal Berth Scheme**
- **Ease of Doing Business Reforms**



## Other key initiatives

- **National waterways**

Business Standard

LIC picks up Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone's entire Rs 5K cr issue

LIC fully subscribes to Adani Ports' Rs 5000 crore bond issue, marking its largest rupee bond deal; other corporate bond issuers struggle to...

29 May 2025



- **Green Port Initiatives**
  - HaritSagar Green Port Guidelines
  - Green Tug Transition Programme





# Indian Ports Bill, 2025

**CONTEXT:** Indian Ports Bill, 2025 was passed by: Lok Sabha (Aug 12, 2025) | Rajya Sabha (Aug 18, 2025)

## THE 13 NATIONAL WATERWAYS NOW IN OPERATION



## THE LINKS AND THE LENGTHS

NW-1	Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly (Haldia-Allahabad)	1,620 km
NW-2	Brahmaputra river	891 km
NW-3	West Coast Canal-Champakara Canal-Udyogmandal Canal	205 km
NW-4	Krishna (Muktiyala-Vijayawada)	82 km
NW-10	Amba river	45 km
NW-83	Rajpuri Creek	31 km
NW-85	Revadanda Creek-Kundalika river	31 km
NW-91	Shastri river-Jaigad Creek System	52 km
NW-68	Mandovi river (Usgaon Bridge-Arabian Sea)	41 km
NW-111	Zuari river (Sanvordem Bridge-Marmugao Port)	50 km
NW-73	Narmada river	226 km
NW-100	Tapi river	436 km
NW-97	Sunderbans Waterways	172 km

## Mains Practise Question

**"The Indian Ports Bill, 2025 modernizes maritime governance but risks centralizing port control." Critically analyze.**

(15 Marks, 250 words)

## Economic Contribution



**Capacity Growth:** Major ports manage 820 MMT of cargo annually (47% growth since 2014), with overall capacity doubling to 1,630 MMT.



**Future Projections:** Port capacity expected to rise sixfold to 10,000 MMT by 2047.



**CONTEXT:** According to reports, the decline in world hunger is partly due to India's tremendous efforts for the same in the country via several welfare programs.

## Part 1: Global Hunger Scenario (2024)

With global chronic undernourishment now on a downward trend, the world is beginning to turn a corner in its fight against hunger. The **United Nations'** newly released **The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025** reports that **673 million** people (8.2% of the world's population) were **undernourished in 2024**. This is **down from 688 million in 2023**. Although we have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels (**7.3% in 2018**), this reversal marks a welcome shift from the sharp rise experienced during COVID-19.



**Maximo Torero Cullen**

is Chief Economist, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the

- ◆ **Hunger** = chronic lack of sufficient calories and nutrients.
- ◆ **Food Security** (FAO) = exists when **all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access** to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food.

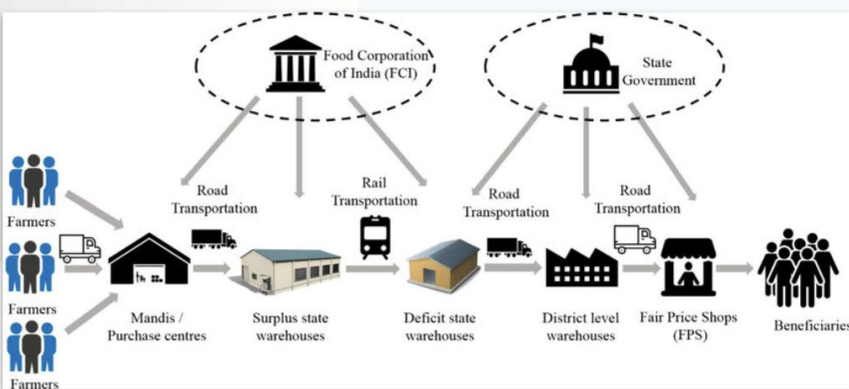
### Dimensions of Food Security:

