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The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

24th February 2026



PRAHAAR: 1st Anti-Terror Policy

CONTEXT: MHA released "**PRAHAAR**", India's first-ever comprehensive National Counter Terrorism Policy and Strategy.

Philosophy Behind PRAHAAR 🇮🇳:

Document Name: PRAHAAR (National Counter Terrorism Policy)

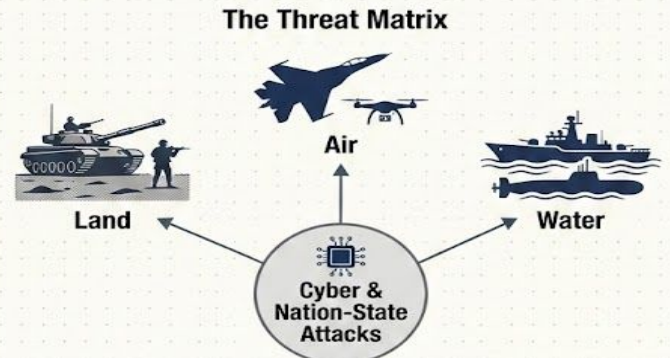
Releasing Authority Ministry of Home Affairs

Core Objective Protecting **critical sectors** & countering **multi-domain terror**.

The counter-terrorism strategy of India, 'PRAHAAR', flows from these ideals and is predicated on the following:

- Prevention of terror attacks to protect Indian citizens and interests;
- Responses, which are swift and proportionate to the threat posed;
- Aggregating internal capacities for achieving synergy in a whole-of-government approach;
- Human rights and 'Rule of Law' based processes for mitigation of threats;
- Attenuating the conditions enabling terrorism, including radicalization;
- Aligning and shaping the international efforts to counter terrorism;
- Recovery and resilience through a whole-of-society approach.

Core Principle: Terrorism has no religion, ethnicity, or nationality.



Protected Sectors

- ✓ Power (Grid, Plants, Distribution) ⚡
- ✓ Indian Railways (Networks, Infrastructure) 🚂
- ✓ Aviation (Airports, Airlines) ✈️
- ✓ Ports (Major & Minor Ports, Shipping) 🚢
- ✓ Defence (Military Installations, Border Security) 🛡️
- ✓ Space (ISRO, Satellites, Launch Centers) 🛰️
- ✓ Atomic Energy (Nuclear Plants, Research) ⚛️



UPSC 2021 M> Analyse the complexity and intensity of terrorism, its causes, linkages and obnoxious nexus.

PRAHAAR identifies **multiple evolving dimensions of terrorism** :

① Cross-Border Sponsored Terrorism

India has long faced:

- Pakistan-backed terror networks
- Handlers across border
- Proxy warfare model

Named Threats:

- **Jihadi** terror outfits
- Frontal organisations
- **Sleeper cells**

② Global Terror Groups

India identified:

- **Al-Qaeda**
- **Islamic State** of Iraq and Syria



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These groups:

- Incite violence online
- Radicalise youth digitally
- Operate sleeper modules

3 Cyber Terrorism & State Actors

New dimension added:

Criminal hackers and nation-states targeting India via cyber-attacks

Targeted Sectors:

Power grids, Railways, Aviation, Ports, Defence, Space, Atomic energy

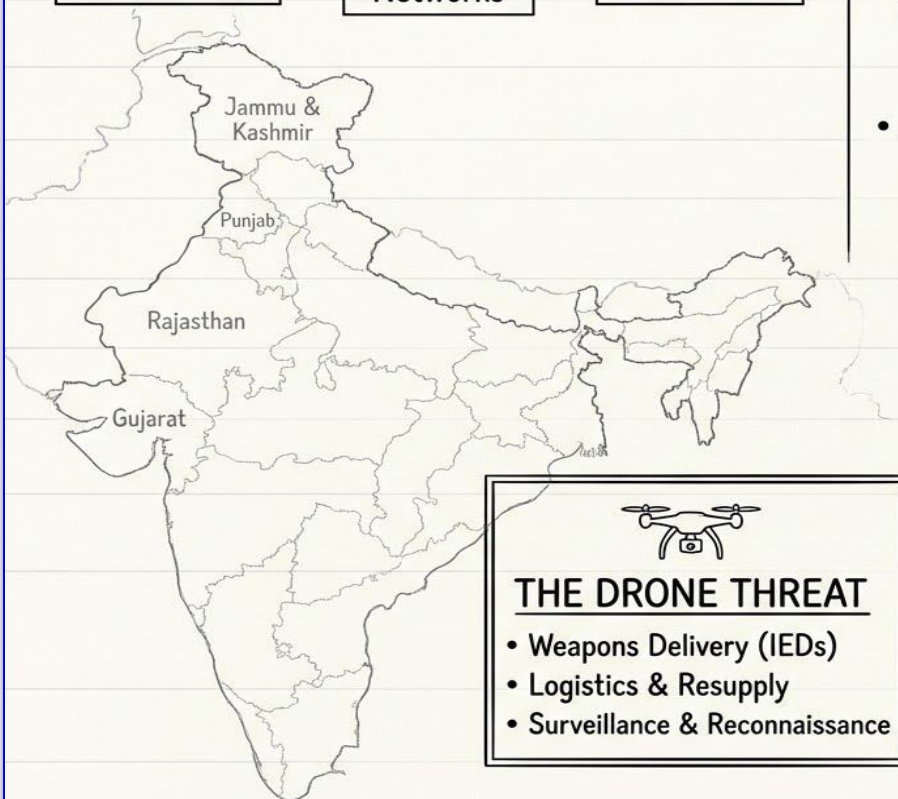
📌 Shift toward **cyber-geopolitics & digital warfare**.

The Evolving Tactics of Terror

Cross-Border
Handlers

Organised
Crime
Networks

Logistics &
Recruitment



TECH ARSENAL

- Dark Web, Crypto, & Encrypted Apps



- Social Media Radicalisation
 - Propaganda Dissemination
 - Targeted Recruitment
 - Remote Operations



C – Chemical

(Toxic agents, nerve gases)

B – Biological

(Pathogens, toxins, diseases)

R – Radiological

('Dirty bombs', radioactive materials)

N – Nuclear

(Fissile materials, improvised devices)

E – Explosive

(IEDs, conventional explosives)

D – Digital

(Cyberattacks, infrastructure disruption, data theft)



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Analyse the **complexity** and **intensity of terrorism**, its causes, linkages and obnoxious nexus. (UPSC 2021 M)

Emerging Technologies Used by Terror Groups

- ◆ Drones
- ◆ Encryption & Dark Web
- ◆ Robotics & AI misuse

CBRNED Threat

UPSC 2021 M Discuss the types of organised crimes. Describe the linkages between terrorists and organised crime that exist at the national and transnational levels.

Terrorism + Organised Crime Nexus

Terror groups increasingly:

- Use **criminal networks**
- Use **smuggling routes**
- Use **narcotics** funding
- Recruit via **gang networks**

Transnational Terrorism

Key message:

National actions alone insufficient.

Need:

- Regional cooperation
- International coordination
- Intelligence sharing
- Financial tracking

Radicalisation & Youth Recruitment

How Terror Groups Recruit:

- Social media
- Gaming platforms
- Encrypted apps
- Religious distortion
- Ideological propaganda

THE 'D-COMPANY' IS A CRIME SYNDICATE LED BY **DAWOOD IBRAHIM** - AN INDIAN NATIONAL WHO TURNED TO RADICAL ISLAMISM IN THE 1990'S AND USED **RESOURCES** AND **KNOW-HOW** OF THE SYNDICATE FOR HIS **TERRORIST OPERATIONS** IN COLLABORATION WITH TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS LIKE AL QAEDA AND THE TALIBAN



Terrorism Impacts

RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE	RANK CHANGE
1	Burkina Faso	8.581	↔
2	Pakistan	8.374	↑ 2
3	Syria	8.006	↑ 2
4	Mali	7.907	↓ 1
5	Niger	7.776	↑ 5
6	Nigeria	7.658	↑ 2
7	Somalia	7.614	↔
8	Israel	7.463	↓ 6
9	Afghanistan	7.262	↓ 3
10	Cameroon	6.944	↑ 2
11	Myanmar	6.929	↓ 2
12	Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.768	↑ 1
13	Iraq	6.582	↓ 2
14	India	6.411	↔
15	Colombia	6.381	↑ 1
16	Russia	6.267	↑ 21
17	Mozambique	6.251	↓ 2
18	Iran	6.056	↑ 7
19	Kenya	5.366	↓ 1
20	Philippines	5.166	↓ 1
21	Chile	5.162	↓ 4
22	Yemen	5.08	↑ 1
23	Chad	5.032	↓ 2
24	Togo	5.004	↑ 2
25	Palestine	4.93	↓ 4
26	Benin	4.802	↓ 2
27	Germany	4.748	↑ 13

