



**VAJIRAM & RAVI**  
Institute for IAS Examination

# The Analyst

**CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout**

**25th February 2026**

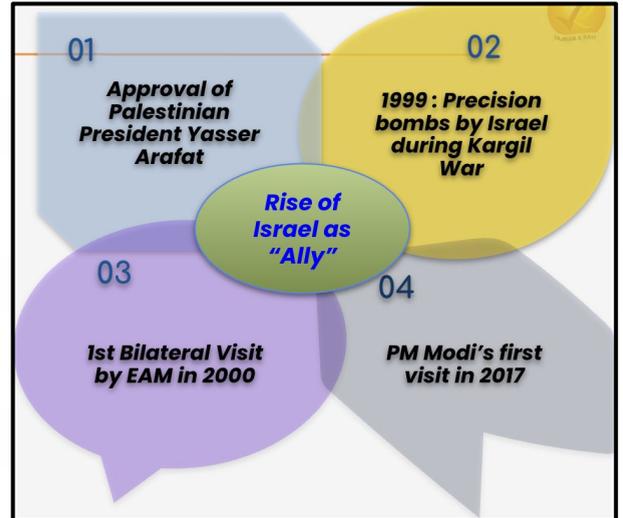
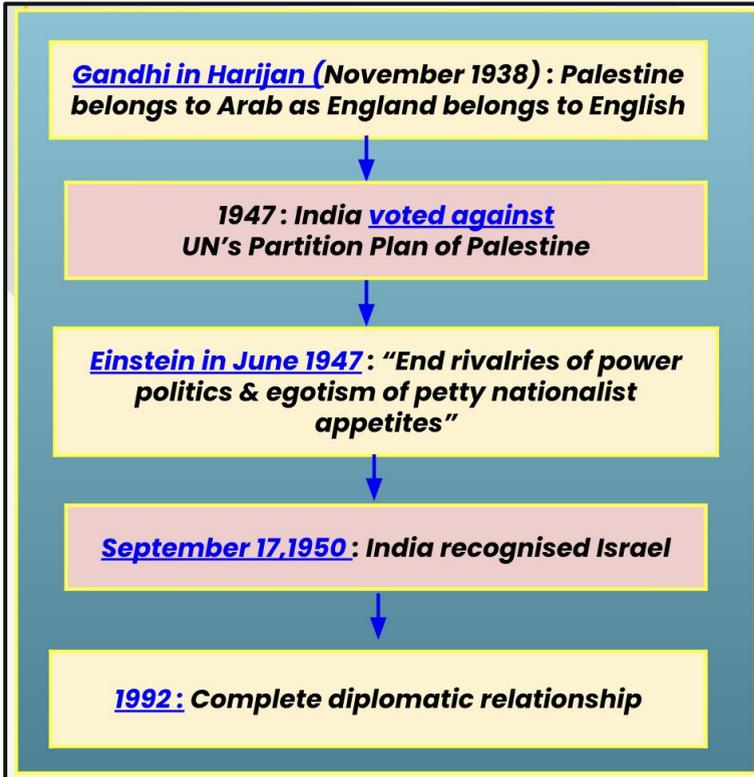


# Realist Diplomacy with Middle East



**CONTEXT:** PM Narendra Modi will be in Israel on Wednesday & Thursday in his first visit to the country in 9 year

## Mains Heading 1 : Historical Ties Between India - Israel :



India-Israel trade ties: India ranks as Israel's second-largest Asian trading partner in merchandise

## Mains Heading 2 : Economic Ties Between India - Israel :

**Growing "Economic Synergy" : Data by IBEF :**

- Bilateral Merchandise Trade : **\$3.75 Billion** in FY 2025
- India's Export to Israel : **\$2.1 Billion** - India's import from Israel : **\$1.6 Billion**
- Direct Investments by Indian Companies : **\$443 Million** (Adani led consortium in Haifa Port)
- Indigenous manufacturing of Electronic Fuzes by **BEL & Reshef Technologies**
- Defense drones production by **Paras Defence & Heven Drones**



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**Quadrilateral Economic Grouping I2U2**

- Announced in **October, 2021**
- **Cooperation & Investment** : Energy, Transportation, Space, Health & Food Security
- UAE : **\$2 Billion** investment to develop Food Parks
- USA & Israel : **300 MW Hybrid RE Project in Gujarat**

**Increasing Connectivity to Europe :**

India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)

**India-Israel Industrial R&D & Innovation Fund (IIF)**

- Launched in **2017** to accelerate joint technological R & D
- Total Corpus : **\$40 Million**
- Fields : AI, Medical Devices, Irrigation technologies & Renewable Energy
- Encourage **MSMEs & Startups**

## Mains Heading 3 : Economic Ties Between India - Iran :

**Importance of Strait of Hormuz**

Strait accounts for **40% crude imports & 54% LNG Imports**

**The Importance of Iran :**

**75 years of Diplomatic ties in 2025**

**Total Bilateral Trade : \$652 Million : India's Trade Surplus : ~300 Million**

**Major Export Item : Basmati Rice : 61% share**

**Route to Central Asia : Chabahar Port**

**Constraint on Trade : US's trade sanctions under CAATSA**

**BEING DIRECT: INDIA TO CHABAHAR**

**CONTEXT:** PM Narendra Modi will be in Israel on Wednesday & Thursday in his first visit to the country in 9 year

## Mains Heading 4 : Prevailing Issues in Middle East :

Maintain Strategic Ties amid Rising Regional Tensions :

Israel's role in Middle East : Extension of "Nixon Doctrine"

"Regional Policemen" after 6 Day War

Iran's role as leader of "Shia" Muslim

Creation of "Axis of Resistance" in West Asia

Weakened Iran & "Ghosts of Iraq"

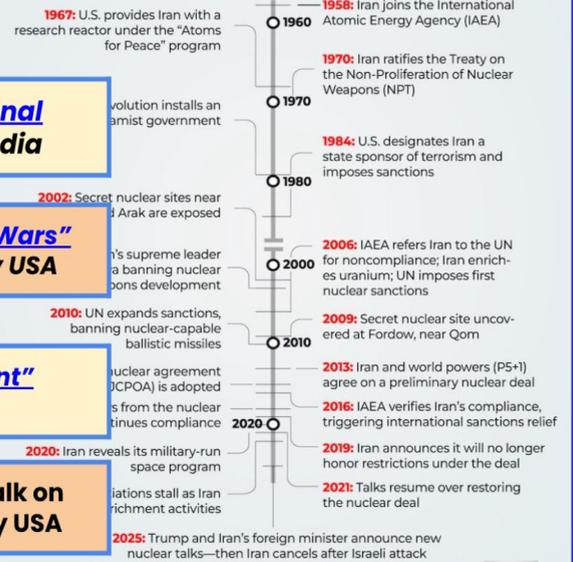
Israel's "Hexagonal Alliance" with India

Navigate "Cloud of Wars" imposed on Iran by USA

Failure of "20 Point Peace Plan"

India's tightrope walk on "Board of Peace" by USA

## Iran's Nuclear Program A Timeline



## Mains Heading 5 : The Way Forward :

Article 2(4) of UN Charter : Prohibit use Of Force against territorial integrity

The Steps To Take ?

