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Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

28th January 2026



India -EU FTA - Mother of All Deals

CONTEXT : 🇮🇳🇪🇺 India-EU FTA 2026 is one of the largest bilateral trade deals in global history.

Why is it called the "Mother of All Deals"?

Because of its **scale + scope + strategic depth**

Population Covered	~1.9 billion ppl
Share of Global GDP	~25%
Share of Global Trade	~11-12%
Global Trade	\$11 Trillion (out of \$33 Trillion global)
Countries	India + 27 EU nations
Coverage: Goods + Services + Investment + Digital + Sustainability	

European Union:
Customs Union of 27 countries

China-ASEAN deal

Category	India Exports to EU	EU Exports to India
Goods	\$75.85 Billion	\$60.68 Billion
Services	\$30.00 Billion	\$23.00 Billion
Total	\$105.85 Billion	\$83.68 Billion

Total Bilateral Trade: >\$190 Billion.
India's Merchandise Trade Surplus: +\$15.17 Billion.

Investment & Strategic Ties

FDI Inflow (EU to India):

- **\$117.4 Billion** (since 2000).
- Share: **16.5%** of India's total FDI.
- Presence: **6,000 EU firms** operate in India.

FDI Outflow (India to EU): ~\$40 Billion

India-EU trade (FY25)

TOI

Exports to EU

\$15 bn
Petroleum products

\$11.3 bn
Electronics (incl. smartphones \$4.3 bn)

\$6.1 bn
Textiles & garments

\$5 bn
Machinery & computers

\$5.1 bn
Organic chemicals

\$4.9 bn
Iron & steel

\$3 bn
Pharmaceuticals

\$2.5 bn
Gems & jewellery

\$1.6 bn
Auto parts

\$0.81 bn
Footwear

\$0.78 bn
Coffee

Imports from EU

\$13 bn
Machinery & computers

\$9.4 bn
Electronics

\$6.3 bn
Aircraft

\$3.8 bn
Medical devices & scientific instruments

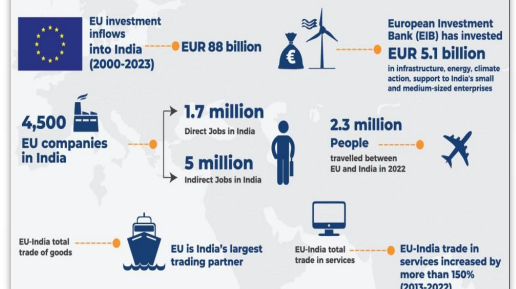
\$3 bn
Gems & jewellery

\$2.3 bn
Organic chemicals

\$2.3 bn
Plastics

The Trade Statistics: Bilateral Trade Report Card (FY 2025)

The EU's growing economic footprint in India



India -EU FTA - Mother of All Deals

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TIMELINE OF INDIA-EU FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (FTA)

India and the European Union (EU) are aiming to conclude an FTA by December, 2025

Oct, 2006

India and the EU recognize need for a trade agreement at the India-EU Summit in Helsinki

Jun, 2007 to 2013

15 rounds of negotiations took place

2013 to 2021

Talks stalled due to multiple unresolved issues and mutual disagreements

Jul, 2022

First round of negotiations completed

Jun, 2022

European Commissioner for Economy and Productivity Valdis Dombrovskis and Indian Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal relaunched EU-India negotiations

Oct, 2022

Second round in Brussels

Nov-Dec, 2022

Third round in New Delhi

Feb, 2023

Trade and Technology Council (TTC) set up to oversee cooperation in AI, quantum computing, biotech, security and defence

Jun, 2023

Fifth round in New Delhi

Mar, 2023

Fourth round of trade negotiations concluded in Brussels

Oct, 2023

Sixth round in Brussels

Feb, 2024

Seventh round in New Delhi

Jun, 2024

Eighth round in Brussels

Mar, 2025

Tenth round in Brussels

Feb, 2025

European Commission president v visits India. PM Modi and Leyen decide to fast-track India-EU FTA

Sep, 2024

Ninth round in New Delhi

May, 2025

Eleventh round in New Delhi

Jul, 2025

Twelfth round in Brussels

Sep, 2025

Thirteenth round in New Delhi (ongoing)

Oct, 2025

Fourteenth round in Brussels (announced)

What has been agreed: 🟢 Tariff Liberalisation

Estimated **€4 billion/year tariff savings** for EU exporters

Potential **doubling of EU exports to India by 2032**

EU → India

✅ Tariffs cut/eliminated on **96.6% of EU exports**

🚗 Auto tariffs:

- From **110%** → **10%** (over 5 years)
- Quota: **250,000 vehicles/year**

🍷 Alcohol:

- Wine: 20–30%
- Spirits: 40%
- Beer: 50%

✈️ Aircraft & spacecraft:

Near-zero tariffs

🔧 Machinery, chemicals, pharma: major cuts

India → EU

✅ Tariffs removed on **99–99.5% of Indian exports (by value)** over 7 years

Major gainers:

- 👕 Textiles & garments
- 🐟 Marine products
- 💎 Gems & jewellery
- 🧴 Chemicals
- 📱 Electronics
- ⚙️ Engineering goods



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• WHO GAINS WHAT, WHAT NEXT



FOR INDIA

	Before FTA	After FTA
Marine sector	up to 26%	0%
Chemical	up to 12.8%	0%
Leather & footwear	up to 17%	0%
Plastic & rubber	up to 6.5%	0%
Textile & apparel	up to 12%	0%
Base metal	up to 10%	0%
Gems & jewellery	up to 4%	0%
Railway, aircraft, ships	up to 7.7%	0%
Furniture & light consumer goods	up to 10.5%	0%
Toys	up to 4.7%	0%
Sports goods	up to 4.7%	0%

FOREU

	Before FTA	After FTA
Motor vehicles	110%	10% (quota of 250k/yr)
Wine	150%	20% (premium); 30% (medium)
Spirits	up to 150%	40%
Beer	110%	50%
Olive Oil	up to 45%	0%
Kiwis & pears	33%	10% (in-quota)
Machinery & electrical equipment	up to 44%	0% for most products
Aircraft & spacecraft	up to 11%	0% for most items
Iron and steel	up to 22%	0% for most items
Pharma	11%	0% for most items
Processed food (bread, biscuit, pasta, chocolate, pet-food)	up to 50%	0%

- India's labour-intensive annual exports worth \$35 billion benefit immediately
- Signing of the deal expected later this year
- Legal scrubbing to take 4-5 months