Human Lives Cost

Society, Anxiety, Vulnerability

International Relations

Deviation of Resources

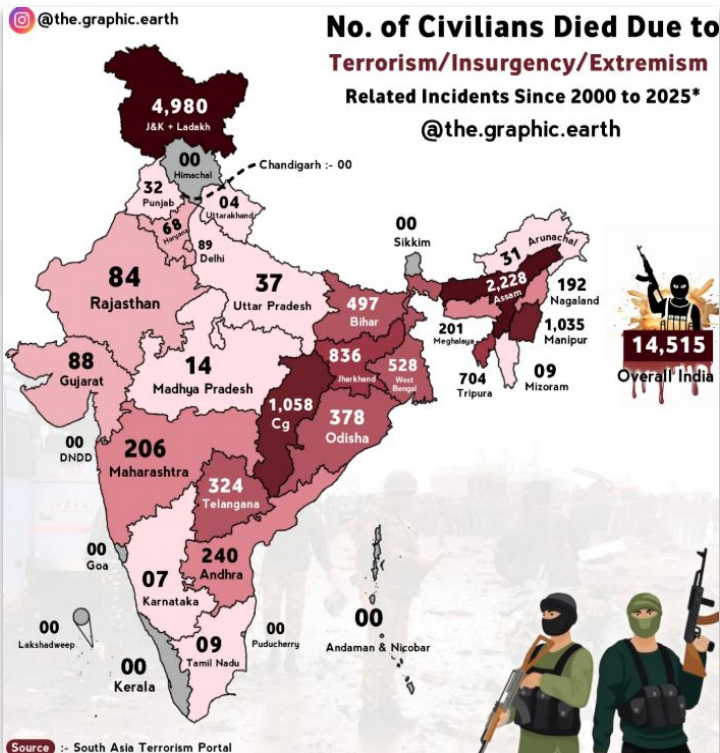
Impact on the Economy

Kargil Conflict Impact (2002): The conflict-related costs were estimated at approximately **₹14.6 billion per day** for India.

Informal Terror Financing (J&K): The visible, ISI-sponsored "**Gross Terror Product**" (GTP) in Kashmir was estimated at roughly **₹3.5 billion per year**.

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India's Multi-Dimensional Strategy to Curb Terrorism :

Constitutional Framework :

- **7th Schedule:** 'Police', 'Public Order'
- **Centre's Role**
 - Capacity building
 - Central deployments

Hard Infrastructure :

- **Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System**
- **Unmanned Aerial Vehicles**
- **Satellite surveillance**
- **Bharatmala**
- **Border Road Organization**
- **Vibrant Villages**
- **Joint patrolling**

Following the April 22, 2025, Pahalgam terror incident, the **National Investigation Agency (NIA)** conducted meetings with anti-terror units of all States and apprised them of the measures aimed at preventing and pre-empting such attacks.

Sealing the border with Pakistan using smart technology-aided fence will be in place by December next year.

KIREN RIJU Minister of state for home affairs

Underlining Role of Technology

Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS) to be deployed on Pakistan border

CIBMS integrates manpower, sensors and command & control to facilitate quick responses

CIBMS will counter infiltration and cross-border terror attacks by using technology that can detect infiltration via land, underwater, air and tunnels

ITBP's operational requirements include better road network on LAC

India's Multi- Dimensional Strategy to Curb Terrorism :

Legal Regime	UAPA Amendments (2019) NIA Act Amendments (2019)
24/7 intel sharing	Central Multi Agency Centre and State-level SMACs . Strengthening State Intelligence Bureaus
Preventive	Operations by CAPFs, Army, and State Police

Military Spending: The Indian government has significantly increased defence production to combat threats, with annual defense production rising from ~₹40,000 crore in 2014 to over **₹1.30 lakh crore** in 2024-25.



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Evolution of India's Military Doctrine

Shifted from Strategic Restraint $\Rightarrow$ Punitive Deterrence (Cross-border operations to neutralize threats).

2016: The Shift (Surgical Strikes)

Special Forces crossed LoC. 7 terror launch pads destroyed.



2019: Aerial Preemption (Balakot)

IAF airstrikes on JeM camps. New threshold for air power.



2025: Operation SINDOOR

Post-Pahalgam response. Precise drone/munition strikes in PoK. Commanders neutralized.



~~Strategic Restraint~~



Punitive Deterrence

2016

Physical Breach



Indian Special Forces (Surgical Strikes)

2019

Aerial Dominance



IAF deep strikes (Balakot)

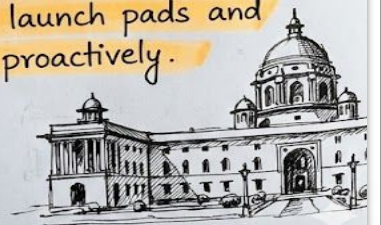
2025

Unmanned Precision



Drone & munition strikes (Op SINDOOR)

*Objective: Destroy launch pads and command centers proactively.



India's Multi-Dimensional Strategy to Curb Terrorism

Financing of Terrorism

- Financial Action Task Force
- MHA: CFT Cell
- NIA: Terror Funding and Fake Currency Cell
- FICN Coordination Centre
- UN Security Council Resolutions
 - UNSCRs 1267, 1373
 - Section 51(A) of UAPA
- Operation Dhvast (2023-24)

Advanced Tech & Global Diplomacy

A. Technological Upgrades:

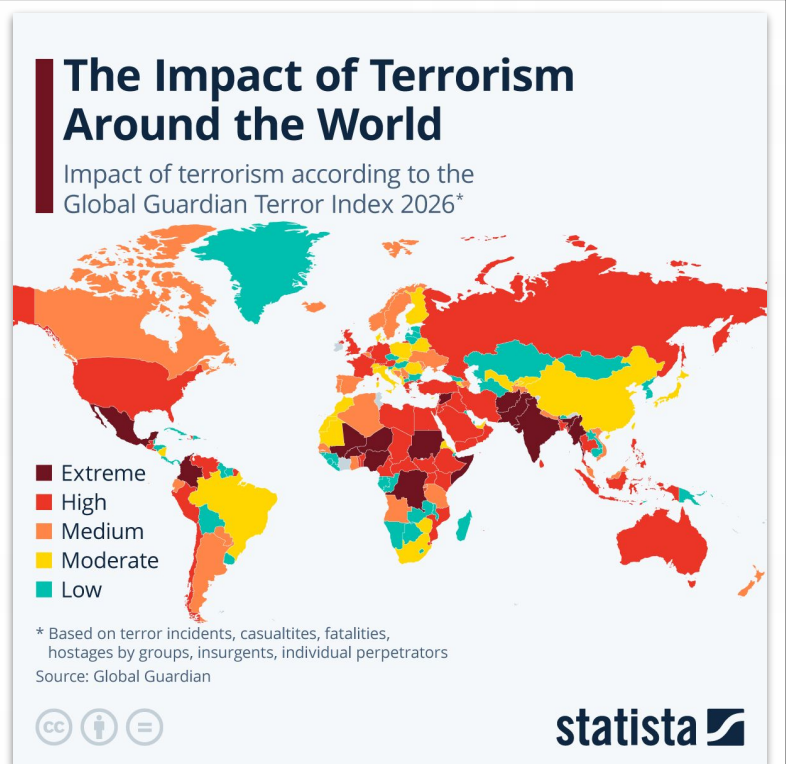
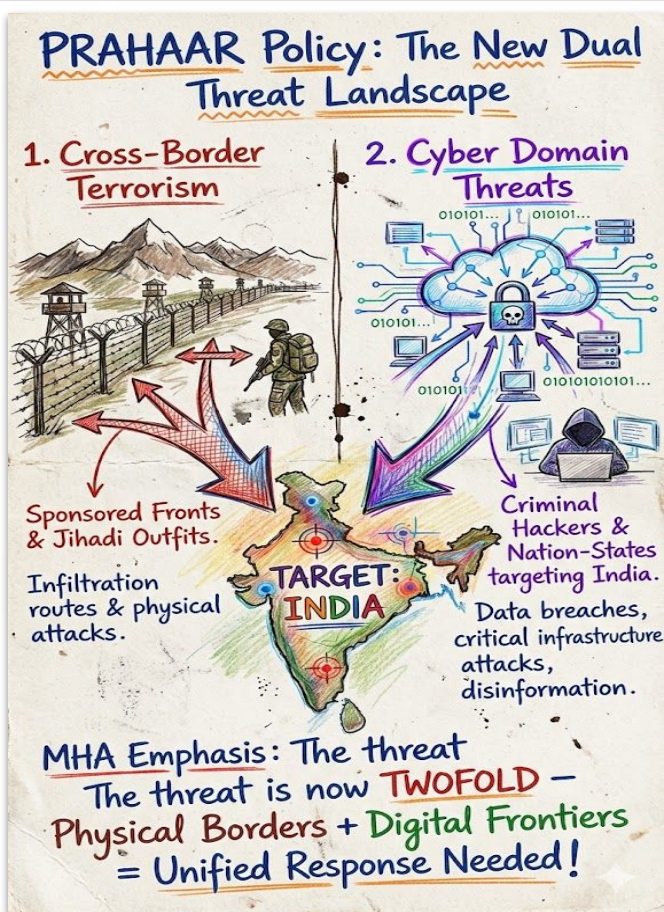
- AI, Big Data Analytics, and Facial Recognition
- National Intelligence Grid