Implementation of "Raj Mandala" Theory

Panchsheel Doctrine 1954 : Mutual respect for sovereignty & mutual non - aggression

Follow epithet of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"

Strengthening I2U2 & IMEC along with Strategic control on Chabahar Port

Parshnigraha : Maldives

Ari - Mitra : China

Mitra : Afg

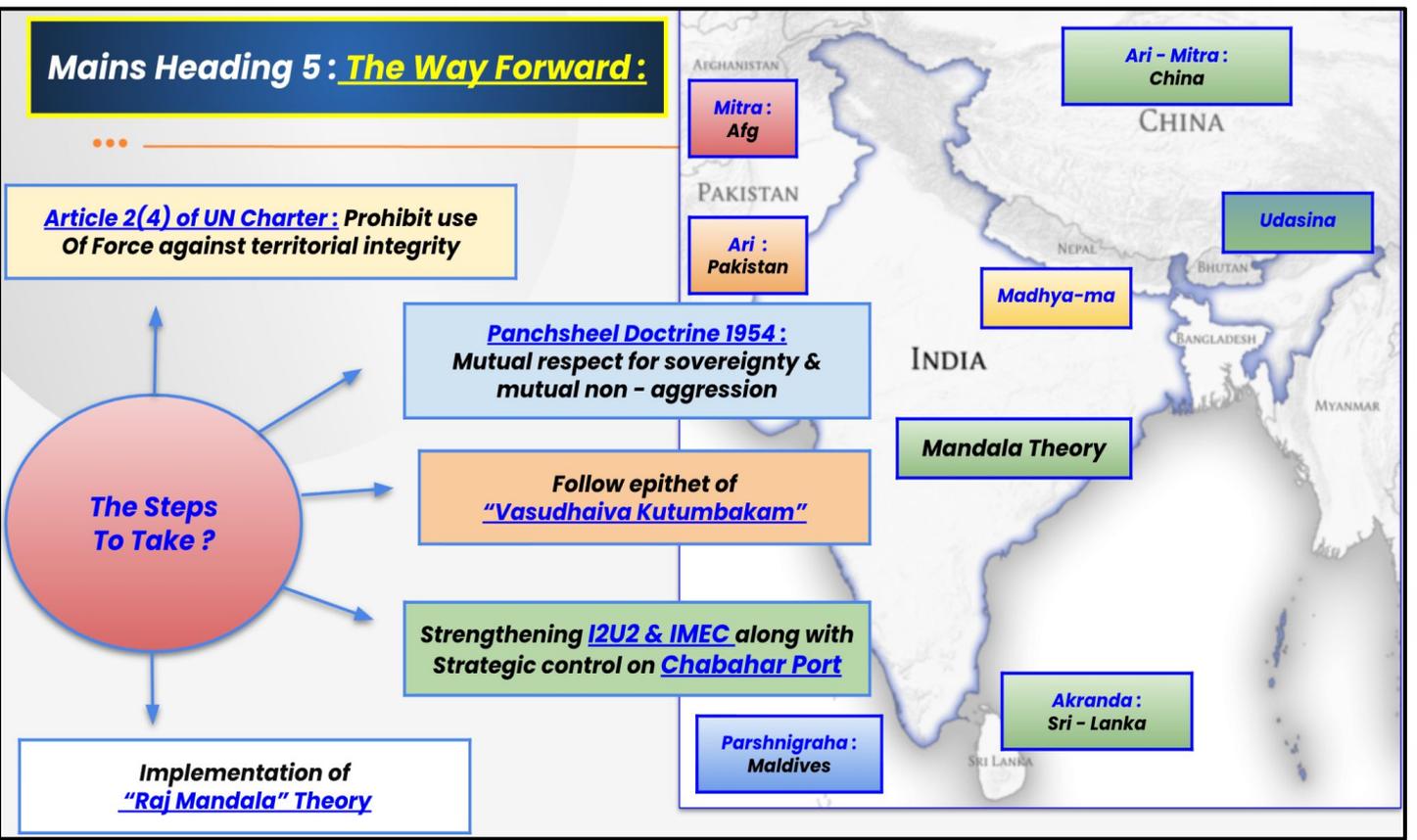
Ari : Pakistan

Udasina

Madhya-ma

Mandala Theory

Akranda : Sri - Lanka



# Realist Diplomacy with Middle East



**CONTEXT:** PM Narendra Modi will be in Israel on Wednesday & Thursday in his first visit to the country in 9 year

## Mains Practise Question

**Practise Question :** Discuss the evolution of India-Israel relations. Analyse the key areas of cooperation and examine the challenges and geopolitical sensitivities involved.  
(10 Marks, 150 words)