- **Availability** (production & supply)
- **Accessibility** (affordability, distribution)
- **Utilisation** (nutrition, absorption)
- **Stability** (long-term resilience)

India's **size, population, and food policy innovations** = decisive for global progress

India's Performance	2020-22	2022-24
Undernourishment	14.3%	12%
Food Inflation Impact	High	Stabilizing
Affordability of Healthy Diet	>60% can't afford	Improving

## Part 2: India's Food Security Framework



### Reforms:

- ✓ **Digitalisation** → online records, tracking.
- ✓ **Aadhaar-based authentication**
- ✓ **e-PoS machines** in ration shops.
- ✓ **One Nation One Ration Card**
- ✓ **PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana COVID-19**

Other Programs	Target Group	Key Feature
<b>PM POSHAN</b>	School children	Focus on <b>dietary diversity</b>
<b>ICDS</b>	Women & Children	<b>Nutrition + health</b> checkups
<b>Fortification</b>	NFSA beneficiaries	<b>Rice &amp; staples</b> → <b>micronutrient</b>





**CONTEXT:** According to reports, the decline in world hunger is partly due to India's tremendous efforts for the same in the country via several welfare programs.

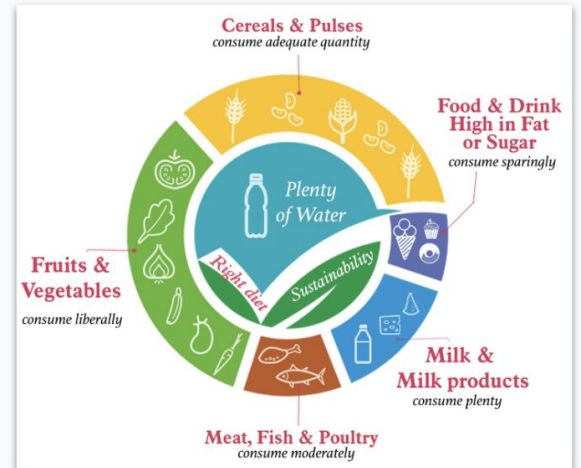
## 🔑 Part 2: India's Food Security Framework

### Food Security:

- **Essential Commodities Act** of 1955
- Pradhan Mantri **Fasal Bima Yojana**
- National **Horticulture Mission**
- **eNational Agriculture Market** Platform
- 2023 as the **International Year of Millets**
- **Mega Food Park** Scheme

### Hunger:

- **Eat Right India** Movement
- **Mid-day Meal** scheme
- **POSHAN Tracker** App
- Pradhan Mantri **Matru Vandana Yojana**



## ⚠️ Part 3: Persistent Challenges

### 1. Hidden Hunger

- **Micronutrient Deficiencies**
- **Obesity Rise**

### 2. Agri-Food System Gaps

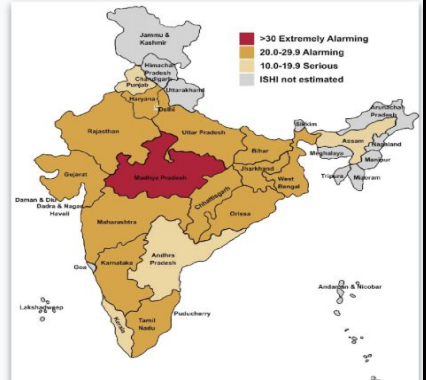
- **Post-Harvest Losses:** 13% of food wasted due to poor cold chains.
- **High Nutrient-Rich Food Prices**

### 3. Climate Vulnerability

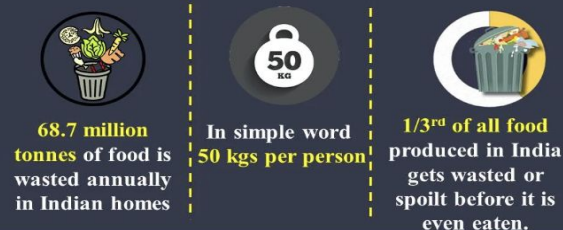
- Erratic monsoons → Crop failures → Price volatility.