B. International Cooperation:

- UN Push (CCIT)
- Joint Working Groups on Counter-Terrorism with 26 countries (USA, Russia, China, UK, Israel).
- 5 multi-lateral forums: ASEAN, BIMSTEC, BRICS, EU, and QUAD-CTWG.
- 'No Money For Terror' (4th in Munich 2025)

PRAHAAR: 1st Anti-Terror Policy

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Mains Practise Question

In light of the various initiatives taken by the Government of India to dismantle the terror ecosystem, analyse the effectiveness of the 'Whole of Government' approach. (15 Marks, 250 words)



CONTEXT: A deep dive article in *The Hindu* exploring the contours of ECI independence.

Election Commission of India

324. Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission

- (1) The superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of the electoral rolls for, and the conduct of, all elections to Parliament and to the Legislature of every State and of elections to the offices of President and Vice-President held under this Constitution shall be vested in a Commission (referred to in this Constitution as the Election Commission).
- (2) The Election Commission shall consist of the Chief Election Commissioner and such number of other Election Commissioners, if any, as the President may from time to time fix and the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners shall, subject to the provisions of any law made in that behalf by Parliament, be made by the President.

Why free & fair elections matter?

Basic Structure Doctrine

Article 326 = Right to Vote :

Indira Gandhi v Raj Narain (1975)

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



1. Recent SIR controversy:

Main statutes

Representation of the People Act, 1950 & 1951

- Electoral rolls
- Registration
- Qualifications
- conduct of elections

S.I.R VOTER DELETION REGION WISE

AVG REDUCTION		DROP IN VOTERS	
STATE AVG			
SEEMANCHAL	-6.12%		-19,576
BHOJPUR	-5.56%		-17,927
ANGA PRADESH	-5.06%		-16,674
MITHILANCHAL	-4.94%		-16,018
TIRHUT	-4.62%		-14,572
MAGADH	-3.73%		-12,383

#ResultsWithNDTV

Source: ECI, M76 ANALYTICS

Types of roll revision

- Continuous updation
- Summary Revision
- Special Intensive Revision

On the independence of the EC



CONTEXT: A deep dive article in *The Hindu* exploring the **contours of ECI independence**.

Procedural safeguards that must be followed

Claims & objections

Hearings / field verification

Opportunity of appeal / review

instructions, reasons for deletion

2. Appointment of CEC – controversy:

◆ 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.



On the independence of the EC



CONTEXT: A deep dive article in *The Hindu* exploring the contours of ECI independence.

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.

⚖️ 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

CEC	Impeachment like SC Judge (Parliament approval).
ECs	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.

Operational Controversies

MCC Enforcement (2024)

- **Hate speech** or **divisive rhetoric** by "Star Campaigners"
- 'swift censure of opposition leaders.'

The "Contempt" Vacuum

Unlike the Supreme Court or High Courts, the ECI cannot punish anyone for contempt of its authority

On the independence of the EC

CONTEXT: A deep dive article in *The Hindu* exploring the **contours of ECI independence**.

The Gap in Autonomy		Status
Independent Staff	Goswami Committee (1990)	✗ Ignored
Deregistration Power	ECI (Multiple Proposals)	✗ Rejected
Cooling-Off Period	Law Commission (255th)	✗ Ignored

EVM/VVPAT Verification	
ECI's persistent refusal to allow a 100% count of VVPAT slips/ independent audit of EVMs Source code = "State Secret"	

Reforms & safeguards :	
• Strengthening EC autonomy : CJI in selection com, non-extendable tenure, EC budget from CFI • Electoral roll reforms : SOPs, geo-tagged verification, Portal, Blockchain • Legal & procedural : Amend RPA rules for transparent deletion process. • Technology & privacy balance : AI + Human in loop, avoid over-dependence on Aadhaar	



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Chief Electoral Officer, Punjab

@TheCEOPunjab www.ceopunjab.gov.in



On the independence of the EC

CONTEXT: A deep dive article in *The Hindu* exploring the contours of ECI independence.

Mains Practise Question

Discuss the challenges to free and fair elections in India in light of recent controversies over electoral rolls and EC independence. What reforms would you recommend?

(15 Marks, 250 words)

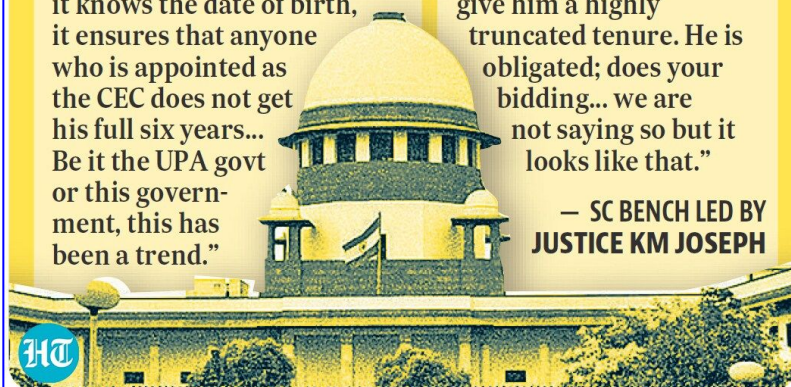
'Alarming trend': Top court

The 'silence of the Constitution' on how to pick election commissioners has been exploited, the apex court said

"After TN Seshan (who was CEC between 1990 and 1996), the slide began when no person has been given a full term. What the government has been doing is that because it knows the date of birth, it ensures that anyone who is appointed as the CEC does not get his full six years... Be it the UPA govt or this government, this has been a trend."