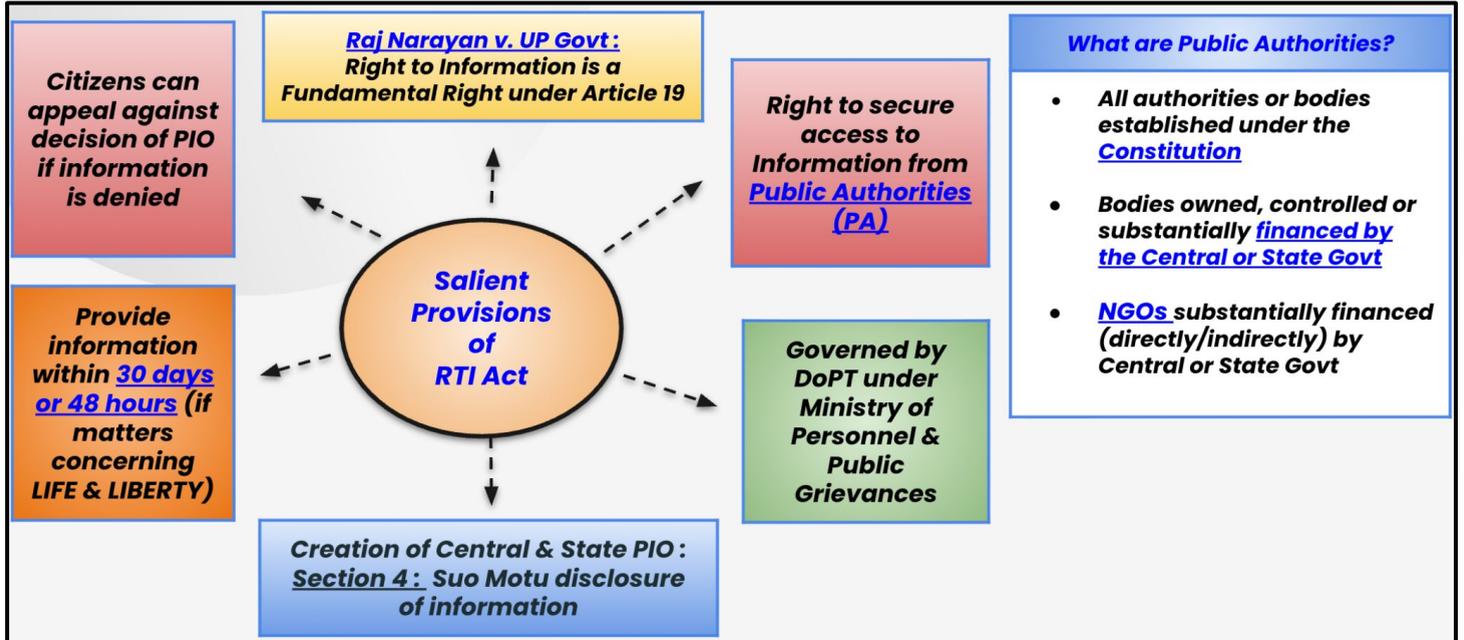


# Data Act 2023 dilute the RTI Act 2005

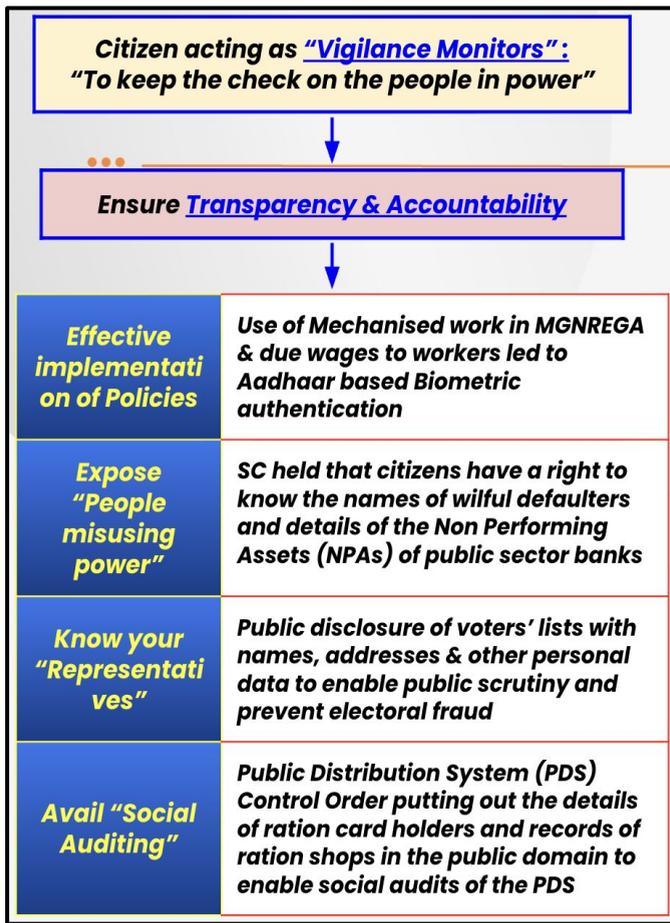


**CONTEXT:** The petition challenging the amendment to the RTI Act 2005 providing blanket exemption for personal information through DPDP Act 2023 has been referred to a Constitution Bench of Supreme Court

## Mains Heading 1: What is **RTI Act 2005**?



## Mains Heading 2: Strengthening **Democracy**:



The RTI Act, 2005, has been instrumental in exposing corruption and administrative irregularities in India over the last decade.

- VYAPAM SCAM – Madhya Pradesh**  
RTI exposed irregularities in recruitment and medical entrance exams. Revealed manipulated candidate lists and evaluation processes.
- MGNREGA FUND DIVERSION** – Multiple States  
RTI revealed fake job cards, ghost beneficiaries, inflated payments.
- DELHI RATION SCAM –** Public Distribution System  
RTI uncovered ration diversions, bogus beneficiaries in the PDS.
- PMC BANK SCAM –** Maharashtra  
RTI exposed regulatory lapses, supervisory failures in PMC Bank.
- ELECTORAL BONDS CONTROVERSY**  
✓ RTI disclosed internal objections, FIRS, and policy discussions.  
✓ Empowered citizens and investigative journalism.

**OVERALL IMPACT OF RTI**

- ✓ Unveiled concrete evidence of corruption
- ✓ Prompted audits, inquiries, FIRS, and policy discussions
- ✓ Empowered citizens and investigative journalism

Despite challenges, **RTI** remains a vital anti-corruption tool in India, operationalising transparency as a democratic right.



# Data Act 2023 dilute the RTI Act 2005



**CONTEXT:** The petition challenging the amendment to the RTI Act 2005 providing blanket exemption for personal information through DPDP Act 2023 has been referred to a Constitution Bench of Supreme Court

## Mains Heading 3: Loopholes that prevails :

## "Parking lot" for Retired Civil Servants :

### From "Sunshine" Law to "Shadowed" Access : Report of "Satark Nagrik Sangathan" :

<b>Inordinate delays due to Red Tapism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2024 : 58% CIC &amp; SIC Officers were Govt Officials &amp; 15% were former judges</li> <li>Less than 2500 cases disposed in a year (2022-23)</li> </ul>
<b>Loopholes in the Law</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30 days time period to disclose "Public Information"</li> <li>NO Time limit on CIC's or SIC's to dispose the cases</li> </ul>
<b>Defunct ICs &amp; Vacancies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 out of 29 ICs were defunct between July 2023 to June 2024</li> <li>9 Commissions were without Chief Info Commissioner</li> </ul>
<b>Digital Divide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessible? For "Rich Few"</li> <li>India Digital Report 2025 : 46% Indians do not own a Smartphone</li> <li>Can not file application Online or pay UPI</li> </ul>

## KEY POINTS OF DIFFERENCE

The bill seeks to empower the central govt on deciding salaries, and other terms of service of information commissioners.

RTI Act, 2005 RTI (Amendment) Bill, 2019

Term	Quantum of salary	Deductions in salary
<b>CHIEF</b> information commissioner (CIC) and information commissioners will have a tenure of five years	<b>CIC</b> pay equivalent to CECs, Central ICs and state CIC to election commissioners and state ICs to chief secretary	<b>IF</b> such officials are receiving pension or other retirement benefits, their salaries will be reduced by an amount equal to the pension
<b>CENTRE</b> will notify the tenure of all information commissioners (ICs) at state and central level	<b>SALARIES</b> and allowances of these officers will be determined by the Central government	<b>THESE</b> provisions have been removed

Source: PRS Legislative Research

## Mains Heading 3 : Loopholes that prevails :

### Exemptions under Section 8 (i) (j) :

Information related to Cabinet, records of CoM or Secretaries

Any "personal information" which has no relationship with "Public activity"

**KS Puttaswamy 2017:**  
Right to Privacy

Medical records, ITR, Service records, family details, Bank account details

**Section 8 (2) :** Personal information can be disclosed if larger public interest justified

## BN Srikrishna Committee : Data Protection Framework

## DIGITAL PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION ACT, 2023

The Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, aims to safeguard citizens' personal data in the digital age.