- Deal expected to come into effect by early next year
- India will receive same flexibility as US on EU's carbon tax



SOURCE: COM

Trade winds nudged across finish line

• INDIA'S TOPEU TRADE PARTNERS

India's exports India's imports All figures in \$ mn, FY25

SWEDEN 1,262 2,120

POLAND 2,619 1,266

IRELAND 865 5,129

NETHERLAND 22,763 4,995

BELGIUM 6,320 6,590

FRANCE 7,960 7,231

SPAIN 4,764 2,218

GERMANY 10,629 18,948

CZECH REPUBLIC 2,063 726

ITALY 7,727 6,014

UK 1,262 2,120

FINLAND 1,262 2,120

RUSSIA 1,262 2,120

UKRAINE 1,262 2,120

ROMANIA 1,262 2,120

BULGARIA 1,262 2,120

Mediterranean Sea



India -EU FTA - Mother of All Deals



CONTEXT : 🇮🇳🤝🇪🇺 India-EU FTA 2026 is one of the largest bilateral trade deals in global history.

Other details of the deal

Services & Investment

Services Liberalisation

EU gets better access to:

- 🏦 Financial services
- 🚢 Maritime services
- 💻 IT-enabled services
- 📊 Business & professional services

India benefits in:

- IT & telecom
- Transport services
- Skilled mobility

CBAM

- Indian exporters **NOT exempted** from EU's CBAM (carbon tax)
- Affects:
 - a. Steel
 - b. Aluminium
 - c. Cement
 - d. Fertilisers
- EU gave **assurances of flexibility**, but no blanket waiver

What is EXCLUDED?

🚫 Sensitive sectors excluded to protect farmers & food security:

- ❌ Dairy
- ❌ Beef
- ❌ Sugar
- ❌ Rice
- ❌ Soya

➡️ Protects **India's agriculture & rural livelihoods**

UPSC PYQ (P) 2017

Q. 'Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA)' is sometimes seen in the news in the context of negotiations held between India and:

- (a) European Union
- (b) Gulf Cooperation Council
- (c) Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
- (d) Shanghai Cooperation Organization

UPSC PYQ (P) 2010

In the context of bilateral trade negotiations between India and European Union, what is the difference between European Commission and European Council?

1. European Commission represents the EU in trade negotiations whereas European Council participates in legislation of EU.
2. European Commission comprises the Heads of State or Government of member countries whereas European Council comprises of the persons nominated by European Parliament.

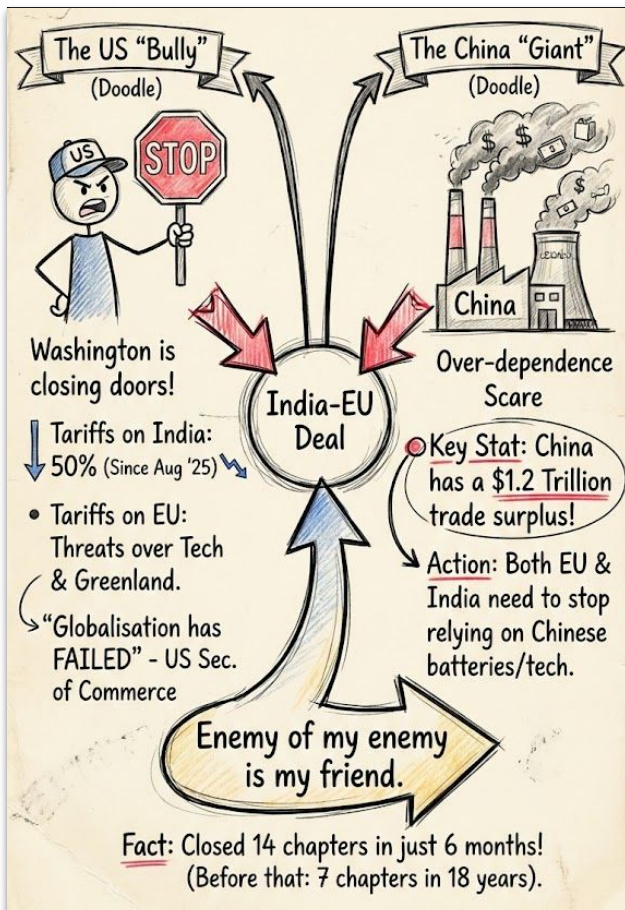
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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



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The "Perfect Storm": Why Now

Driver 1: The "US Bully" Effect (Protectionism)



The Attack on India

- 50% Tariffs
- Labour-intensive sectors

The Attack on the EU

- 30% tariffs on EU: Greenland
- EU's strict tech regulations
- The "Fake" Deal

Driver 2: The "China Trap" (Overcapacity)



China has a massive \$1.2 Trillion Trade Surplus

NP National Post

Lutnick's speech slamming Europe at Davos leads to Lagarde's abrupt exit: sources

European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde abruptly walked out of an invitation-only sit-down dinner in Davos after US Commerce...

5 days ago

- EU imposed 35% tariffs on Chinese EVs

India-UK Deal (July 2025)

- India **signed a deal with the UK before the EU**
- India allowed UK-made cars with lower duties.
- EU's Panic



FTA covers nearly 100% of trade value

99% of Indian exports to the UK will enjoy zero-duty access

ABOUT \$56 BILLION in BILATERAL TRADE today set to DOUBLE by 2030


Indian professionals exempt from UK social security payments for 3 YEARS

Driver 3: The "Brexit FOMO"

Sector	The Deal Mechanics
Automobiles	Duty cut from 110% → 10% . Catch: Limited to a Quota of 250,000 cars/year .
Alcohol	Duty Cuts: Reduced to 40% for Spirits and 20-30% for Wines .
Services	Privileged Access: Easier movement for Indian IT and skilled professionals.
Climate	€500 Million for green transition.