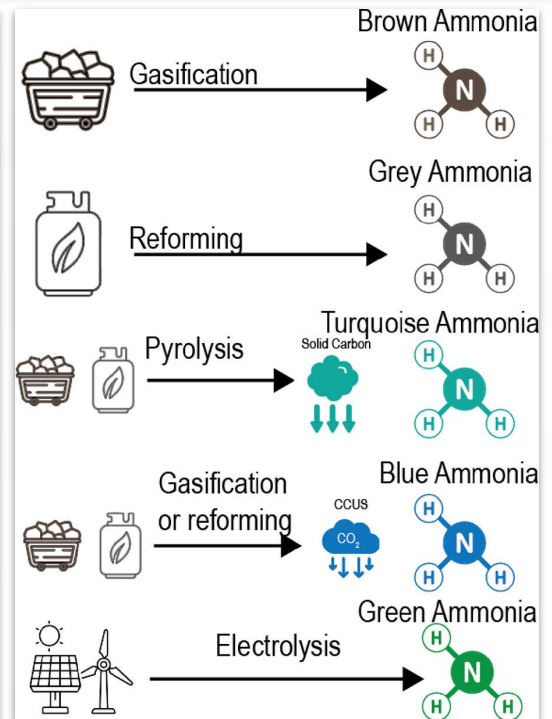
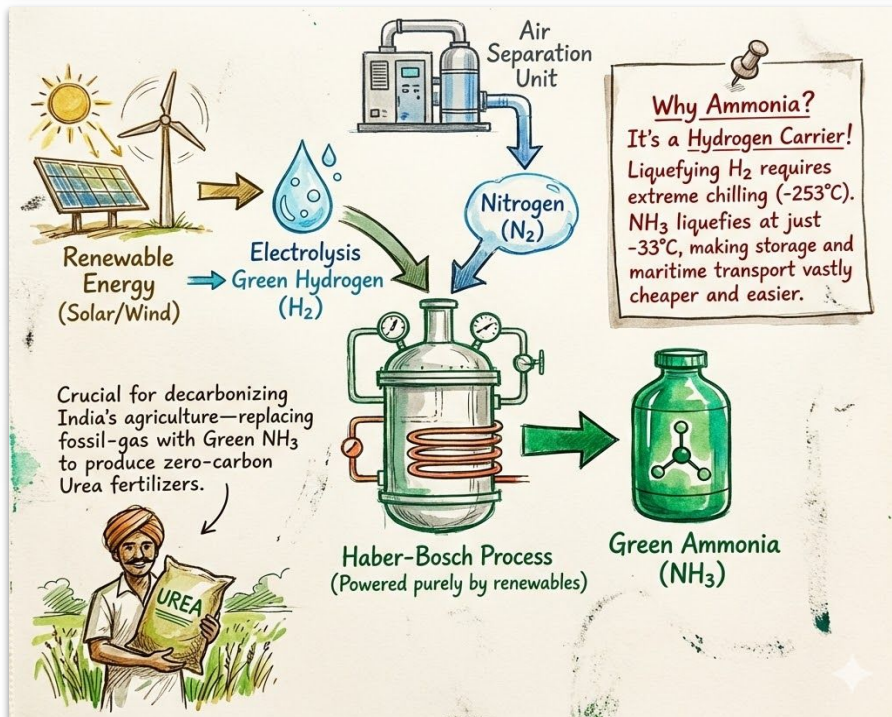
"This is how the silences of the Constitution can be exploited. There is no law, no check. Everyone has used it to their interest... Pick up someone and give him a highly truncated tenure. He is obligated; does your bidding... we are not saying so but it looks like that."

— SC BENCH LED BY
JUSTICE KM JOSEPH



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Concepts of Green Ammonia
Newspaper: *The Hindu* Page Number: 8

Decoding Green Ammonia



UPSC PYQ (P) 2023

Consider the following heavy industries:

1. Fertilizer plants
2. Oil refineries
3. Steel plants

Green hydrogen is expected to play a significant role in decarbonizing how many of the above industries?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

The Green Fuel Spectrum: A Comparison

Fuel Type	Storage Difficulty	Volumetric Energy Density	Safety/ Toxicity
 Green Hydrogen (H_2)	Very High ($-253^\circ C$) (Cryogenic storage or high pressure)	Low (Requires very high pressure, e.g., 700 bar)	Highly Flammable (Wide explosive range)
 Green Ammonia (NH_3)	Moderate ($-33^\circ C$) (Easily liquefied under mild pressure)	Medium-High (Better than Hydrogen, worse than liquid fuels)	Highly Toxic/Corrosive (Hazardous if inhaled or contacted)
 Green Methanol (CH_3OH)	Low (Liquid at room temp) (Easiest to store & transport)	High (Comparable to conventional fuels)	Toxic (Poisonous if ingested or absorbed)

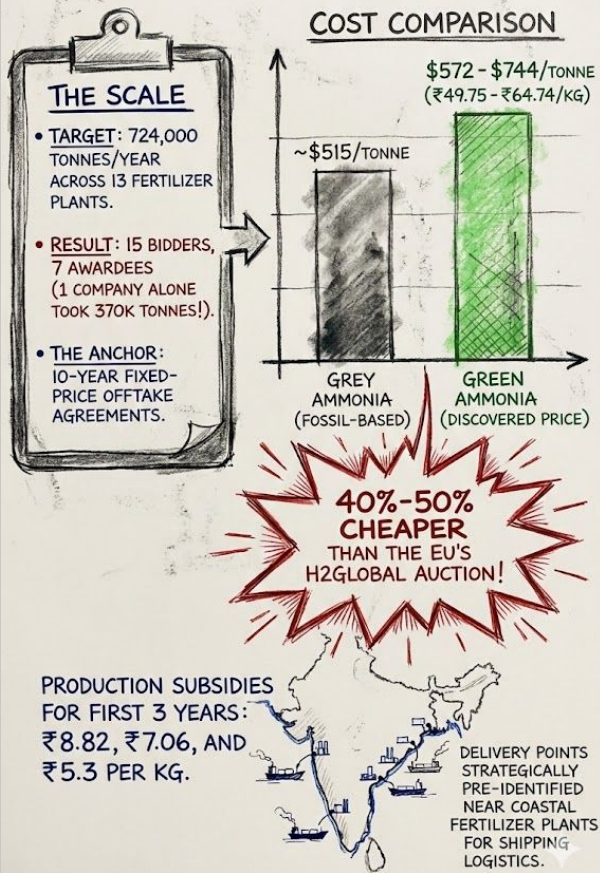
Takeaway: Ammonia wins for heavy shipping and industrial scale, while Hydrogen is better for direct fuel cells and hard-to-abate sectors.

Paradip or Kandla Green Shipping Hubs

While Bio-Ethanol (E20) dominates India's road transport, Green NH_3 is the future for heavy maritime logistics under the National Green Hydrogen Mission.

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Concepts of Green Ammonia
Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 8

The SECI Tender: Shattering Global Price Benchmarks



The SIGHT Programme & SECI Tender



Bulk Order: Govt grouped the demand of 13 fertilizer plants

The Strategic Benefit IN

Replace 30% ammonia we currently import

Port location; cheap transport using ships

Safety from Global Shocks

Global Comparison: India vs. The World

EU	H2Global
South Korea	Clean Hydrogen Portfolio Standard

Propelling the momentum

India's approach is increasingly shaping the clean ammonia landscape worldwide, owing to its combination of low renewable energy costs, large-scale logistics, robust contract design and targeted incentives. As more countries seek reliable clean ammonia imports to decarbonise industry, power and transport, India's successful auction model is well placed to shape emerging global market structures and accelerate adoption at scale.



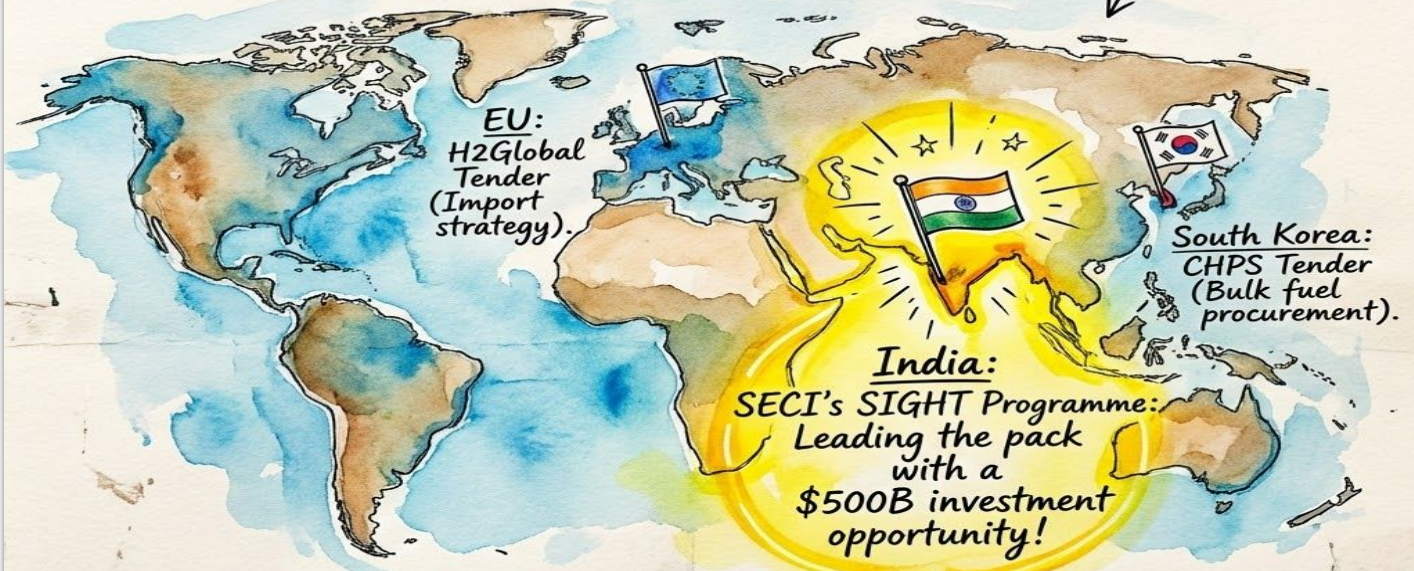
SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Concepts of Green Ammonia
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Green Ammonia: The Fuel of Energy Independence

Nitrogen + Green Hydrogen
= Green Ammonia (NH_3).