The infographic details the following key provisions:

- 1. CONSENT-BASED PROCESSING**
  - Consent must be free, specific, informed, and unambiguous.
  - Individuals can withdraw consent at any time.
- 2. RIGHTS OF THE DATA PRINCIPAL**
  - Access, correction & erasure of data
  - Nominate another person in case of incapacity
- 3. OBLIGATIONS OF DATA FIDUCIARIES**
  - Ensure data accuracy & security safeguards
  - Notify data breaches; erase data after purpose fulfilled
- 4. SIGNIFICANT DATA FIDUCIARY CLASSIFICATION**
  - Entities processing sensitive data in large volumes
  - Must appoint DPO & conduct impact assessments.
- 5. SIGNIFICANT DATA FIDUCIARY CLASSIFICATION**
  - Entities processing sensitive data in large volumes
  - Must appoint DPO & conduct impact assessments
- 5. PENALTIES & DATA PROTECTION BOARD**
  - Board adjudicates non-compliance cases
  - Penalties of up to ₹ 250 crore per breach

**OVERALL IMPACT OF THE DPDP ACT, 2023**

- Balances user rights and data utility
- Enhances accountability of data processors
- Ensures robust digital privacy framework



# Data Act 2023 dilute the RTI Act 2005



**CONTEXT:** The petition challenging the amendment to the RTI Act 2005 providing blanket exemption for personal information through DPDP Act 2023 has been referred to a Constitution Bench of Supreme Court

**Mains Heading 4 :  
How DPDP Act 2023 dilutes RTI?**

**Context of News :**

Section 44(3) of the DPDP Act amends section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act. It provides a blanket exemption to any information which relates to personal information without any exceptions. The statement of objects and reasons while introducing the DPDP Bill is silent about the aim of this amendment. It may be inferred that it is to protect the fundamental right to privacy of public officials that cannot be abridged or taken away by parliamentary law. However, this amendment has been challenged in the Supreme Court, through a series of petitions, on the ground that it is *ultra vires* the Constitution. This has now been referred

**Section 44 (3) Of DPDP Act 2023**

- Significantly increase ambit of information that can be "refused"
- Case Study of Journalist writing about Performance of MP
- Central Govt can exempt any Govt or Private sector entity by merely issuing a notification
- NGOs, Research Organisations & Opposition Parties : Comply with stringent obligations of data fiduciary
- No autonomy for Data Protection Board

**Mains Heading 5 :  
The Way Forward :**

**Justice A.P. Shah Report on Privacy**

"The enactment of a data protection law does not require any amendment to the existing RTI law"

**The Way Forward by Hindu :**

- Disclosure of "Personal Assets" & Liabilities of Public Servants
- Harmonious Balance : Info required to probe corruption
- SC to lay down guidelines on what constitute "Personal Info"?
- Repeal amendment of RTI Act 2005 by DPDP Act 2023
- Upheld Section 8 (2) of RTI Act 2005

**IAS Officer's Charter Flight With Family Sparks Row In Bihar Assembly As Government Stays Silent**

The arrival of a Dassault Falcon 2000 at Patna airport has prompted political questions after it emerged that a Bihar-based IAS officer and his family were on board.

**# SAVE ITI**  
**# आर टी आई**

Anjali Bhardwaj, co-convenor of the National Campaign for the Right to Information (NCPRI), addressing the RTI activists during a protest against changes to RTI Act at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi. File | Photo Credit: Shiv Kumar Pushpakar



# Data Act 2023 dilute the RTI Act 2005



**CONTEXT:** The petition challenging the amendment to the RTI Act 2005 providing blanket exemption for personal information through DPDP Act 2023 has been referred to a Constitution Bench of Supreme Court

## Mains Practise Question

**Question :** Discuss the major issues affecting the implementation of the RTI Act, 2005. Suggest reforms to strengthen the transparency regime in India.  
(10 Marks, 150 words)