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A "Decade of Diplomacy," Not a "Trump Panic"

Just the
beginning

10 years of deliberate strategy

- Brussels (EU HQ)
- Berlin, Paris, Rome, etc
- Nordics, Baltics

Goal: To have Strategic
Autonomy; US + China

The RCEP Lesson:
"Complementary Economies"
vs "Competing Economies"

Finalise negotiations

The Challenges:
Implementation is hard

Table 2: Selected Indian trade agreements currently under negotiation

Country	Type	Date negotiations began
Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand)	Free Trade Agreement (FTA)	Feb 2004
Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates)	FTA	Mar 2006; resumed in Nov 2022
European Union	FTA	Jun 2007; resumed in Jun 2022
South African Customs Union (Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa)	Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA)	Oct 2007; resumed in Apr 2025
Israel	FTA	May 2010; resumed in Nov 2025
Canada	Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)	Nov 2010; resumed in Nov 2025
Indonesia	Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)	Jan 2011
Peru	FTA	Mar 2017; resumed in Mar 2025
Bangladesh	CEPA	Jun 2024
United States	Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA)	Mar 2025
Maldives	FTA	Jul 2025
Qatar	CEPA	Oct 2025
Eurasian Economic Union (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia)	FTA	Nov 2025
Bahrain	CEPA	Nov 2025
Mexico	PTA	Dec 2025

Source: IISS analysis

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CONTEXT : 🇮🇳🇪🇺 India–EU FTA 2026 is one of the largest bilateral trade deals in global history.

Mains Practise Question

Analyse the strategic and economic implications of the India–EU FTA for India.
(15 Marks, 250 words)

TPP Trans-Pacific Partnership



Table 1: Selected Indian trade agreements since 2000

Country	Type	Date Effective
Sri Lanka	Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Negotiations for an Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) ongoing since 2016	Mar 2000
Afghanistan	Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA)	May 2003
Singapore	Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)	Aug 2005
South Asian Free Trade Area (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka)	FTA	Jan 2006
Thailand	FTA (Early Harvest Scheme). Ongoing discussion to restart negotiations for a Comprehensive FTA since Nov 2025	Sep 2006
Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (Bangladesh, China, India, Laos, South Korea and Sri Lanka)	PTA	Sep 2006 (updated; originally signed in 1975)
Chile	PTA. Negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) ongoing since May 2025	Aug 2007
Mercosur (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay)	PTA. Update of the PTA through negotiations ongoing since Oct 2025	Jun 2009
Nepal	Treaty of Trade	Oct 2009 (updated; originally signed in 1950)
South Korea	CEPA. Ongoing negotiations on the update of CEPA since 2015	Jan 2010
ASEAN Trade in Goods, Trade in Services and Investment Agreement	CECA. Ongoing review of the goods agreement since 2020	Jan 2010 (goods); Jul 2015 (services and investment)
Malaysia	CECA	Jul 2011
Japan	CEPA. Ongoing review of CEPA since Aug 2025	Aug 2011
Bhutan	Agreement on Trade, Commerce and Transit	Jul 2016 (updated; originally signed in 1972)
Mauritius	Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA)	Apr 2021
United Arab Emirates	CEPA	May 2022
Australia	Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA). Ongoing negotiations for a CECA since 2022	Dec 2022
United Kingdom	Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)	Jul 2025 (signed); effective in 2026 (TBC)
European Free Trade Association (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland)	Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA)	Oct 2025
Oman	CEPA	Dec 2025 (signed); effective in 2026 (TBC)
New Zealand	FTA	Dec 2025 (signed); effective in 2026 (TBC)

Source: IISS analysis

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CONTEXT: On January 27, 2026, a Supreme Court Bench led by CJI Surya Kant heard a petition by acid attack survivor Shaheen Malik.

💔 Shaheen Malik's Story

Women of Impact

the
better
india

"I had 2 options -- to be dependent on my parents for life or to go out in the world & see what life had in store."



Left With 90% Burns After an Acid Attack, Shaheen Malik Has Helped 300+ Other Survivors With Surgeries, Shelter & More

🔪 What is an Acid Attack?

Shaheen was attacked in her 20s. She is now 42.

She underwent 25 surgeries. She lost her eyes (one partially recovered) and her identity.

After fighting for 16 years, the trial court acquitted the attackers recently.

in India Today

Acid Attack Survivor Shaheen Malik Denied Justice As Court Acquits Accused After 16 Years - India Today

On this Special Report, the focus is on the acquittal of three accused in the 2009 acid attack on survivor Shaheen Malik. A Delhi trial...

1 month ago

The CJI promised to appoint the "best legal aid counsel" for her appeal.

The Definition:

Throwing corrosive substance (Sulfuric/Nitric/Hydrochloric) with intent to harm.



Medical Reality:

Melts skin, causes blindness, permanent disfigurement.

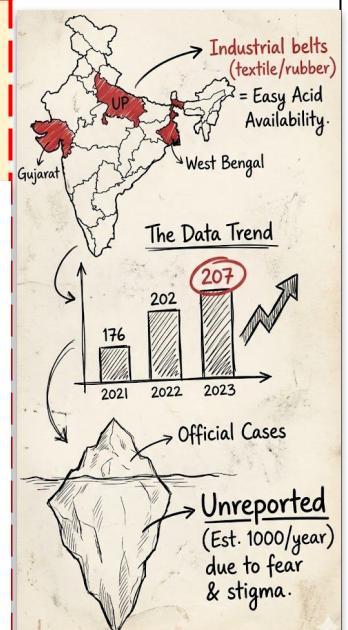
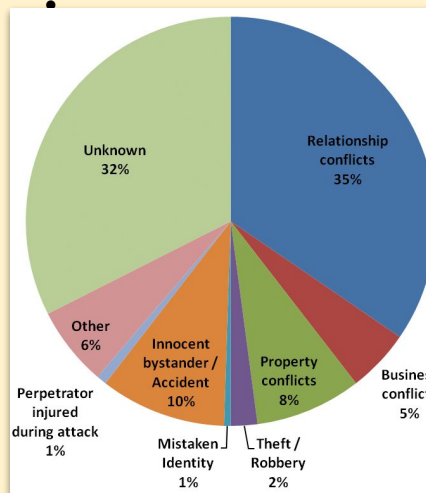


Law Commission (226th Report, 2009)

- Gender-specific crime
- Targeting women to destroy their appearance and identity

📊 The Grim Statistics

- 2021: 176 cases
- 2022: 202 cases
- 2023: 207 cases (+ 65 attempted attacks)



CONTEXT: On January 27, 2026, a Supreme Court Bench led by CJI Surya Kant heard a petition by acid attack survivor Shaheen Malik.



Legal Framework: The Shield Against Acid



Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita , 2023

- **Section 124:** Treats acid attack as a specific, serious offence.
- **Punishment:** Minimum **10 years imprisonment**, extendable to **Life**.
- **Fine:** "Just and reasonable" fine to cover the victim's medical expenses.
- **Attempts:** Even an *attempt* to throw acid is punishable by **5-7 years** in jail.
- **Mandatory Treatment:** All hospitals (Public & Private) **MUST** provide free first aid/treatment. Denial is a crime.