→ Applications: Fertilizers, Clean Energy, Marine Fuel.



Goal: Shifting from Energy Security $\Rightarrow$ Energy Independence.

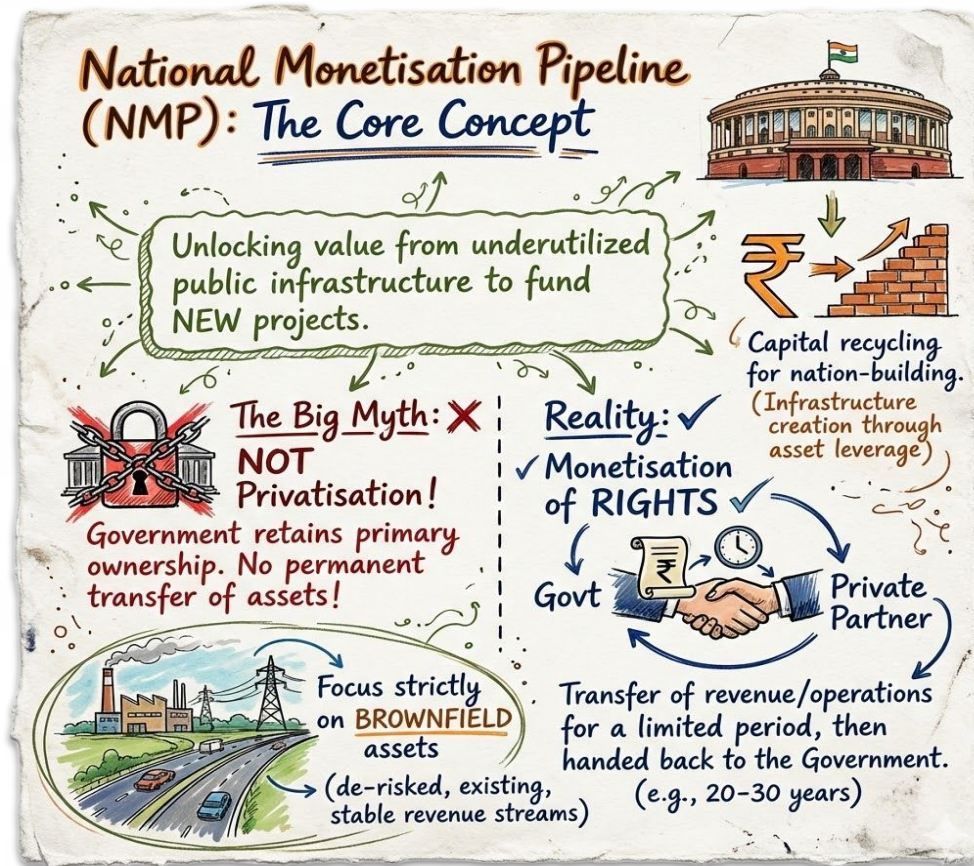


National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Scheme details

Newspaper: Indian Express Page Number: 15

What is Asset Monetisation? 💰



Asset monetisation **does not mean outright "selling" of government assets**. It involves **unlocking the economic value** of **underutilised or "brownfield"** public infrastructure.

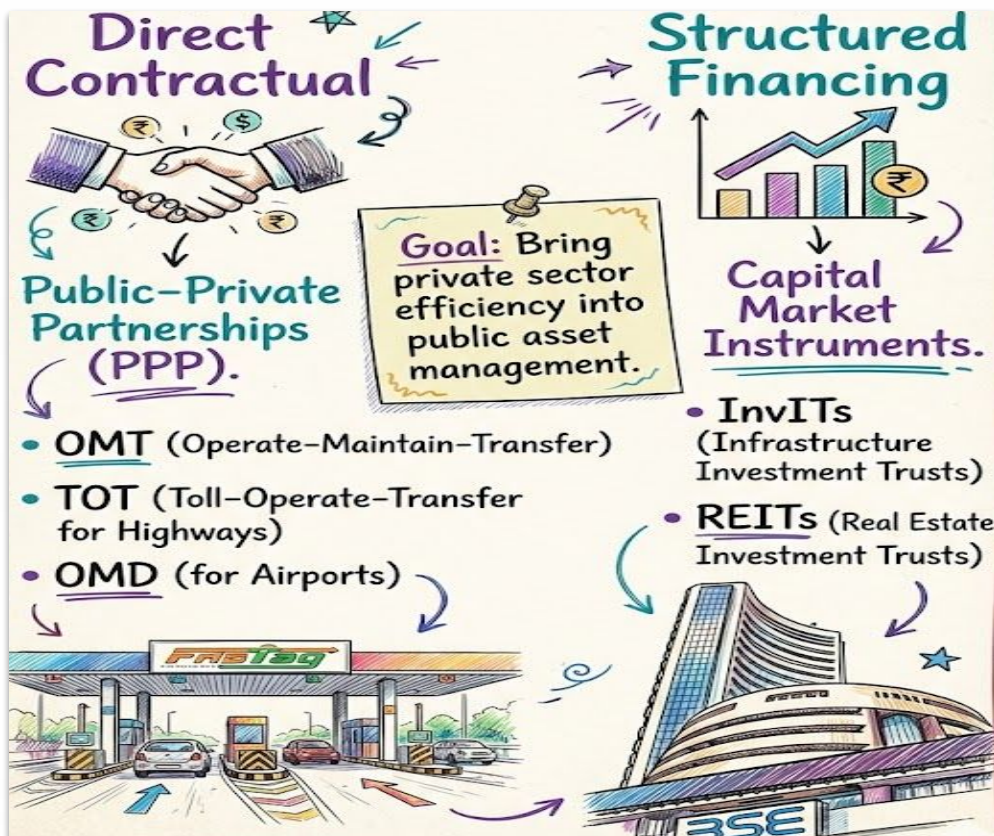


National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Scheme details

Newspaper: Indian Express Page Number: 15

Mechanisms Used



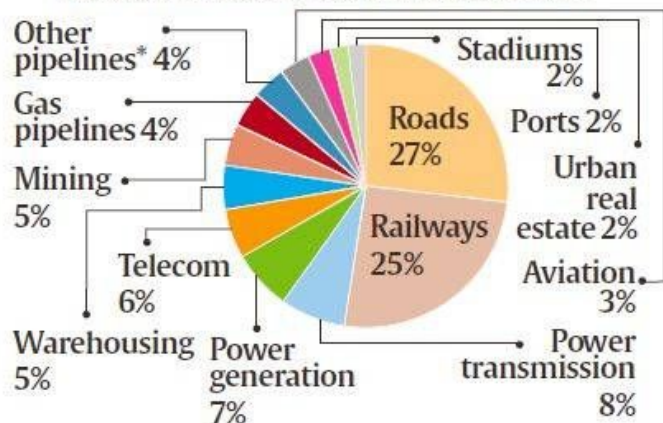
Predecessor: NMP 1.0 Recap (2021-2025)

₹6 LAKH CRORE MONETISATION PLAN

INDICATIVE VALUE OF THE MONETISATION PIPELINE YEAR-WISE (Rs cr)



SHARE OF SECTORS IN TERMS OF INDICATIVE MONETISATION VALUE IN NMP



*Other pipelines and other assets; source: NITI Aayog



National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Scheme details

Newspaper: Indian Express Page Number: 15

Key Successes

- **89%** of target
- Popularised **TOT** for NHAI
- **Infrastructure Investment Trusts**

NMP 1.0 and 2.0 - achievements and annual targets

(in Rs lakh cr)

YEAR	NMP 1.0	NMP 2.0
FY22-24	3.87	
FY25	1.43	
FY26		2.49
FY27		3.26
FY28		3.46
FY29		3.69
FY30		3.81

The second phase of the pipeline is based on the mandate for 'Asset Monetisation Plan 2025-30' announced in the Union Budget for 2025-26 last year, but exceeds the figure of Rs 10 lakh crore mentioned therein

Private Sector Component

Rs 5.8 lakh crore

NMP 1.0 Achieved

5.3L

Cre (FY22-25)

Top Sector (2.0)

26%

Highways Share

Pvt. Investment

5.8L

Cre (Est.)