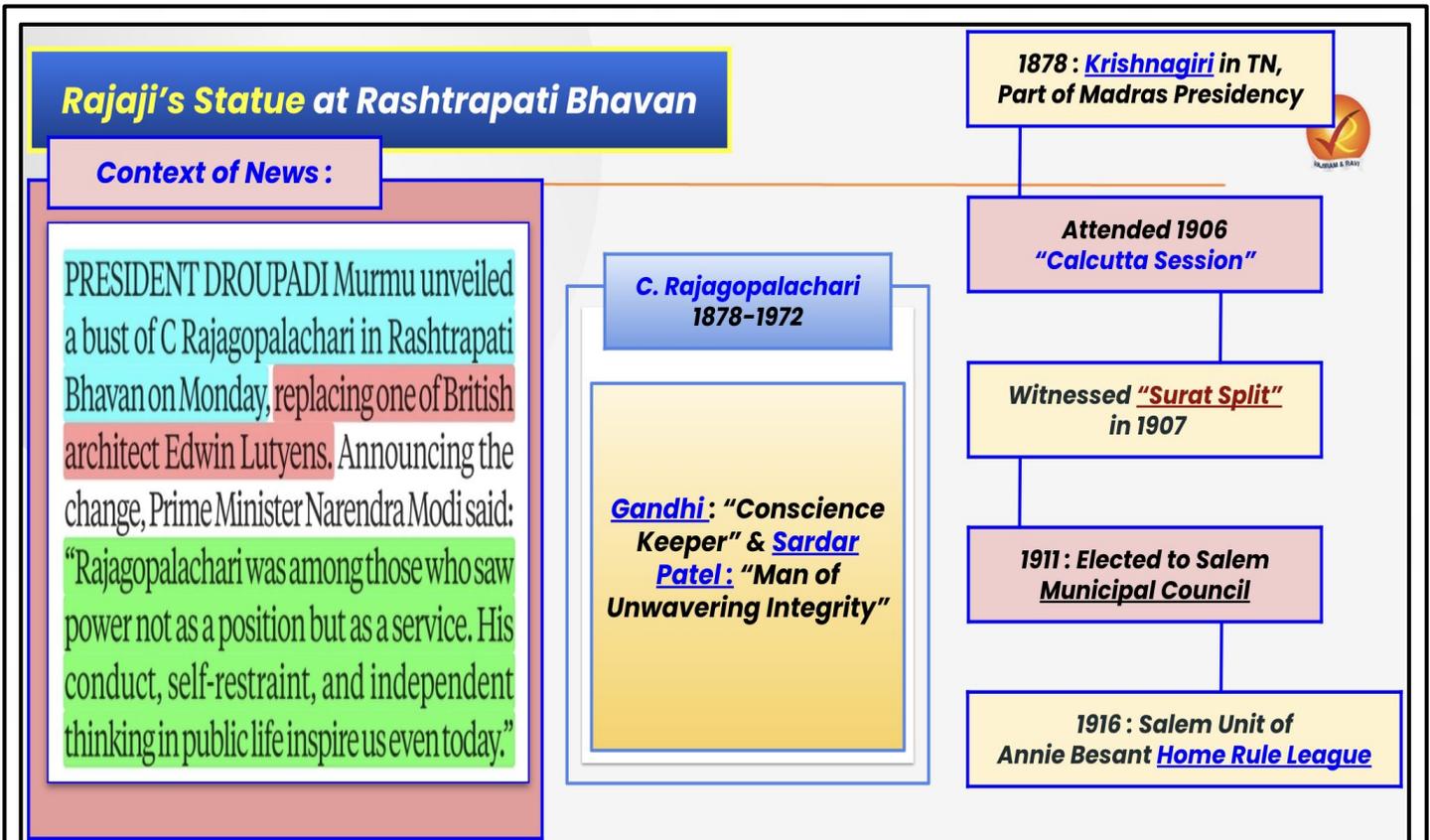


# Rajaji's Statue at Rashtrapati Bhavan



**SYLLABUS : Prelims:** Indian History

**Newspaper :** The Indian Express **Page No :** Explained



# Rajaji's Statue at Rashtrapati Bhavan



**SYLLABUS : Prelims:** Indian History

**Newspaper :** The Indian Express **Page No :** Explained

**Dharasana Salt Satyagraha**  
21st May, 1930



Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the Salt March, defied salt laws during the Salt March in 1930. Gandhi was arrested on 4 May after announcing his intentions of the Dharasana Satyagraha. Due to his arrest and other Congress leaders, the raid was led by Sarojini Naidu and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

Lahore Session 1929

Gandhi's 11 Demands

**Dandi March :**  
12th March - 6th April 1930

**78 Followers :**  
Vithal Liladhar Thakkar

American Journalist Webb Miller

## Rajaji's Statue at Rashtrapati Bhavan

A week after the Dandi March, Gandhi's associate C. Rajagopalachari assumed the responsibility of leading the protest in the Tamil land. He marched about 150 miles with Satyagrahis from Trichinopoly to Vedaranyam. At the dawn of April 30, 1930, Rajaji and a few others picked up a fistful of salt near Agasthiyampalli and were arrested



Peaceful protest: C. Rajagopalachari and other Satyagrahis pass through Tiruvaiyaru towards Vedaranyam in April 1930 to oppose the tax on salt. All along, the Satyagrahis received an overwhelming response from people. | Photo Credit: THE HINDU ARCHIVES

### C. Rajagopalachari Formula (July, 1944)

Congress would accept the idea of Pakistan if Muslim League supported a united demand for British Withdrawal

Response

- ❑ Interim Govt = ML + INC
- ❑ Provinces where Muslims in "Absolute Majority" = Plebiscite
- ❑ "You want a UNION or Separate Constitution"?
- ❑ Who will vote? **Everyone**
- ❑ Separation = **Federal Govt = Defence + Communication**
- ❑ **ONLY** if Britain transfer power



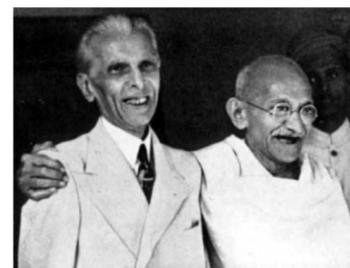
The Sind Observer reports Gandhi's acceptance to the C. R. Formula

Equality of Status With "Holy Hero" of Congress :

**Mahatma Gandhi** accepted the CR Formula as a basis for initiating talks with Jinnah

**Nehru :** Future India could break into several "communal units"

**MA Jinnah :** Only the Muslims of North - West & North - East to vote in the plebiscite & not the entire population



Gandhi and Jinnah in Bombay, September 1944



# Rajaji's Statue at Rashtrapati Bhavan

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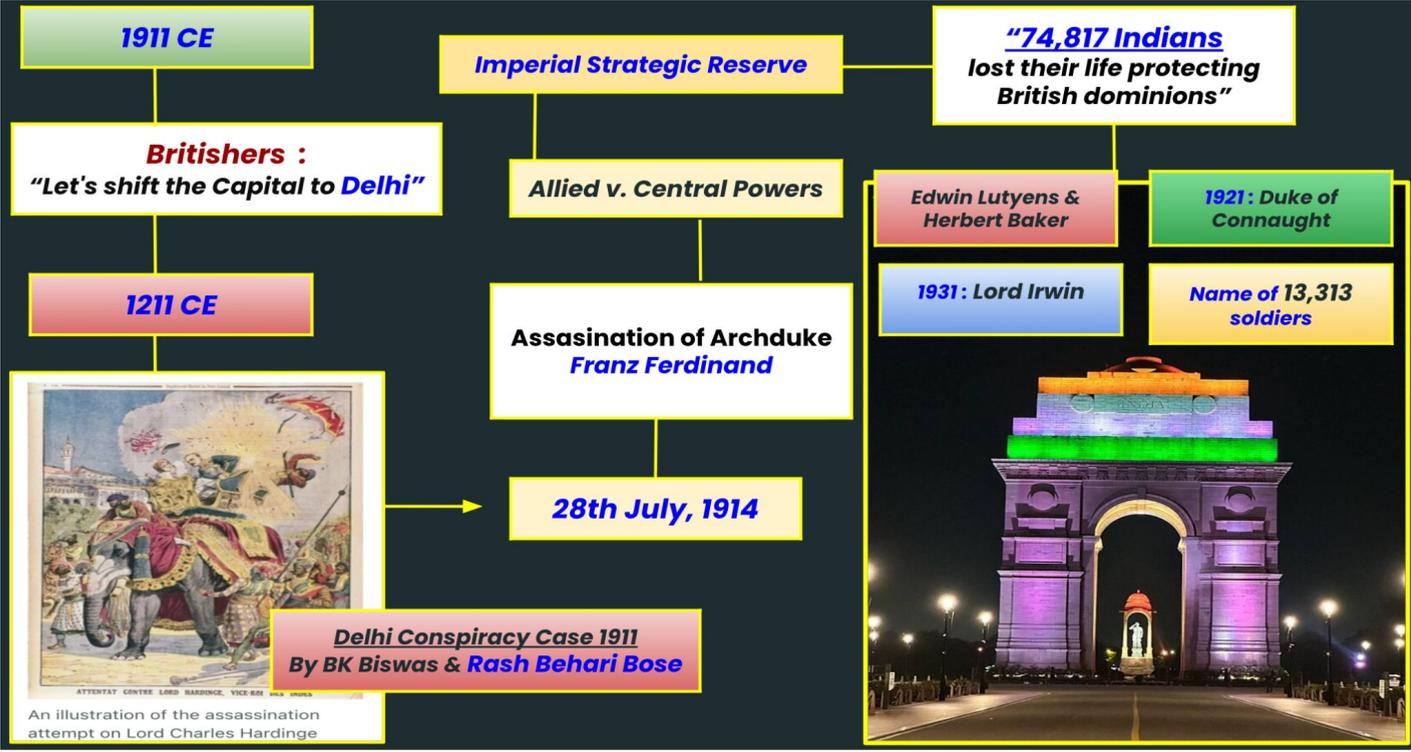
<p>Succeeded Lord Mountbatten as the <b>"First"</b> Indian Governor General of India</p>	<p>Served as <b>CM of Madras</b> State from 1952 - 54</p>	<p><b>CM of Madras (1938) :</b> Introduced Hindi for Class 6,7 &amp; 8</p>
<p>Forum for Free Enterprise (1958) &amp; All India Agriculturalist Federation (1958)</p>	<p><b>Swatantra Party</b> 1959 with KM Munshi</p>	<p>1965 : Strongly opposed the imposition of Hindi as <b>Official Language</b></p>
<p>Rejected Soviet Style planning system &amp; championed <b>"Free Enterprise"</b></p>	<p>JL Nehru : <b>Party representing middle ages of Lords, Castles &amp; Zamindars</b></p>	<p>First Bharat Ratna Award in 1954 : <b>CV Raman &amp; S. Radhakrishnan</b></p>