### How India compares with its neighbours

Rank	Country	GHI score	% of malnourished	% under 5 stunted
29	China	7.7	8.8	8.1
72	Nepal	21.9	7.8	37.4
75	Myanmar	22	14.2	31
84	Sri Lanka	25.5	22	14.7
90	Bangladesh	27.1	16.4	36.4
97	India	28.5	15.2	38.7
107	Pakistan	33.4	22	45



### FOOD WASTE IN INDIA IS...



# Ending Global Hunger via India

**CONTEXT:** According to reports, the decline in world hunger is partly due to India's tremendous efforts for the same in the country via several welfare programs.

## Part 4: Roadmap for Zero Hunger (SDG-2)

Food Security ➡ Nutrition Security ➡ Required Steps

### Boost Production of Nutrient-rich Foods

- Pulses, fruits, vegetables, milk, eggs.
- Climate-resilient crops.





### Reduce Post-harvest Losses

- Cold storage, warehouses, logistics.
- Digital supply chains.

#### ⦿ What constitutes micronutrient deficiency?

- ⦿ Micronutrient deficiency, also known as hidden hunger, refers to inadequate intake of crucial vitamins and minerals - such as zinc, vitamin A and folate - needed for healthy mental and physical growth of children

#### What are its effects

-  Stunting in children
-  Weakened immune systems
-  Impaired cognitive function
-  Anaemia, low energy levels

#### THE SOLUTION

A diverse diet including

-  Variety of cereals
-  Legumes
-  Fruits & vegetables
-  Animal-source foods
-  Fortified foods and drinks with micronutrients




## Part 4: Roadmap for Zero Hunger (SDG-2)

Food Security ➡ Nutrition Security ➡ Required Steps

### Empower Women & FPOs

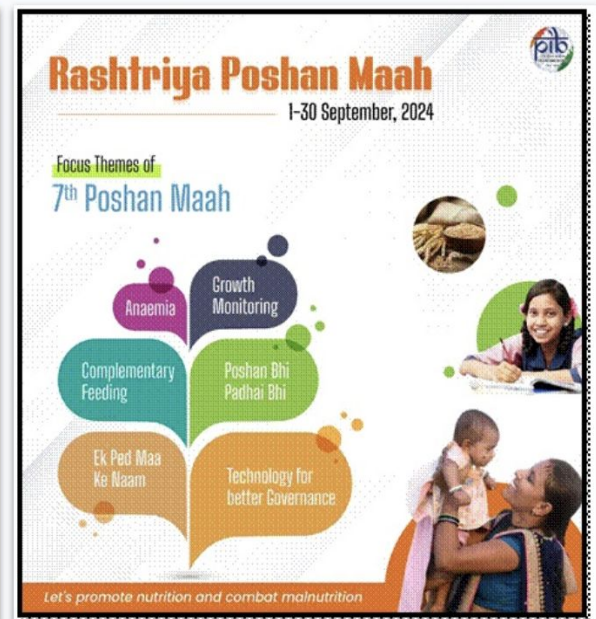
- Women-led food enterprises.
- Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs).

### Leverage Digital Advantage

-  **AgriStack** → farmer data for targeted support.
-  **e-NAM** → digital agricultural markets.
-  **Geospatial tools** → crop monitoring, planning.

### India's Global Role

- **South-South** cooperation





# Ending Global Hunger via India

**CONTEXT:** According to reports, the decline in world hunger is partly due to India's tremendous efforts for the same in the country via several welfare programs.

