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The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

22nd April 2026



Anti-Defection Law

CONTEXT: A committee of presiding officers, set up by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Tuesday reviewed the constitutional and procedural framework governing disqualification of legislators under the anti-defection law.

Anti Defection Law

- **52nd Amendment Act of 1985** - Tenth Schedule
 - Why ? Ensure that politicians are held accountable
- **Provisions**
 - **Disqualification** of any member of any political party
 - **Voluntarily** giving up membership of party
 - **Voting against/ abstaining**
 - **Independent** Members
 - **Nominated** members
 - Exceptions ($\frac{2}{3}$ **Merger, Presiding Officer**)
- **Deciding Authority, Rule-Making Power** (Speaker/ Chairman; **Final**)
- **Role of Whip**

Data Point	Details
Lok Sabha MPs (2016–2020)	12 MPs defected to recontest polls (ADR data)
MLAs Switching Parties	45% of MLAs have switched parties
MLAs Defecting to Contest Fresh Elections	357 MLAs defected; 170 (48%) won
Re-election Rate (MLAs & MPs)	52% of 433 defected MLAs and MPs were re-elected

Need for an Anti-defection Law

To ensure loyalty of members to political party and its policies.

To uphold the will of the people.

To facilitate democratic realignment of parties in the legislature by merger of parties.

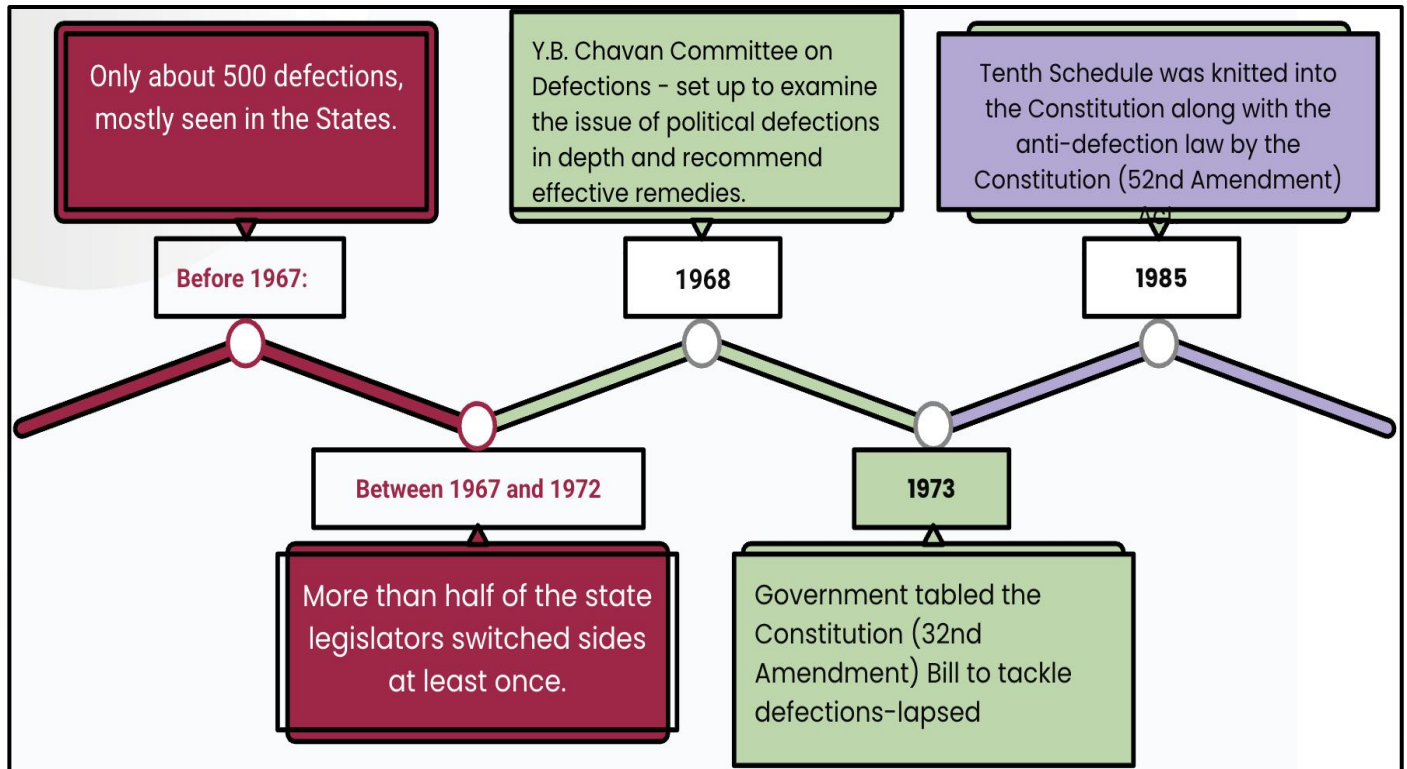
To prevent non-developmental expenditure incurred on irregular elections.