Premier Rajagopalachari at a rally in Ootacamund, 1939.



During a 1948 tour of southern India, women in Mysore removing their gold necklaces and giving them to Rajagopalachari as a sign of honour.



# Kerala to become "Keralam"



**SYLLABUS : Prelims:** Indian Polity & Governance

**Newspaper :** The Indian Express **Page No : 06**

## Kerala to become "Keralam"

### Context of News :

THE UNION Cabinet on Tuesday approved the proposal to change the name of Kerala to Keralam.

Briefing reporters after the Cabinet meeting, Information & Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that the Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2026, will now be sent to the state Assembly for its approval, following which the Centre will take the next steps.

**Article 3 : Parliament may by Law alter the Name of any State**

Article 3

- Formation of a NEW State
- Change in areas of any state
- Change in boundaries or "Names" of any state

Article 4

Laws made under Article 3 may include supplemental, incidental & consequential provisions & shall **NOT** be considered as "Constitutional Amendment" under Article 368

Proposal to change name of a State can be initiated by:  
Union or State Govt  
(Through a Resolution)

Article 3 : NO Bill can be introduced in Parliament without prior recommendation of President

President acts on the advice of the Council of Ministers

"Ordinary Bill" introduced in either Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha

Opinion of the State : Not Binding : Thus, Parliament's supremacy in territorial matters

President refers the bill to the Concerned State Legislature (Express views within specified period)

Bill must be passed by "Simple" majority

President gives "Assent" to Bill under Article 111 of the Constitution

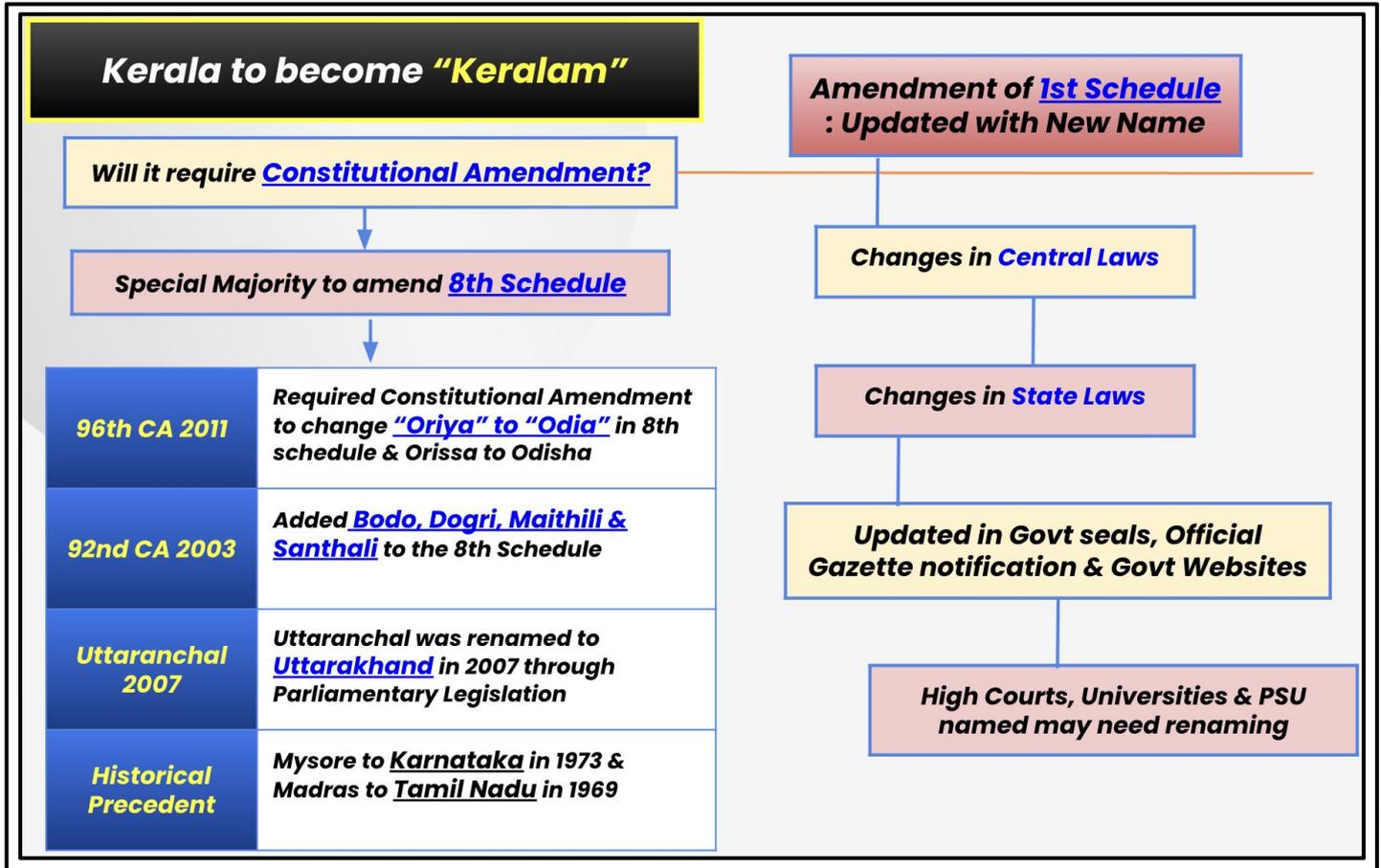


# Kerala to become "Keralam"



**SYLLABUS : Prelims:** Indian Polity & Governance

**Newspaper :** The Indian Express **Page No : 06**



# Anticipatory Bail in POCSO Case



**SYLLABUS : Prelims : Indian Polity & Governance**

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

## Anticipatory Bail in POCSO Case

### Context of News :

Swami Avimukteshwara-nand Saraswati on Tues-day moved the Allahabad High Court for anticipatory bail after being booked by the Uttar Pradesh Police for alleged sexual harassment of two minors.