## UPSC PYQ (P) 2018

With reference to the provisions made under the National Food Security Act, 2013, consider the following statements:

1. The families coming under the category of 'below poverty line (BPL)' only are eligible to receive subsidised food grains.
2. The eldest woman in a household, of age 18 years or above, shall be the head of the household for the purpose of issuance of a ration card.
3. Pregnant women and lactating mothers are entitled to a 'take-home ration' of 1600 calories per day during pregnancy and for six months thereafter.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

## UPSC PYQ (P) 2016

Which of the following is/are the indicator/indicators used by IFPRI to compute the Global Hunger Index Report?

1. Undernourishment
2. Child stunting
3. Child mortality

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

## Mains Practise Question

**India's food security programs are a balance of scale and innovation."**  
**Discuss.**

(15 Marks, 250 words)

## Hungry India



**SYLLABUS : G.S. 2:** Appointment to various Constitutional posts

**Newspaper :** The Hindu **Page No :** 01



## Background & Judicial Evolution

### ◆ Pre-2023 Situation

- **Appointments by:** President → on advice of **Union Council of Ministers** (PM-led).
- **No statutory law** regulating the process.

### ◆ Anoop Baranwal Case, 2023 (SC)

- Held: **"Free & fair elections" = basic structure of Constitution.**
- Ordered: Until Parliament enacts a law, appointments must be made by a **panel of 3:**
  - ✓ Prime Minister
  - ✓ Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Lok Sabha
  - ✓ Chief Justice of India (CJI)

👉 Introduced a **judicial check** on executive dominance.

### ◆ Parliament's Response → 2023 Act

- Passed **new law** replacing SC formula with **PM + LoP + Union Minister.**
- Reduced judiciary's role → restored **executive dominance.**

The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs) shall be appointed on the advice of a committee comprising the Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha and Chief Justice of India. Where no Leader of the Opposition is available, the committee will include the leader of the largest Opposition party in Lok Sabha in terms of numerical strength.



## The Chief Election Commissioner & Other Election Commissioners Act, 2023

### Selection Committee 🏛️

- PM (Chairperson)
- LoP in Lok Sabha
- Union Cabinet Minister (nominated by PM)

### Search Committee 🔍

- Chaired by Law Minister + 2 Secretaries
- Shortlists **5 names** → Selection Committee free to consider others also.

### Eligibility 🎓

- Must have served as **Secretary-level officer** in Government of India.
- Integrity + election management experience.

### Tenure & Service ⌚

- **6 years or till 65 years**, whichever earlier.
- Salary = **Supreme Court Judge.**
- **No reappointment** (CEC/EC).
- If EC becomes CEC → total tenure max 6 years.

### Resignation & Removal ✖

- **CEC** → same as SC Judge (via impeachment).
- **EC** → removable only on **CEC's recommendation.**
- Both can resign to President.





**SYLLABUS : G.S. 2:** Appointment to various Constitutional posts

**Newspaper :** The Hindu **Page No :** 01

## Concerns & Criticism

**Exclusion of CJI** ⚖️

**Executive Dominance** 🏛️

**Vacancy Loophole** 🕒

**Separation of Powers Violation** ✂️

- **Raises constitutional issue:** Can Parliament override a SC Constitution Bench judgment through legislation?

**Impact on Democracy** 🗳️

## What the Supreme Court said

Key highlights of what the apex court said in two separate, but concurring judgments that revamped the selection mechanism to appoint CEC and ECs.

- 1 "The right to vote is not just a statutory right but a constitutional right."
- 2 "The ballot is more potent than the most powerful gun."
- 3 "Parliament never intended the Executive to have absolute power to appoint CEC and ECs."
- 4 "Democracy is inextricably linked to the power of the people. Power of the ballot is supreme, capable of unseating the most powerful parties."
- 5 "A party in power will have an insatiable quest to continue in the saddle."
- 6 "An EC that does not guarantee rule of law is against democracy."
- 7 "Complete independence of ECs is paramount to ensure purity of electoral processes."



## Removal Process

### Constitutional Provisions

- **Article 324(5):** CEC removable only like a Supreme Court Judge (proven **misbehavior/incapacity**).
- **Article 124(4):** Requires **impeachment via Parliament**.