Other Provisions

- **NALSA Scheme (2016):** Provides priority legal aid to victims.
- **Poisons Act (1919):** States frame rules under this to control acid sale (Model Rules 2013), though implementation is weak.



Legal Framework: The Shield Against Acid



Supreme Court Judgments

Laxmi vs. Union of India (2013): landmark case.

- **Regulation:** Banned over-the-counter sale of acid. Buyers need ID proof; sellers must maintain a register.
- **Compensation:** Minimum **₹3 Lakh** (₹1L within 15 days for immediate care + ₹2L within 2 months).

Parivartan Kendra Case (2015): SC slammed states for poor implementation and demanded effective rehabilitation.

The Challenges Why is Justice Delayed?

Investigation Failures

Data (2023): Out of 703 pending cases, only 16 convictions were achieved.

Easy Availability

The "Compromise" Culture

Compensation Delays





SC on Acid Attacks

CONTEXT: On January 27, 2026, a Supreme Court Bench led by CJI Surya Kant heard a petition by acid attack survivor Shaheen Malik.



Legal Framework: 3 Major Legal Shifts Proposed

Supreme Court on Malik's case

- Rejection of **"Reformative Justice"** 
 - Gandhian principle: "Hate the crime, not the criminal"
 - SC's Stance:** For acid attacks, the SC explicitly rejected this.
 - Attacker deserves **"Extraordinary Punitive Measures"**
- New Approach: **Deterrent & Retributive Justice**
 - Police** should **investigate the attacker's property details** during the probe.
 - The Court should ban the attacker from selling/transferring these assets
 - If Convicted:** Auction the assets.
- Shifting the "Onus" (**Burden of Proof**) 

The CJI compared it to **Dowry Death (Section 304B IPC / Sec 80 BNS)**. In dowry death cases, if a woman dies unnaturally within **7 years of marriage**, the **law presumes the husband is guilty unless he proves otherwise**.

IT Telegraph India

Supreme Court seeks tougher acid attack law, calls for property attachment of accused

The Supreme Court on Tuesday called for "extraordinary punitive measures", including attachment of properties, for acid attacks and asked...

3 hours ago

Daily Pioneer

Supreme Court Seeks Detailed Data from States on Acid Attack Cases, Victim Rehabilitation

Taking strong note of acid attack cases, the Supreme Court has directed States and Union Territories to submit detailed year-wise data on...

10 hours ago



Way Forward

Strict Enforcement

Administrative accountability for **SDMs**

Bangladesh Model

494 (2002) to **13 (2024)**
Sealing illegal shops within 30 days + Campaigns

Justice Delivery

Training for judges/prosecutors
Fast-Track Courts

Disability Norms

Move beyond the rigid "40% disability" rule.

Justice Verma Committee (2013)

National Survivor Fund



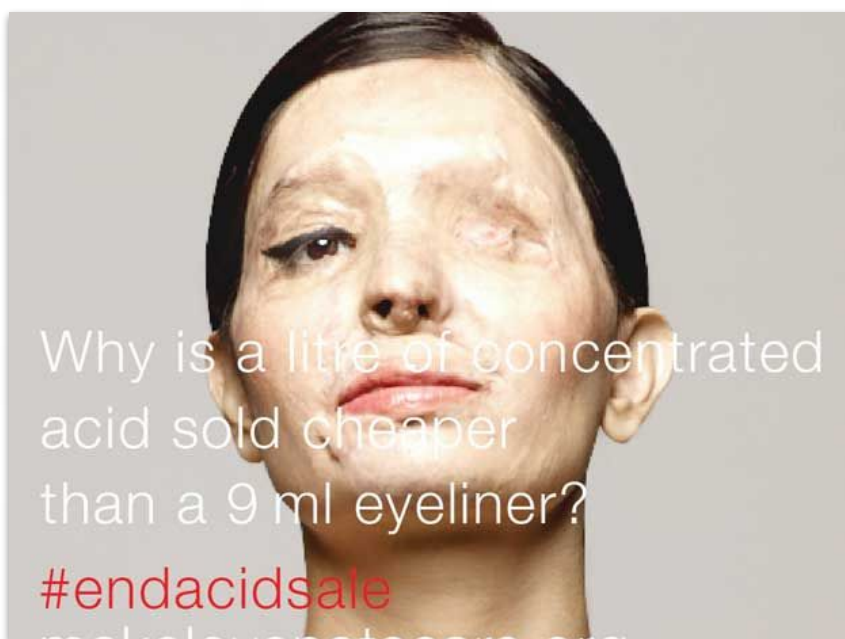
SC on Acid Attacks

CONTEXT: On January 27, 2026, a Supreme Court Bench led by CJI Surya Kant heard a petition by acid attack survivor Shaheen Malik.

Mains Practise Question

Retributive justice is often seen as archaic, yet the Supreme Court has advocated for it in acid attack cases. Discuss the ethical and legal arguments for seizing assets of convicts to compensate victims.

(15 Marks, 250 words)



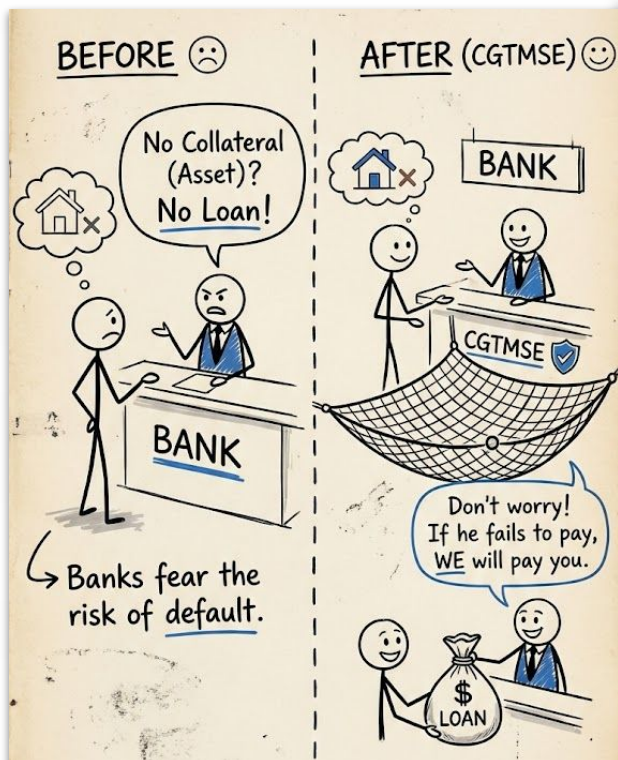
SYLLABUS : Prelims: Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises

GS 2 Paper : Resource Mobilization & MSMEs

Newspaper: The Hindu **Page Number:** 2



What is Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises?