The FIR against the religious leader and one of his aides, Mukundanand Giri, was registered on the directions of a special court in Prayagraj.

### Anticipatory Bail : Section 482 of BNSS

"Pre - Arrest" legal protection

Applicable ONLY in Non - Bailable Offence

Granted by Session Court or High Court

Court considers nature & gravity of accusation

**Gurbaksh Singh v. State of Punjab** : "Should be granted cautiously & NO rigid time limit required"

### "Hands off our children" :

- **Section 2(d)** : "Child" as any person below 18 years of age
- **Section 3** : Defines penetrative sexual assault
- **Section 7** : Defines sexual assault
- **Section 19** : Reporting of the offence
- **Section 21** : Punishment for failure to report

### "Punishing the Guilty" :

- **Section 24** : Child's statement recorded at residence or "place of choice"
- **Section 26** : Medical examination in presence of parent or trusted person
- **Section 33** : Establishment of Special Courts
- **Section 29** : Exception to "Presumption of Innocence"
- **POCSO Amendment Act 2019** : "Death Penalty"

## Key factors

### Real-life considerations for court while deciding bail

**Age of the minor victim:** The younger the victim, the more heinous the offence alleged

**Age of the accused:** The older the accused, the more heinous the offence alleged

**Comparative age of victim and accused:** The more their age difference, the more the element of perversion in the offence alleged



**Familial relationship:** The closer such relationship, the more odious the offence alleged

### WHAT DOES SECTION 29 OF THE POCSO ACT SAY

When a person is prosecuted for committing an offence of sexual assault against a minor, the special court trying the case "shall presume" the accused to be guilty

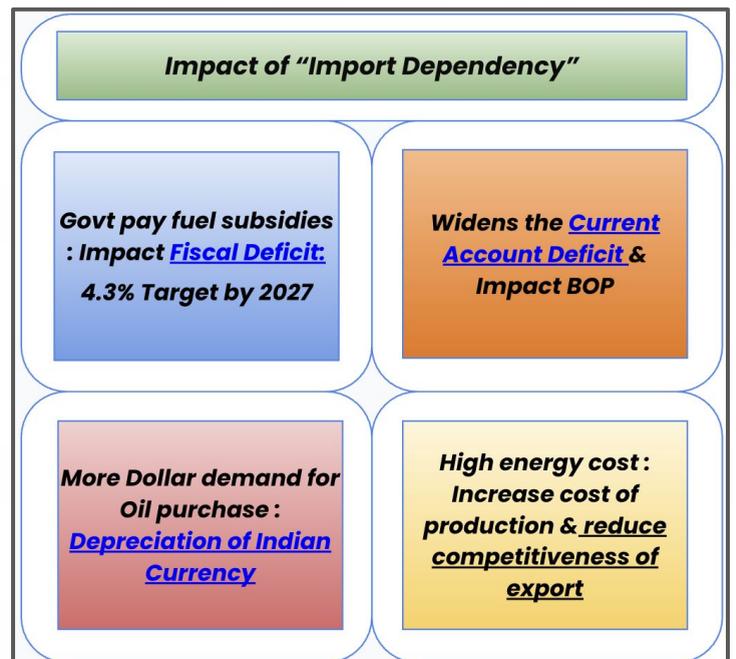
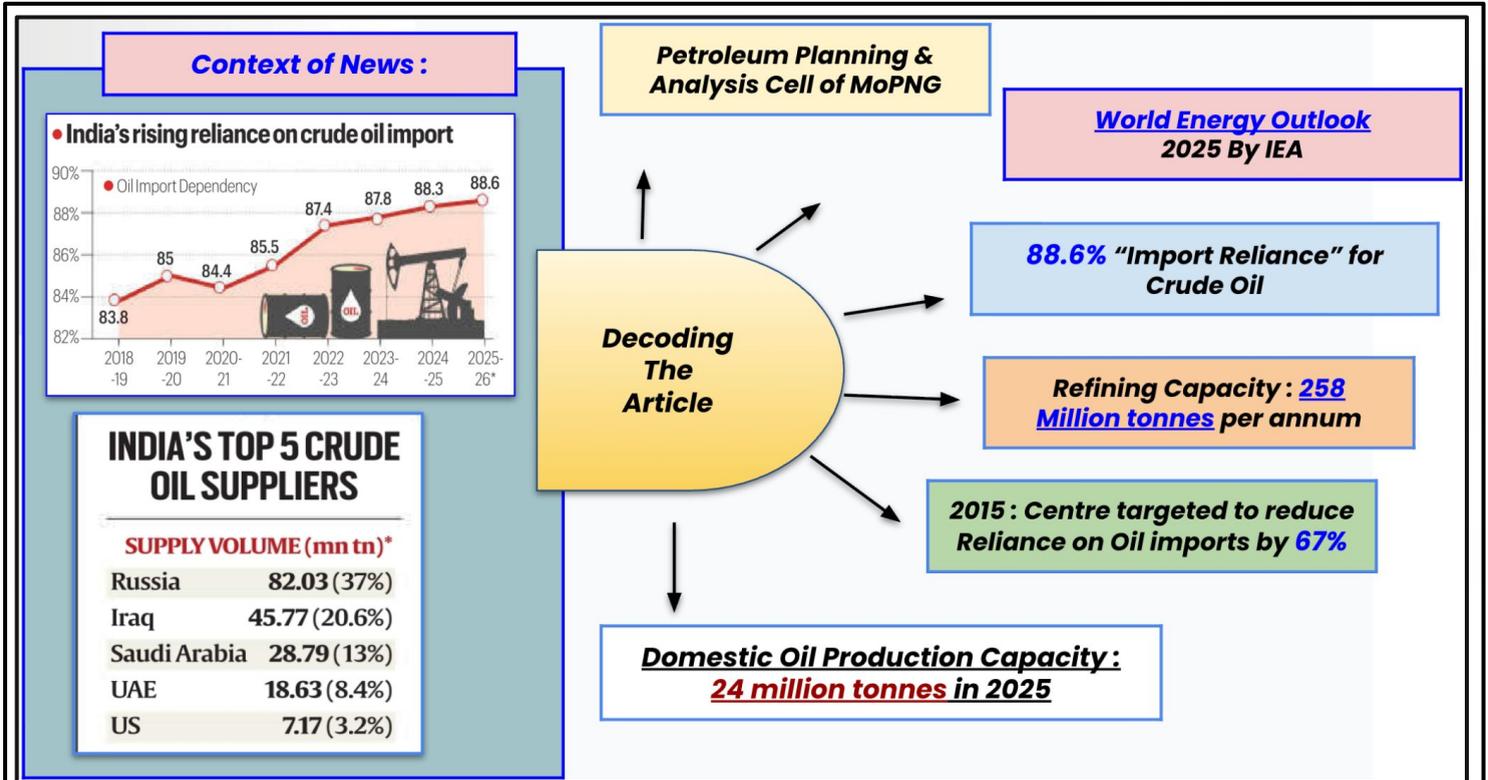


# India's Dependence on Imported Oil



**SYLLABUS : Prelims:** Economic & Social Development

**Newspaper :** The Indian Express **Page No :** 13



# Centre to roll out HPV Vaccination Drive

**SYLLABUS : Prelims : General Science**  
**Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 01**

## Centre to roll out HPV Vaccination Drive

### Context of News :

The Union Health Ministry is set to launch a nation-wide Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination programme targeting girls aged 14.