### Key Differences: CEC vs. ECs

<b>CEC</b>	Impeachment like SC Judge (Parliament approval).
<b>ECs</b>	Removed only on CEC's recommendation.

Step 1

#### Notice of Motion

Filed in Lok Sabha / Rajya Sabha with charges of misbehavior (e.g., bias, corruption) or incapacity.

Step 2

#### Investigation

Committee formed (judges / MPs) to probe the charges.

Step 3

#### Parliamentary Vote

Requires 2/3 majority of members present and voting in both Houses.

Step 4

#### Presidential Order

If Parliament approves, the President issues an order to remove the CEC/EC.

Flowchart: Vertical sequence — Notice — Investigation — Parliamentary Vote — Presidential Order.



# Appointment of CEC & ECs

**SYLLABUS : G.S. 2:** Appointment to various Constitutional posts

**Newspaper :** The Hindu **Page No :** 01

## UPSC PYQ (P) 2017

**Consider the following statements:**

1. The Election Commission of India is a five-member body.
2. Union Ministry of Home Affairs decides the election schedule for the conduct of both general elections and bye-elections.
3. Election Commission resolves the disputes relating to splits/mergers of recognised political parties.

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

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





# India's Unemployment Report: July 2025



**SYLLABUS: GS 3:** Indian Economy and issues relating to employment  
**Newspaper:** The Hindu **Page No:** 14

## Key Highlights (July 2025 Data)

### 1. National Unemployment Rate

- July 2025: 5.2% (↓ 5.6% June 2025)
- Gender Breakdown:
  - Female: 5.1% (↓ from 5.6%)
  - Male: 5.3% (↓ from 5.6%)
- Rural vs. Urban:
  - Rural: 4.4% (↓ 50 bps)
  - Urban: 7.2% (↑ 10 bps)

### 2. Youth Unemployment (15-29 Yrs)

- All-Ind: 14.9% (↓ from 15.3% June)

### 3. Youth Unemployment (15-29 Yrs)

- All-India LFPR: 54.9% (↑ 70 bps).
- Female LFPR: 33.3% (↑ 130 bps)
- Male LFPR: 77.1% (stable)

State	Unemp Rate (15+ yrs)	Youth Unemp (15-29 yrs)	LFPR (15+ yrs)
HP	8.5%	29.6% (Highest)	70.3% (Highest)
Rajasthan	8.8% (Highest)	18.2%	56.1%
Gujarat	2.2% (Lowest)	5.6% (Lowest)	53.5% (Youth)
Delhi	6.1%	15.4%	43.5% (Lowest)

## Reasons Behind Trends

### 1. Decline in July Unemployment

Post-monsoon farm activities boosted rural jobs  
Female Workforce Surge: MGNREGA, SHG-linked schemes

### 2. Rising Urban Youth Unemployment (19%)

Skill Mismatch  
Gig Economy Saturation

### 3. Himachal's Paradox (High LFPR + High Unemployment)

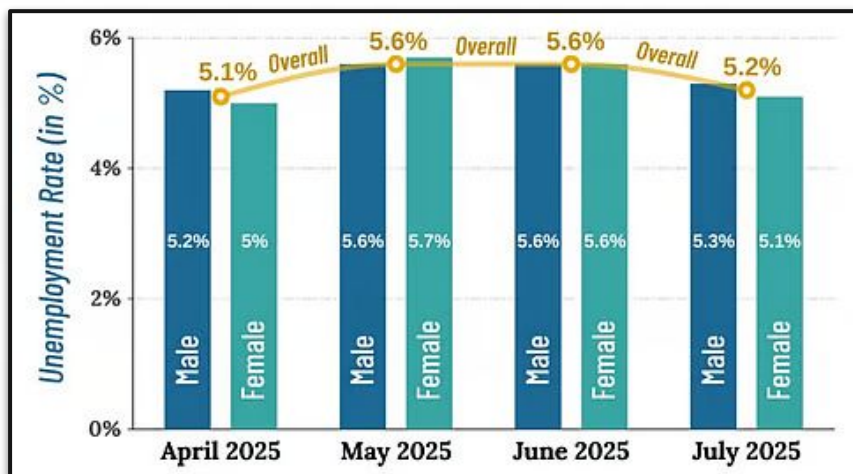
Floods (195 deaths, 24k livestock lost)  
Limited Industries