NMP 2.0: The Blueprint (2025-2030)

Swarajyamag

Centre Launches Rs 16.72 Lakh Crore Asset Monetization Plan for 2025-30

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday, 23 February, unveiled the blueprint for the second phase of India's public asset monetization...

10 hours ago

Timeline: 5-year FY 2025-26 to 2029-30

Total Estimated Potential: Rs 16.72 lakh cr

1. Consolidated Fund of India
2. Direct Investment
3. PSU/Port Authority Allocation
4. State Consolidated Fund

NMP 2.0: Where is the Value Unlocked?



National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Scheme details

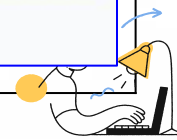
Newspaper: Indian Express Page Number: 15

NMP 2.0: The Blueprint (2025–2030) 🚀

Sector	Estimated Value	Key Physical Targets / Assets Included
Roads & Highways	Rs 4.42 lakh crore	21,300 km of highways , 15 Multi-Modal Logistics Parks , 6 ropeways .
Power	Rs 2.77 lakh crore	Transmission lines, generation assets.
Ports	Rs 2.64 lakh crore	Developing prime land parcels belonging to Major Port Authorities via PPP.
Railways	Rs 2.62 lakh crore	Stations, tracks, dedicated freight corridors.
Coal	Rs 2.16 lakh crore	Auctioning approximately 94 coal mines .
Mines (Non-Coal)	Rs 1 lakh crore	Mineral block auctions.

NMP 2.0: The Blueprint (2025–2030) 🚀

Sector	Estimated Value	Key Physical Targets / Assets Included
Urban Infrastructure	Rs 52,000 crore	Urban real estate, transit systems.
Civil Aviation	Rs 27,500 crore	Divestment of AAI holdings in 1 subsidiary and 4 Joint-Venture airports.
Petroleum & Natural Gas	Rs 16,300 crore	Listing of a minority stake in GAIL Gas .
Warehousing & Storage	Rs 10,000 crore	Developing Food Corporation of India land parcels via PPP.
Telecom	Rs 4,800 crore	Leasing 38 BSNL land parcels on a long-term basis.
Tourism	Rs 1,200 crore	Tourism infrastructure and estates.



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Regulation of gambling/ financial markets
Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 11

What are Prediction Markets?

Polymarket @Polymarket

BREAKING: The odds of Jesus Christ returning this year have doubled overnight.

4% chance.

Will Jesus Christ return before 2027?

Past Dec 31

4% chance ▲ 2%

Polymarket

Jan 11 Jan 25

\$628,869 Vol

1H 1D 1W 1M MAX

Buy Yes 4.3¢ Buy No 95.8¢

7:02 PM · 04 Feb 26 · 8M Views

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69% Mamdani opens city-owned grocery store b... 18% chance

32% Yes No

\$155k Vol

BTC 15 Minute Up or Down 52% Up

Up Down

Live

US strikes Iran by...?

February 3 <1% Yes No

February 4 1% Yes No

\$167m Vol Monthly

76 76ers 80%

30 Suns 33%

64 Warriors 21%

41 Trail Blazers 68%

76ers Warriors

Suns Trail

Kraken Ducks

Q3 - 04:09 \$6m Vol - NBA

End Q1 \$4m Vol - NBA

P2 - 00:35 \$2m Vol - NHL

23% Where will Giannis be traded?

500 S&P 500 (SPX) Opens Up or Down on February 4? 59% Up

What will Gold (GC) hit... by end of February?

A prediction market is a **digital platform** where users purchase units (**shares**) of a '**probable event**' to **make a financial profit** if their predicted outcome occurs.

UPSC PYQ (P) 2020

With reference to "Blockchain Technology", consider the following statements:

1. It is a public ledger that everyone can inspect, but which no single user controls.
2. The structure and design of blockchain is such that all the data in it are about cryptocurrency only.
3. Applications that depend on basic features of blockchain can be developed without anybody's permission.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 1 and 2 only
- C. 2 only
- D. 1 and 3 only

UPSC PYQ (P) 2011

What is "Virtual Private Network"?

- (a) It is a private computer network of an organization where the remote users can transmit encrypted information through the server of the organization.
- (b) It is a computer network across a public internet that provides users access to their organization's network while maintaining the security of the information transmitted.
- (c) It is a computer network in which users can access a shared pool of computing resources through a service provider.
- (d) None of the statements (a), (b) and (c) given above is a correct description of Virtual Private Network.

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Regulation of gambling/ financial markets
Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 11

Mechanism: How the Betting Works ⚙️

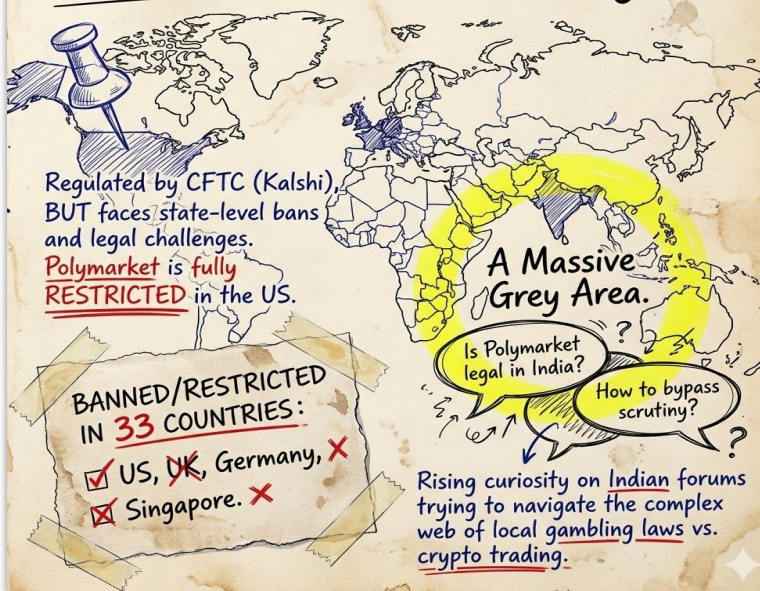
Prediction Markets: Betting on Reality



Funding Accounts	Bank transfers, credit/debit cards, cryptocurrencies.
Crypto Integration	USDC stablecoin via Polygon blockchain.
Dynamic Pricing	'Yes' and 'No' share prices change constantly
Exit Strategy	Users can sell their shares before the deadline to cash in profits or cut losses.

Indian Context & Legal Grey Area 🇮🇳

Are Prediction Markets Legal?



MAJOR ONLINE PLAYERS

From fantasy cricket to online ludo, skill-based games with the chance to win real money are attracting millions of users to multiple digital platforms daily

DREAM11 2008 100 mn+ Fantasy sports 	ZUPEE 2018 50 mn+ Ludo, trump cards 	RUMMY CIRCLE 2009 50 mn+ Online rummy 	APP Year of launch Total downloads* Game type *from Google Play
MY11 CIRCLE 2019 50 mn+ Fantasy sports 	RUSH 2021 50 mn+ Card/board games, fantasy sports 	WINZO 2018 10 mn+ Card/board games, fantasy sports, etc. 	MOBILE PREMIER LEAGUE 2018 10 mn+ Ludo, rummy, fantasy cricket, etc. MPL

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Regulation of gambling/ financial markets
Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 11

Mechanism: How the Betting Works ⚙️

**State subjects
(Entry 34, List II)**

**"Game of Skill"
VS
"Game of
Chance"**

**FEMA + RBI:
"Betting on foreign
platforms using
foreign exchange
or crypto"**

 The Hindu

Government, online companies spar in Supreme Court on
GST over games of skill, chance

Supreme Court debates whether games of skill will be taxed under GST, sparking
dispute between government and gaming companies.

5 May 2025



Making India a full member @IEA

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Important International institutions
Newspaper: Indian Express Page Number: 13

International Energy Agency (IEA)

SQ SolarQuarter

Global Energy Leaders Meet In Paris As International Energy Agency Hosts Largest Ministerial With 54 Countries And USD 14 Trillion In Companies

IEA Ministers Strengthen Partnerships With Brazil, Colombia, India and Viet Nam as Global Energy Cooperation Expands.