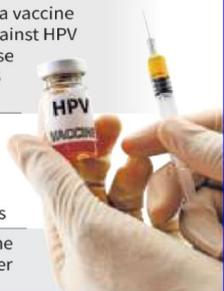
The vaccination will be voluntary and free of cost, ensuring equitable access across socio-economic groups.

India will use Gardasil, a quadrivalent HPV vaccine, for protection from HPV types 16 and 18, which cause cervical cancer, and types 6 and 11.

### Safety shot

The Centre's nation-wide HPV vaccination programme targeting girls aged 14 will begin soon

- A single-shot of Gardasil, a vaccine that provides protection against HPV types 16 and 18, which cause cervical cancer, and types 6 and 11 will be used
- The vaccination will be voluntary and free of cost. It will be administered exclusively at designated government health facilities
- Cervical cancer remains the second most common cancer among women in India



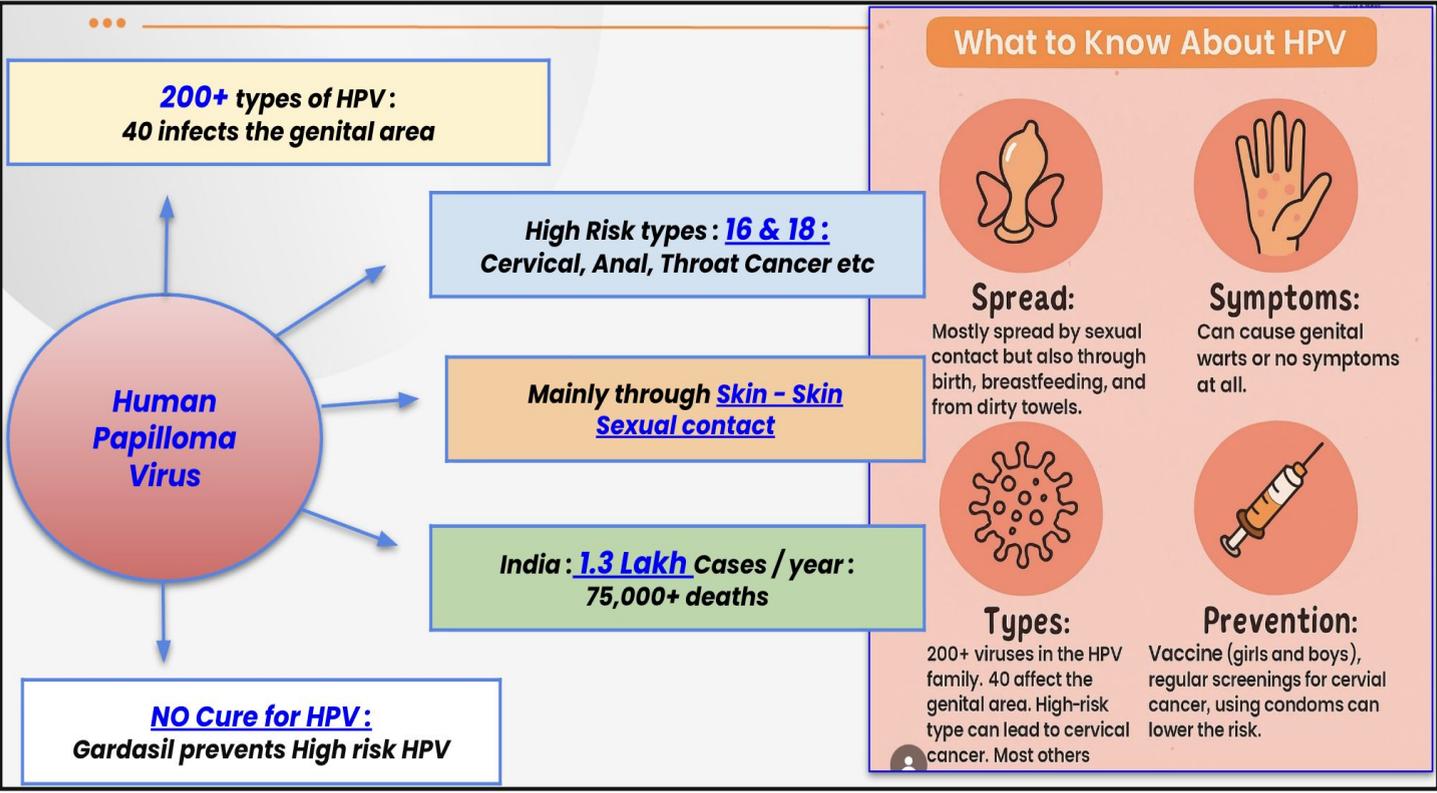
Most common cancer among Women in India : **Breast Cancer : 13-14% of all cases**

### Lancet Report 2025 : Rate of Cancer increasing in India

Rate of Cancer Occurrence : **107 per 1,00,000 people**

NHRC : Impact **30.5 million people by 2050**

Use of tobacco, alcohol, unhealthy diet & diabetes : **70% cancer cases**



**Q1. Consider the following statements regarding Chakravarti Rajagopalachari:**

1. He founded the Swatantra Party in 1959.
2. He succeeded Lord Mountbatten as the first Indian Governor-General of India.
3. He was the first recipient of the Bharat Ratna.

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

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

**Answer: c**

**Q2. Consider the following statements regarding Article 3 of the Constitution of India:**

1. A law made under Article 3 amounts to a Constitutional Amendment under Article 368.
2. The President is required to refer the Bill to the concerned State Legislature for expressing its views within a specified period.
3. The opinion expressed by the State Legislature on such a Bill is binding on Parliament.

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

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

**Answer: b**

**Q3. Consider the following statements regarding the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO Act):**

1. The Act defines a "child" as any person below 18 years of age.
2. Under Section 29 of the Act, when a person is prosecuted for committing sexual assault against a minor, the Special Court shall presume the accused to be guilty.

**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: c**

**Q4. Consider the following statements regarding India's crude oil import dependence:**

1. Saudi Arabia is the largest supplier of crude oil to India.
2. A higher dependence on crude oil imports leads to an appreciation of the Indian rupee.
3. Greater crude oil import dependence can trigger cost-push inflation in the domestic economy.

**Which of the statements given above is/are NOT correct?**

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

**Answer: a**

**Q5. Consider the following statements regarding Human Papillomavirus:**

1. Gardasil 4 protects against high-risk HPV types 16 and 18, responsible for over 80% of cervical cancer cases in India.
2. There is no cure for HPV infection.

**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: c**





# **VAJIRAM & RAVI**

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