# India's Unemployment Report: July 2025

**SYLLABUS: GS 3:** Indian Economy and issues relating to employment

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



## UPSC PYQ (P) 2018

**Increase in absolute and per capita real GNP do not connote a higher level of economic development, if**

- (a) industrial output fails to keep pace with agricultural output.
- (b) agricultural output fails to keep pace with industrial output.
- (c) poverty and unemployment increase.
- (d) imports grow faster than exports.

## UPSC PYQ (P) 2013

**Disguised unemployment generally means**

- (a) large number of people remain unemployed
- (b) alternative employment is not available
- (c) marginal productivity of labour is zero
- (d) productivity of workers is low





# Nominations to UT Assemblies

**SYLLABUS : GS 2:** Parliament and State legislatures—structure

**Newspaper :** The Hindu **Page No :** 10

## Who Decides Nominations to UT Assemblies?

### The story so far:

**T**he Union Home Ministry, in its affidavit before the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court, has submitted that the power of the Lieutenant Governor (LG) of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) to nominate five members to the Legislative Assembly of J&K can be exercised by him without the aid and advice of its Council of Ministers.

### What does the Constitution state?

The Indian Constitution provides for **nominated members** in the houses of **Parliament** and **State legislature**. The provision for nominating two **Anglo-Indian members** to the Lok Sabha and one **Anglo-Indian member** to State Legislative Assemblies was discontinued in 2020. The Rajya Sabha has 12 **nominated members**. These members are nominated by the **President** on the **aid and advice of the Union Council of Ministers**. In the six States with Legislative Councils, nearly one-sixth of the members are nominated. These members are nominated by the **Governors** on the **aid and advice of the States' Council of Ministers**.

Feature	States	Delhi (UT)	Puducherry (UT)	J&K (UT)
Who nominates?	<b>Governor</b> (on aid & advice of State govt)	✗ <b>None</b>	Central Govt (directly)	LG (with or without advice?)
Basis	Constitutional provisions	GNCTD Act, 1991	Govt of UT Act, 1963 30 MLAs + <b>3</b>	J&K Reorgan Act, 2019 (am. 2023) 90 + <b>5</b>
Democratic control?	✓ Yes	✓ (no nominations)	✗ No	⚠ <b>Contested</b>

### Why Nominate?

- Ensure **representation** for marginalized/technical experts.
- **Balance political majorities** in small assemblies.

In addition, Sections 15, 15A and 15B provide that the LG may nominate a total of up to five members – **two women, two Kashmiri migrants and one displaced person from Pakistan occupied Kashmir** – to the J&K Assembly.

## Key Court Judgments

### What have courts ruled?

The procedure for nomination of members to the **Puducherry Assembly** came up before the Madras High Court in the **K. Lakshminarayanan versus Union of India (2018)** case. The court **upheld the power of the Union government to nominate three members to the Assembly** and that it need not be based on the **aid and advice of the UT's Council of Ministers**.

Nevertheless, considering the importance of the matter as well as larger principles involved, the court provided **certain recommendations for consideration of Parliament**. It suggested **statutory amendments to lay down a clear and unambiguous procedure for nomination of MLAs**. It should provide clarity about where such nomination should emanate from and who/which office will exercise the powers of nomination. However, the Supreme Court on appeal had set aside the recommendations in this judgment of the Madras High Court.