Basics

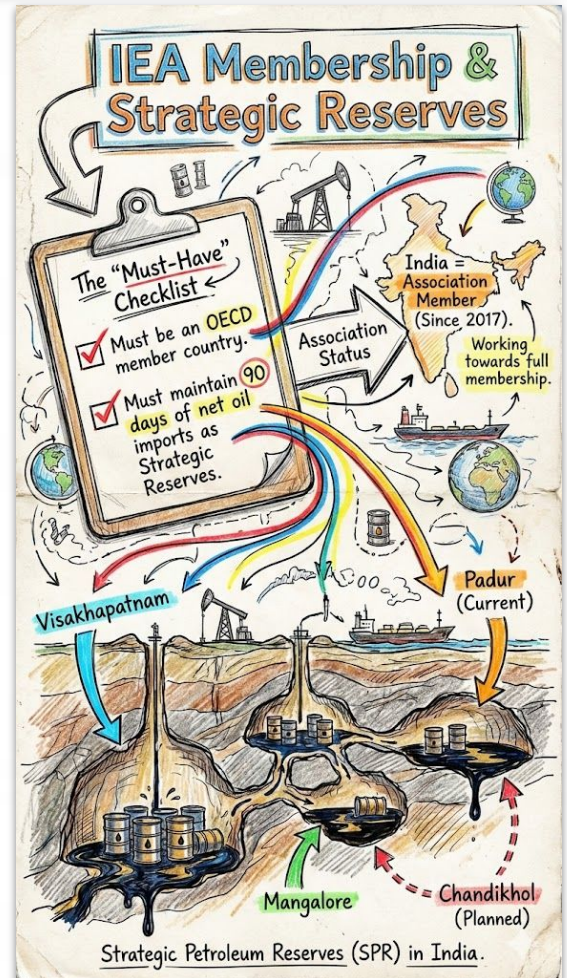
Origin: 1974 by 17 countries
1973 Yom Kippur War

Impact of Crisis; OECD to IEA

MANDATORY minimum strategic stocks

1991 Gulf War
Russia- Ukraine in 2022

Members? 33 full members
2020: Colombia



IEA's Evolution: From Oil to Energy Transition

The Shifting Focus



New domains:

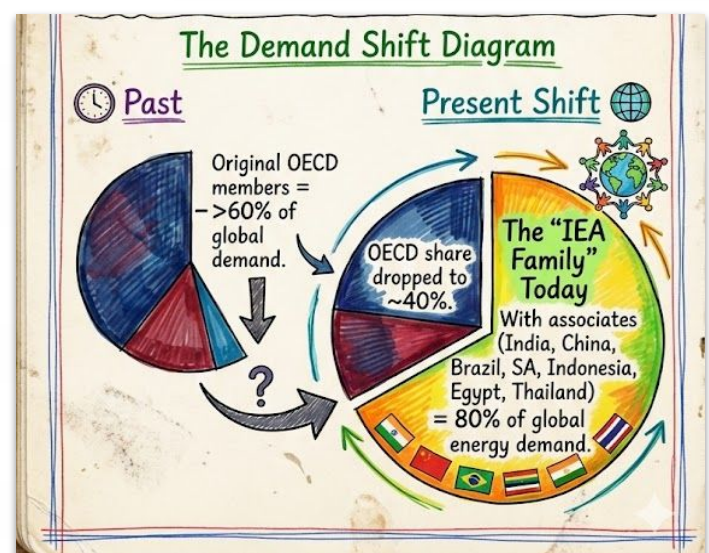
- Renewables
- Climate Change
- Decarbonisation
- Energy Transition
- Critical Minerals

Membership Expansion

* Full Members: 32 + Colombia (33rd, joined OECD in 2020).

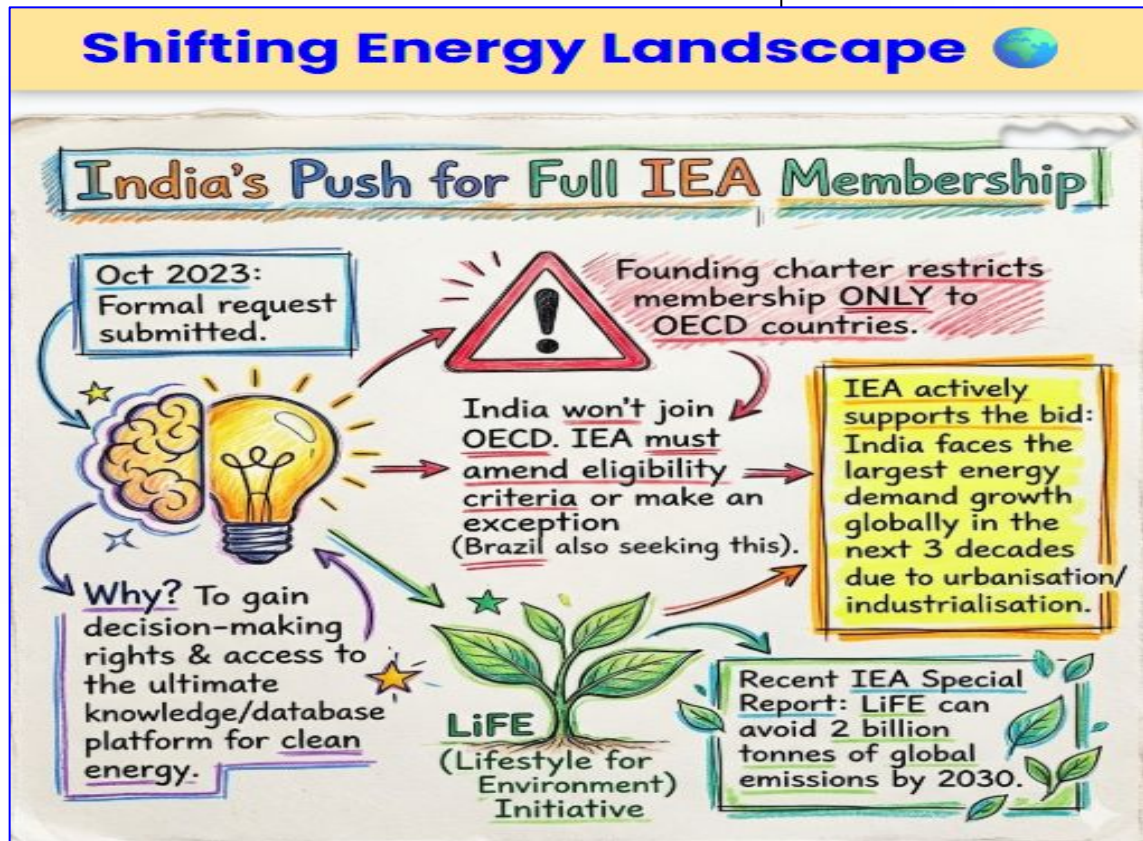
→ 2015: Doors opened for Non-OECD Associate Members.

• Currently 13 Associate Members (India joined in 2017).



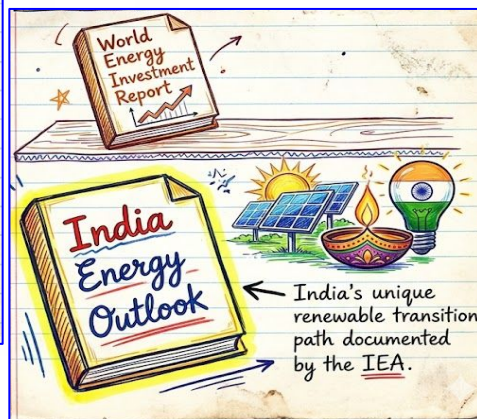
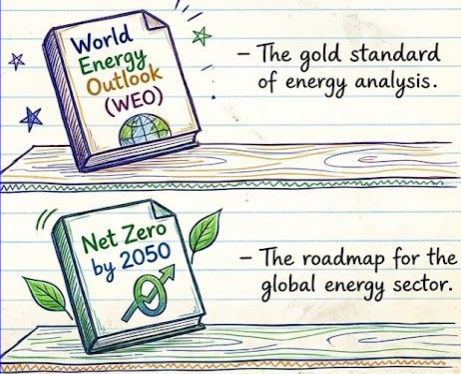
SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Important International institutions
Newspaper: Indian Express Page Number: 13