"Hybrid Security" Model

Established in **July 2000**. It is a joint venture between:

Ministry of MSME + SIDBI

Status: It is a **Trust**, not a Bank.

Fee: borrower pays an **Annual Guarantee Fee** to CGTMSE

Default: CGTMSE pays within 30 days of the claim.

Maximum Loan Limit: (2025-26): **₹10 Crore**

Category of Borrower	Guarantee Coverage
Micro Enterprises (<₹5L)	85%
Women Entrepreneurs 🧑	90%
SC/ST Entrepreneurs	85%
ZED Certified Units	85%
NER / J&K / Ladakh	80%
General Category (>₹50L)	75%

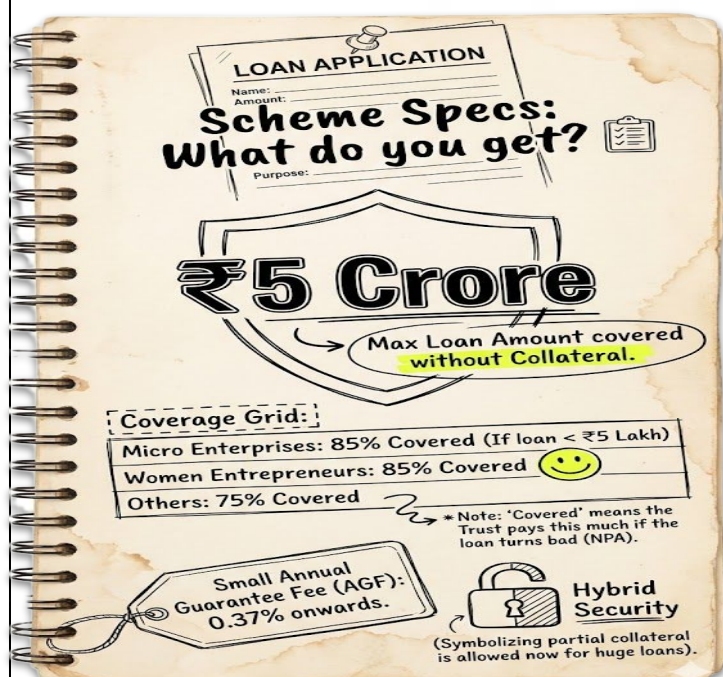


SYLLABUS : Prelims: Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises

GS 2 Paper : **Resource Mobilization & MSMEs**

Newspaper: The Hindu **Page Number:** 2

Collateral-Free Loans for Delhi's MSMEs



Target Audience & Impact

Sectors Covered

- Special Focus:**
- Women Entrepreneurs
 - First-Time Entrepreneurs

MSMEs are the 2nd largest employer

Enterprise Category	Existing Limited (applicable upto 31.03.2025)		Revised Limits (applicable w.e.f 01.04.2025)	
	Investment in Plant & Machinery	Turnover	Investment in Plant & Machinery	Turnover
Micro	1.00	5.00	2.50	10.00
Small	10.00	50.00	25.00	100.00
Medium	50.00	250.00	125.00	500.00

According to the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), CGTMSE will provide guarantee cover of 75-90% of the loan amount while the remaining portion will be backed by the Delhi government.

"As a result, up to 95% of loans extended by banks will be government-guaranteed, reducing banks' exposure to just 5% and encouraging them to lend more confidently to small businesses," read a statement from the CMO.



SYLLABUS: Prelims: **Nuclear Energy**
GS 2 Paper: **Science & Technology**
Newspaper: The Hindu **Page Number:** 12



Part 1: The Nuclear Pact (India-Euratom)

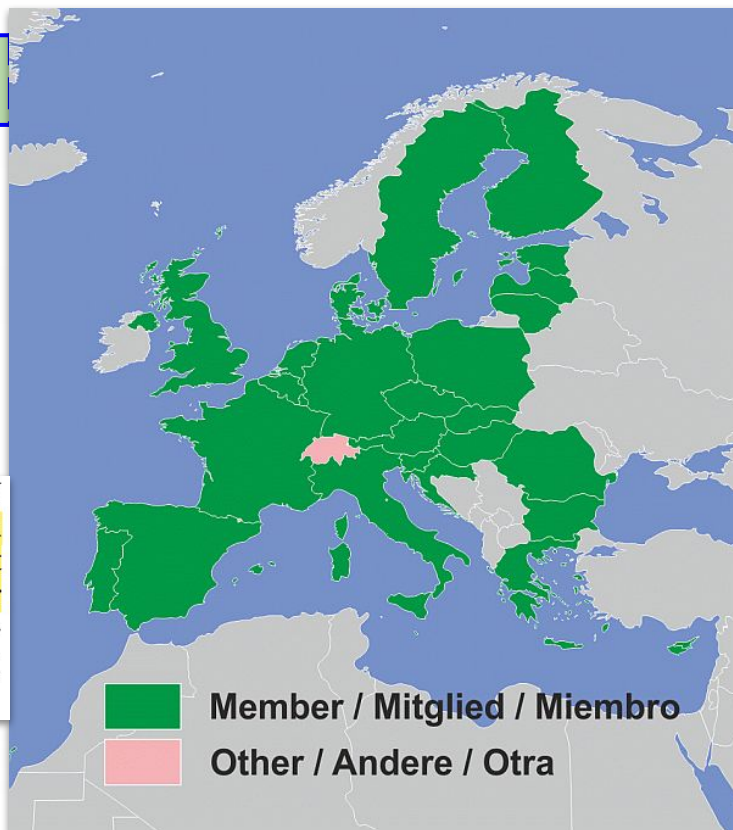
What is Euratom?

European Atomic Energy Community

- Established in **1957**
- **Separate legal entity** from EU
- Coordinate **research**
- Ensure the **safety of nuclear energy** across Europe

The European Union (EU) and India have committed to promoting collaboration on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the India-Euratom agreement, according to a statement from the Joint India-European Union Comprehensive Strategic Agenda on

Tuesday. India and the EU had signed a research and development agreement on peaceful uses of nuclear energy with Euratom, Europe's atomic energy body, in July 2020.