### (b) NCT of Delhi v. Union of India (2023, Constt. Bench)

- Introduced idea of **"Triple Chain of Accountability"**
  - **Civil servants → Ministers → Legislature → People**
- LG must act on **aid & advice of elected govt**, **except in matters where Delhi Assembly lacks legislative competence**.

## 'LG bound by ministers' aid, advice'

### What the court said

- 1 The elected government of Delhi has legislative power over the city's 'services' so that it can control officers executing its policies
- 2 It reiterated that the LG is bound by the aid, advice of the government's council of ministers except 'public order', 'police', and 'land'



### What it means

The state government will be in control of appointing, transferring officers in the Delhi administration, a power so far exercised by the LG



# Nominations to UT Assemblies



**SYLLABUS : GS 2:** Parliament and State legislatures—structure

**Newspaper :** The Hindu **Page No :** 10

## 📌 Special Context: J&K

- Earlier a **full-fledged State with special status** (Art. 370).
- Post-2019 → downgraded to **UT with legislature**.
- Nomination powers (5 MLAs) given to **LG**.
- **Union Home Ministry affidavit (2025)** → LG can act *without advice of Council of Ministers*.

## 🌟 Way Forward

- 📦 **Follow democratic principle** → wrt **aid & advice of elected Council of Ministers**.
- 📖 **Statutory clarity** → **PARLIAMENT**
- 🕒 **Balance Centre-UT relations** → Avoid central interference.
- 🔔 **Special care for J&K** → Respect **local democratic accountability**.





## Part 1: The Problem with Current Toll Practices

**T**he Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament has recommended significant reforms to toll collection practices on national highways, such as calling for an end to the perpetual tolling system. The report was submitted before Parliament on August 12.

### Current Tolling

- Governed by **National Highways Act, 1956** & **NH Fee Rules, 2008**.

### Revenue Snapshot:

- 2005-06** → ₹1,046 crore.
- 2023-24** → ₹55,000 crore (₹25,000 crore to CFI, rest to concessionaires).

### Perpetual Tolling

No **sunset clause**  
**NH Fee Rules:** 3% + 40% WPI adjustment

### Lack of Transparency

If toll **rates** = maintenance **costs**  
**FASTag glitches** cause delays

### Affordability Concerns

**Local residents** (w/n 20 km) pay ₹340/month  
**EXEMPTIONS** but **No slab system**

### Traffic Bottlenecks

No real-time monitoring of toll plaza efficiency

annual increase of WPI is provided. The fee is to be collected by the **Union government** if a highway is publicly funded or by the concessionaire if it follows any of these models – Build Operate Transfer (BoT), Toll-Operate-Transfer (ToT) or developed under Infrastructure Investment Trust.

## Part 2: PAC's Key Recommendations

Recommendation	Current System	Proposed Reform	How has the Ministry responded? The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways acknowledged the Committee's concerns and informed the PAC that it has initiated a comprehensive study with NITI Aayog to revise the user fee determination framework. Ministry representatives indicated that the study's scope has been finalised and will cover parameters such as vehicle operating cost, damage to the highway due to vehicle use as well as user's willingness to pay.
<b>Toll Sunset Clause</b>	Tolls collected <b>perpetually</b>	Stop/reduce tolls after cost recovery	
<b>Independent Regulator</b>	No oversight body	Create a <b>toll regulatory authority</b>	
<b>Dynamic Pricing</b>	Fixed 3% annual hike + WPI	Link tolls to <b>actual maintenance costs</b>	
<b>FASTag Reforms</b>	Scanner failures common	On-site <b>FASTag kiosks</b> + <b>barrier-free tolling</b>	
<b>Toll Reimbursement</b>	No refunds for construction delays	<b>Automated refunds</b> for unusable highways	



**SYLLABUS :** Prelims : Indian Polity

**Newspaper :** Indian Express **Page No : 12**



## SC Overturns Haryana Sarpanch Election Results (2025)

THE SUPREME Court last week **overturned the result of the sarpanch election of Buana Lakhu village in Haryana's Panipat district.** The apex court conducted a recount of votes by summoning all Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) used during the election to its premises in New Delhi.