Shifting Energy Landscape



India's Quest for Membership: Key +ves

IEA: Major Flagship Reports



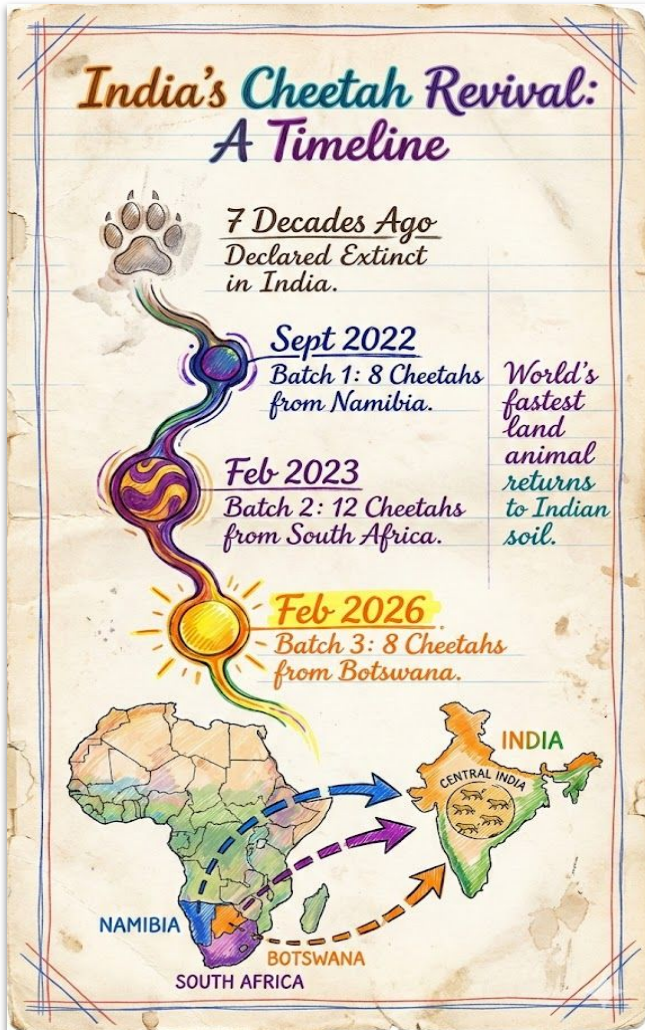
1. **Decision-Making Power**
2. **Knowledge Platform Access**
3. **Data Utilisation**
4. **Energy Security**
5. **Managing Growth**
6. **Combating Climate Change**
7. **Bilateral Strategic Alignment**
8. **Showcasing Domestic Initiatives**
 - LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment)
 - IEA report = LiFE avoid 2 bn tn of global emissions by 2030.



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Flora and fauna

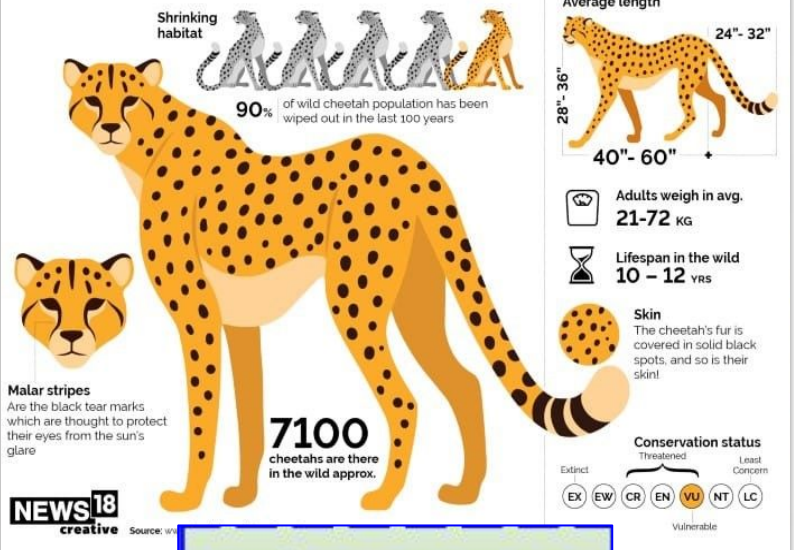
Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 3

Project Cheetah



THE RETURN OF CHEETAHS

India will be home to the world's fastest land animal again after the feline was declared extinct in the country in 1952. Five female and three male cheetahs are all set to reach Kuno-Palpur National Park on 17 September as part of the reintroduction programme.



African Cheetah:
Vulnerable
Asiatic Cheetah:
Critically Endangered

Nodal Agency:
NTCA

Schedule I;
WPA, 1972



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Flora and fauna

Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 3

Tracking the Translocations (Updated Feb 2026)

Project Cheetah: The 3rd Translocation



	Origin Country	Arrival Date	Count & Sex Ratio	Current Status Highlights
1st	Namibia	Sept 2022	8 (5F, 3M)	Mothers: Jwala, Aasha.
2nd	South Africa	Feb 2023	12 (7F, 5M)	Mothers: Gamini, Veera, Nirva.
3rd	Botswana	Feb 2026	8 (6F, 2M)	Undergoing 1-month quarantine at KNP.
Total	Africa	2022 - 2026	28 Imported Adults	Target population: 50 individuals.



CHEETAH BIRTHS IN INDIA (PROJECT CHEETAH)

Litter Summary by Individual Females

Namibian Females

JWALA
8 cubs across 2 litters
(March 2023 — first-ever cheetah birth in India and January 2024)

AASHA
3 cubs (January 2024)

GAMINI
(South African origin but included for parity)
6 cubs (March 2024)

NIRVA
• 2 cubs — First litter (Nov 2024) → 6th litter in India
• 5 cubs — Second litter (Apr 2025) → 8th litter in India

VEERA
2 cubs — First litter (Feb 2025) → 7th litter in India

India-born Female

MUKHI (INDIA-BORN)
5 cubs — November 2025
(First, second-generation litter)



Cub Boom

39 cubs born @KNP since 2023

Survival Rate

27 cubs

2nd Gen Success

Mukhi (India-born)
Naturalised breeding

Meta-Population Management

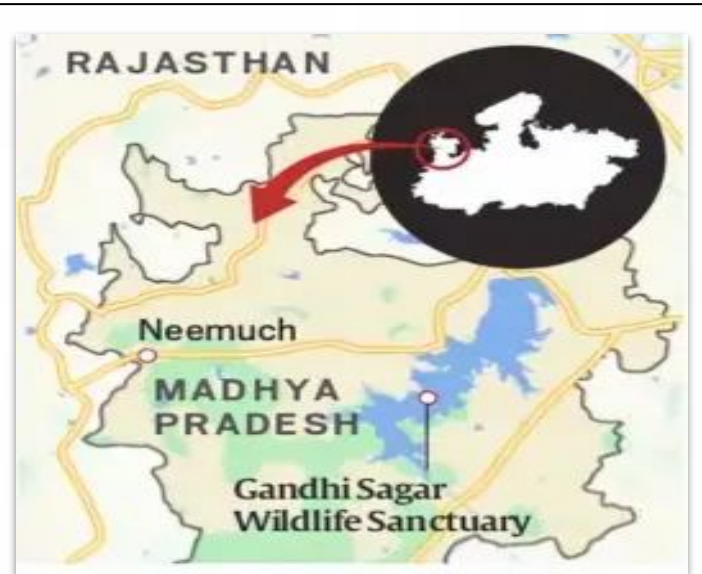
3 @ Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary
35 @ KNP



More cheetahs at Kuno

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS: Flora and fauna

Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 3



Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Asiatic Cheetah :

1. It is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN list.
2. More than half of the Asiatic Cheetah's wild population has been wiped out in the last 100 years.
3. It is listed in Schedule 2 of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972, providing them the highest degree of protection.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: a

Q2. Consider the following statements regarding the Prediction Markets:

1. It is a digital platform where users purchase units (shares) of a probable event to make a financial profit.
2. It has gained massive traction among Indian retail investors seeking alternatives to traditional finance.

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

Q3. Which of the following statements best describes the aim of the "SIGHT" Programme recently seen in the news?

- a) It aims to provide free medical aid to People with Disabilities.
- b) It aims to create indigenous small reactors for nuclear energy.
- c) It aims to boost solar energy production to achieve the Panchamrit Target.
- d) It aims to support domestic manufacturing of electrolyzers to produce Green Hydrogen.

Answer: d

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding the International Energy Agency (IEA):

1. It was established in 1974 as a response to the "Oil crisis" which took place in 1973.
2. It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
3. It publishes the annual World Energy Outlook report.

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

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

Answer: b

Q5. Consider the following statements regarding the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC):

1. Article 324(5) of the Constitution states that the CEC can be removed only in the same manner as a Judge of the Supreme Court.
2. As per Article 124(4), the removal of the CEC requires impeachment by the 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

Answer: a





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