The 2020 Foundation vs. 2026 Upgrade

The 2020 Agreement:

- **R&D** in peaceful uses
- **Safety**, radioactive **waste management**, and radiation protection

2026 Upgrade

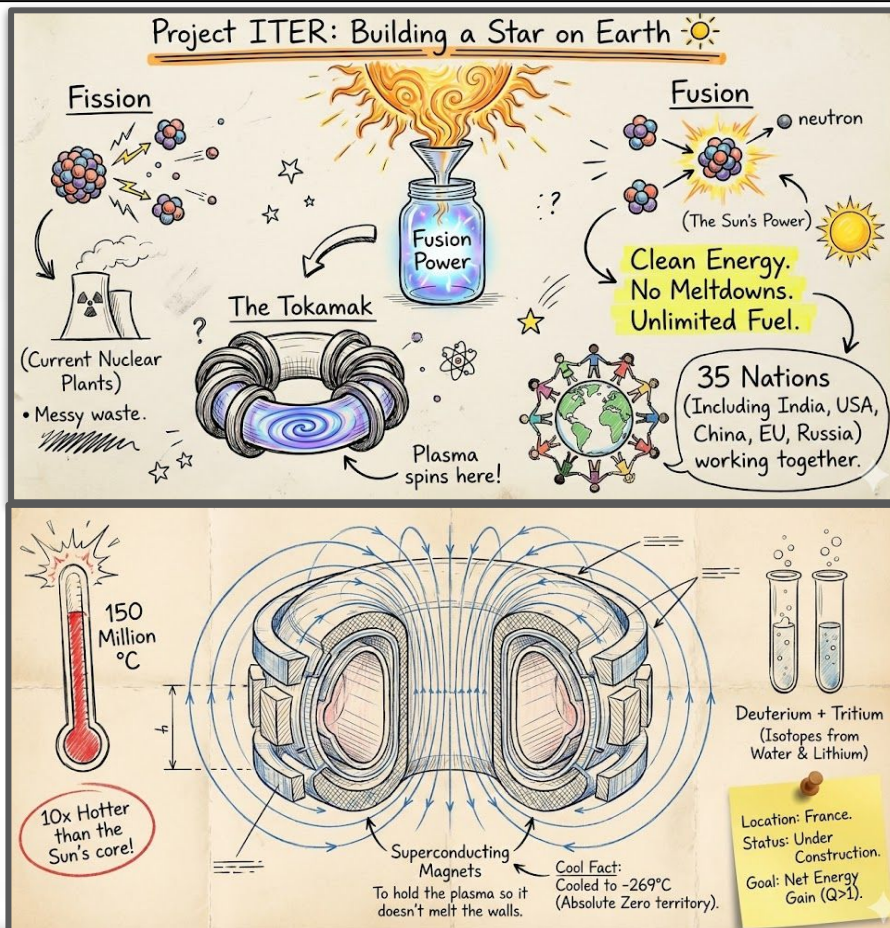
- Focus 1: **Advanced Materials**
- Focus 2: **Radiopharmaceuticals**
- Focus 3: **Horizon Europe**

"Non-Power Applications":

- **Cobalt-60**
- **Mutant seeds**
- **Isotope hydrology**



SYLLABUS: Prelims: **Nuclear Energy**
GS 3 Paper: Science & Technology
Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 12



Part 2: The Trade War Averted (CBAM)

Sectors covered by the CBAM:

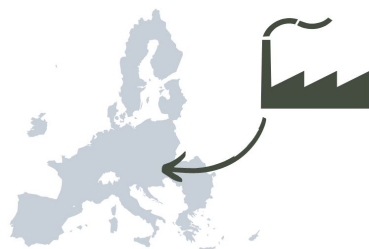
Cement, iron and steel, aluminium, fertilisers, electricity and hydrogen



EU Production



EU production is subject to the **EU-ETS***
 (Assuming an ETS allowance price of 90€ per tonne of CO₂)



Non- EU Production



Non-EU production is subject to a lower **ETS** and **CBAM** certificates

* The EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) is a market-based approach for setting a price for CO₂ emissions.

What India Wanted

Exemption

Fair Treatment

Recognition

Tech Support

What India Got

No Exemption, but "Flexibilities".

Most-Favoured Nation (MFN) Assurance.

Recognition of Verifiers.

Financial Assistance.



Jal Jeevan Mission Scheme ID



SYLLABUS: Prelims: **Jal Jeevan Mission Scheme**
GS 2 Paper: Governance/Social Justice and Infrastructure
Newspaper: The Indian Express **Page Number: 5**



What is Jal Jeevan Mission?

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Jal Shakti

(Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation).

Target: To provide **Functional Household Tap**

Connection to every rural household by **2024**

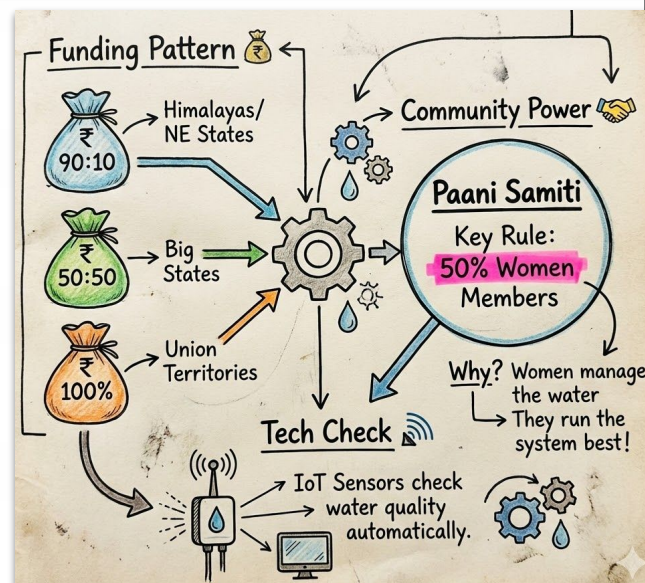
(extended to **2025-26** for some states).

The "Golden Number": 55 LPCD (Litres Per Capita per Day).



Current Status (As of 2025)

- Approx **80% of rural households**
- **100% Saturation Achieved:** Goa, Telangana, Haryana, Gujarat, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and UTs like A&N Islands, Puducherry.
- **Lagging States:** WB, Rajasthan, Jharkhand



The Indian Express

Jal Jeevan outlay to be cut 60 per cent this year

The Centre is planning to cut the outlay of its flagship rural tap water scheme or Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) by almost 60 per cent from Rs...