Experts said this marked the first instance of the Supreme Court conducting a recount of EVM votes.

**Allegation:** Presiding officer swapped votes between Mohit Kumar and Kuldeep Singh

### How can an election result be challenged?

The validity of poll results can be challenged by filing an **election petition**. In the case of **Parliamentary, Assembly, or state council elections**, the petition has to be filed before the **High Court of the state** in which the election was conducted. For local gov-



### Legal Framework for Challenging Elections



#### Who can challenge?

- Only a **candidate or elector** related to that election.



#### Timeframe

- Must be filed **within 45 days** of result declaration.



#### Where to file?

Election Type	Court	Time Limit
Parliament/State Assembly	High Court	45 days from result declaration
Local Bodies (Sarpanch/Municipal)	District Court	45 days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Must state <b>material facts</b></li><li><b>Corrupt practices</b> → provide <b>names, dates, places</b>.</li></ul>		



### When Can Courts Order a Recount?

- Recount = extraordinary remedy** ⚠
  - Secrecy of votes.**
- Allowed **only if**:
  - ✓ Petitioner gives **specific, material facts**.
  - ✓ **Prima facie evidence** that counting mistake occurred.
  - ✓ Error must be **material enough to affect result**,

#### When do courts overturn election results?

It is **rare — but not unprecedented** — for a court to declare an election void and announce another candidate as the winner. This happens **when the court is satisfied that the petitioner or another candidate received a majority of valid votes**.

Alternatively, a petitioner must prove that they would have secured the majority of votes if not for the votes obtained by the winning candidate through corrupt practices. This requires concrete evidence to quantify the votes tainted by corruption.

#### Example Cases:

**Chandigarh Mayoral Election** (Feb 2024)

**Haryana Sarpanch Case** (Aug 2025)



### Grounds for Invalidating Elections

**Bribery** or **undue influence** (e.g., hiding criminal record).

**Promoting enmity** among social groups.

**Disqualification/Non-qualification** of the winning candidate.

**Improper rejection** of **nomination** papers.

Improper **acceptance/rejection of votes** → only if materially affected outcome.

**Violation of Constitution** or **election laws** → again, only if outcome affected.





**Q1. Consider the following statements regarding ports in India:**

1. Major Ports are controlled by the state government.
2. Non-major ports are administered by the central government.
3. Vadhvan Port in Palghar, Maharashtra, has been designated as the 13th major port of India.

**How many statements given above is/are correct?**

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

**Answer: a**

**Q2. Consider the following pairs:**

Programs	Target Groups
<b>PM POSHAN</b>	Women Only
<b>ICDS</b>	School-going children
<b>Fortification</b>	NFSA beneficiaries

**How many of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?**

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

**Answer: a**

**Q3. Consider the following statements:**

1. The other Election Commissioners cannot be removed from their office except in the same manner as a judge of the Supreme Court.
2. The CEC plays a direct role in the appointment of the Election Commissioners.

**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

**Answer: d**

**Q4. Consider the following statements:**

1. The provision for nominating two Anglo-Indian members to the Lok Sabha was discontinued in 2020.
2. In the six States with Legislative Councils, nearly one-third of the members are nominated.
3. In Government of NCT of Delhi vs. Union of India (2023), the Supreme Court introduced the concept of the 'triple chain of command'.

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

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

**Answer: b**

**Q5. Consider the following statements regarding legal framework for challenging an election:**

1. The validity of Parliamentary election results can be challenged in the High Court where election was conducted.
2. The petition can only be filed by a candidate or an elector related to the election in question.
3. Election petition has to be filed within 60 days from the date of declaration of results.

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

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

**Answer: d**





# **VAJIRAM & RAVI**

## **Institute for IAS Examination**

A unit of Vajiram & Ravi IAS Study Centre LLP

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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](http://www.vajiramandravi.com)