2 weeks ago



The New "Rules": Context first

STATES WOULD receive funds under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) only after signing of separate MoUs, with each scheme mapped through a unique Scheme ID and future releases linked to the demonstration of 15 days of continuous water supply, Union Jal Shakti Minister C R Patil said on Tuesday.

Addressing a minister-level Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of Rural Drinking Water Services under JJM, Patil spoke about strengthening implementation discipline and financial prudence in the next phase of the mission.

The JJM has been marred with irregularities with the government taking a stern view in the middle of 2025. On May 21, 2025, an investigation by The Indian Express showed how changes in the Mission's guidelines three years back lifted a crucial check on expenditure and led to cost escalations. The investigation found this resulted in additional costs of Rs 16,839 crore or almost 15 per cent more than the estimated cost.

The same month, the government sent over a hundred officials for ground inspection of the JJM works. Prime Minister Narendra Modi directed the Jal Shakti Ministry officials to take action against those who have committed irregularities in JJM and to not spare anyone.

On November 10, The Indian Express had reported that action has been taken against at least 596 officials, 822 contractors and 152 Third Party Inspection Agencies (TPIAs) across 15 states and Union Territories following complaints about financial irregularities and poor quality of work for supplying tap drinking water to rural households.



SYLLABUS : Prelims: **Jal Jeevan Mission Scheme**
GS 2 Paper : Governance/Social Justice and Infrastructure
Newspaper: The Indian Express **Page Number: 5**

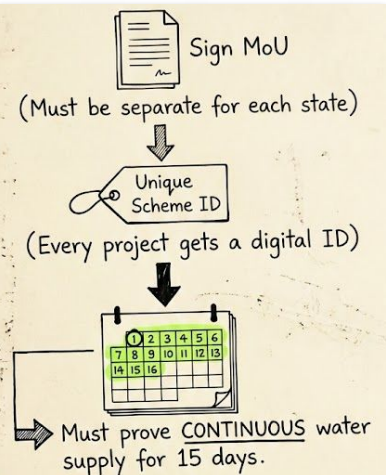
The New "Rules"

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15-Day Test

- **Old Way:** States claimed funds based on "**Physical Progress**"
 - **New Way:** Future funds are linked to **Service Delivery**
- To stop the phenomenon of "Ghost Taps"*



CAUTION!

Oversized DPRs (Project Reports) will be rejected! Keep it realistic.



Private Staff in Digital Census



SYLLABUS: Prelims: **Methodology" of Census**

GS 1 & 2 Paper: **Population & Society, Governance & Human Resources**

Newspaper: The Hindu **Page Number:** 10



What's New in Census 2027?

The Population Census 2027, the first phase of which will begin on April 1 and conclude on September 30, will be the first-ever digital census in the country where the enumerators, mostly government school teachers, will capture details through mobile applications on their personal phones.

Registrar-General and Census Commissioner of India (RG&CCI) Mritunjay Kumar Narayan has written to the State governments that with the introduction of initiatives such as data collection through mobile applications and the use of the Census Management and Monitoring System (CMMS), the Houselisting Block Creator (HLBC) Web application, self-enumeration portal and so on, the

Census 2027 Timeline

Description

Phase 1:
Houselisting & Housing Census

April
2026

Info about housing condition, water, toilets, etc.

Phase 2:
Population Enumeration

February
2027

Demographic and socio-economic data collection

• LOGIN, FILL UP, SUBMIT

RESPONDENTS CAN log in to the self-enumeration (SE) portal by entering their mobile number

AFTER FILLING all the questions in the census schedule, a reference ID will be generated and sent to the registered mobile number of the respondent

THE ID has to be shared with the enumerator during the field visit

AFTER CHECKING the self-enumeration data, the enumerator will include it in the original database



DETAILS ON the SE portal will be available in Assamese, Bengali, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu

Digital Transformation

- ✓ **Mobile App** (Android, iOS)
- ✓ **Enumerators use personal smartphones**
- ✓ **Houselisting Block Creator**
- ✓ **Census Management and Monitoring System**
- ✓ **Web Portal for Self-Enumeration** (for both phases)
- ✓ **Caste enumeration** included



The "Hybrid" Workforce Model

In a first, private technical staff will be engaged to assist government officials during the Census enabling the "release of Census data in the shortest possible time", sources said.

Core Field Force: "Government Officials"

- **Census Act, 1948:** Only a public servant is authorized to enter your home and demand data
- **Who:** 31 Lakh Enumerators.
- **Task:** Each enumerator surveys 750–800 people.
- **Pay (Honorarium):** ₹25,000 (one-time/project basis).



SYLLABUS: Prelims: **Methodology** of Census

GS 1 & 2 Paper: **Population & Society, Governance & Human Resources**

Newspaper: The Hindu **Page Number:** 10



The "Hybrid" Workforce Model

The letter added that assistance in terms of **hired technical manpower** would be provided to assist Census officials.

In addition to this, **multi-tasking staff (MTS)** for office assistance would be provided at the **State and district levels**. "The manpower will be hired for a maximum period of 18 months starting from January 2026," the RG&CCI said.

The RG&CCI said that the engagement of manpower will be **"purely on short-term contractual basis"** and the staff will not be entitled to any claims, rights, interests or further benefits in terms of regularisation or consideration of further appointment to any post, including any claims for any casual, ad hoc, temporary or regular service in the government.

Hiring would be done through an outsourcing agency only and not by direct appointment. "All payments be made through outsourcing agency to the hired manpower. **Retired government officials** may also be considered subject to meeting the suitability for the work," the letter added.

Note: There are **700+ Districts** in India, so this is a massive recruitment drive via agencies.

"Private Technical Assistants"

- **Hiring Mode:** Outsourced. Not direct govt employees.
- **Contract:** Short-term (Max 18 Months).
- **Pay:** Max ₹25,000 per month

Level	Private Technical Assistants	MTS (Office Helpers)
State Level	4	2
District Level	2	1
Municipal Corp	2	1
Tehsil (Charge)	1	0



Doomsday Clock

SYLLABUS: Prelims: **Doomsday Clock**
GS 2 and 3 Paper : **IR/ Science/Security**
Newspaper: The Hindu **Page Number: 14**



The Doomsday Clock



Doomsday Clock

A **symbolic clock face** that represents **how close humanity is to destroying the world** with dangerous technologies of its own making.

Midnight (12:00 AM): Global Catastrophe

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists

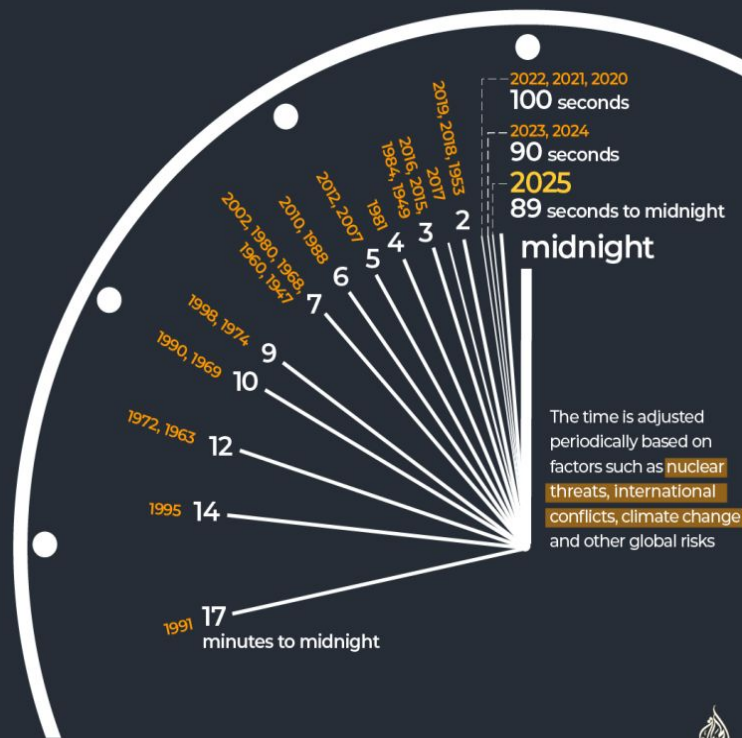
- 1945, University of Chicago scientists
- Manhattan Project

DECISION: Science and Security Board + Board of Sponsors

HISTORY

What is the Doomsday Clock?

Maintained by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists since 1947, the Doomsday Clock symbolises how close humans are to extinction. The closer the clock is to midnight, the closer the world would be to a potential disaster.



Source: thebulletin.org | January 29, 2025

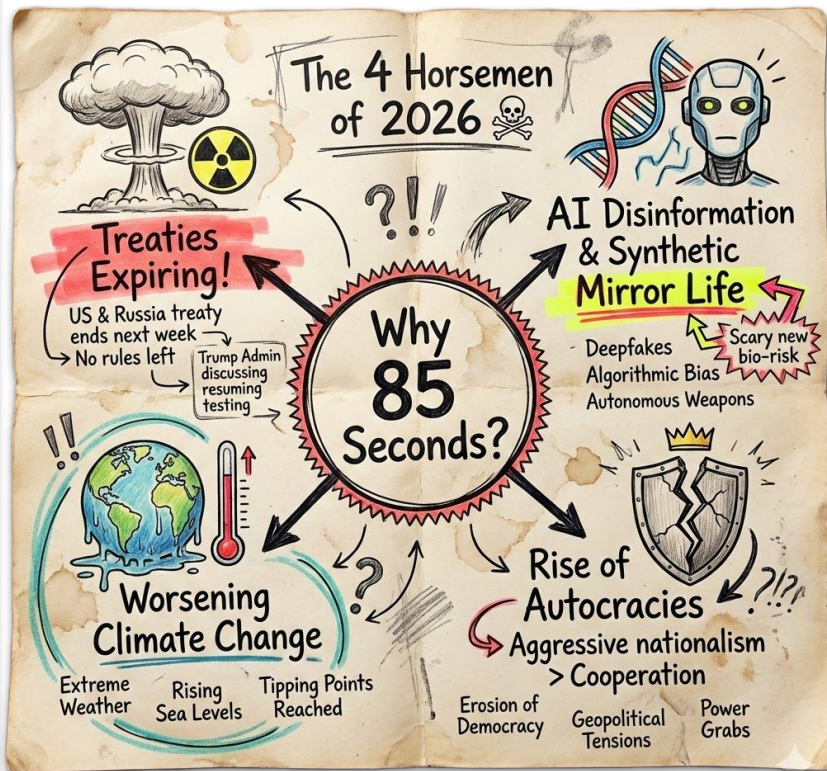
@AJLabs ALJAZEERA



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Why 85 Seconds to Midnight?



The Bulletin's foremost concern seems to be nuclear weapons. Recent rhetoric from the Trump administration regarding the potential resumption of nuclear testing and the modernisation of atomic stockpiles is already destabilising decades of deterrence strategy, fuelling an

"The last remaining treaty governing nuclear weapon stockpiles between the U.S. and Russia expires next week. For the first time in over half a century, there will be nothing preventing a runaway nuclear arms race," Mr. Holz said.

"Most dangerous phase"

- US pivot back to **fossil fuels**
- AI's Information Armageddon
- **Synthetic Mirror Life** = Super-Invasive Species/ Bioweapons
- Erosion of **Democracy**



Q 1. With reference to legal provisions relating to acid attacks in India, consider the following statements:

1. Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, treats acid attack as a distinct and serious offence.
2. The minimum punishment prescribed for an acid attack under BNS, 2023 is ten years' imprisonment, which may extend to life imprisonment.
3. An attempt to throw acid is punishable with imprisonment extending up to seven years.
4. All hospitals, whether public or private, are legally mandated to provide free first aid and treatment to acid attack victims.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: d

Q2. With reference to the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE), consider the following statements:

1. CGTMSE was established in July 2000 as a joint initiative of the Ministry of MSME and SIDBI.
2. CGTMSE directly provides loans to micro and small enterprises.
3. Borrowers are required to pay an annual guarantee fee under the CGTMSE scheme.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: b

Q3. With reference to the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), consider the following statements:

1. Euratom was established under the Treaty of Rome in 1957.
2. It is legally distinct from the European Union, though it shares common institutions.
3. Euratom has the mandate to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy, including research coordination and safety standards.
4. Euratom functions as a regulatory body under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

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

Q4. Under the Jal Jeevan Mission, the service level for providing drinking water to rural households is defined as:

- a) 40 litres per capita per day
- b) 55 litres per capita per day
- c) 70 litres per capita per day
- d) 100 litres per capita per day

Answer: b

Q5. With reference to the Doomsday Clock, consider the following statements:

1. It is a symbolic clock maintained by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists to represent how close humanity is to a global catastrophe.
2. Midnight on the clock represents that a state of global nuclear war has taken place.
3. The clock is periodically adjusted in response to threats such as nuclear weapons, climate change, and emerging technologies.
4. The United Nations Security Council takes the decision to reset the clock.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: a





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