To provide greater political stability by checking the propensity of legislators to change parties.



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Evolution of Anti Defection Law



What Changed in the Law?

- **Initial Provisions and Loopholes in the Law**
 - **The One-Third Split Rule**
- **Total number of ministers** shall not exceed **15%** of the total strength of the Lok Sabha. (@States: Minimum: 12)
- Member disqualified on ground of defection also **disqualified** from being appointed as a **Minister**.
- Member disqualified on the ground of defection shall also be **disqualified from holding any remunerative political post**.
- **Exemption** from disqualification in case of split by $\frac{1}{3}$ of members of a legislature party **has been deleted**.
 - Defectors have no more protection on the grounds of splits.



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Anti-Defection Law – Why It Needs Overhaul

No Accountability for Political Parties

- Law targets individual legislators, not parties that engineer defections.
- Political parties face no consequences for inducing defections.

Flawed Merger Provision

- Defections allowed if two-thirds of members support a merger.
- Focus is on numbers, not intent – legitimizing bulk defections.

Excessive Power with Presiding Officer

- Disqualification decided by Speaker/Chairperson, often partisan.
- Lacks independent or time-bound judicial oversight.

Fuels Political Instability

- Discourages internal dissent; leads to en masse resignations.
- Enables toppling of governments, hampers governance.

Other Issues in the Prevalent Idea of Anti-defection

- **Restricts freedom of speech and expression** of legislators.
- **Reduces accountability** of elected representatives.
- **Undermines representative government.**



Q. Which one of the following Schedules of the Constitution of India contains provisions regarding anti-defection? (2014)





- (a) Second Schedule
- (b) Fifth Schedule
- (c) Eighth Schedule
- (d) Tenth Schedule







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JUDICIAL PRONOUNCEMENT



- 01**
Kihoto Hollohan vs. Zachillhu and Others (1992)

Supreme Court of India upheld the **constitutionality** of the law
- 02**
G. Viswanathan vs. Hon'ble Speaker, Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly (1995)

Decision of the Speaker is **final** and cannot be challenged in a court of law.
- 03**
Ravi S. Naik vs. Union of India (1994)

Speaker or Chairman of the relevant legislative body can **disqualify** an elected representative for defection
- 04**
Keisham Meghachandra Singh (2020)

Speaker's role in defection cases be replaced by an **independent tribunal** to prevent bias

PURPOSE OF ANTI-DEFLECTION LAW (TENTH SCHEDULE)

-  To curb political defections
-  To strengthen political stability and democracy
-  To ensure loyalty to political party mandates
-  To prevent misuse of power and office

'FINISH PROCEEDINGS IN 3 MTHS'

- SC sets **three months** as the **outer limit** for Speakers to **conclude disqualification proceedings** against defectors
- Recommends that Parliament should amend Constitution to set up a permanent tribunal to decide cases. Tribunal can be **headed by retired SC judge or HC CJ**
- SC emphasises that **ensuring purity of anti-defection law** under

the 10th Schedule is vital to democracy's functioning

- SC decision came in a case related to **Manipur Congress MLA T Shyam Kumar**, who switched to BJP and became a minister after the party formed govt in 2017
- A dozen pleas seeking Shyam's disqualification were filed but Speaker sat over them. SC asks Speaker to **decide in four weeks**



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The Path Ahead

- **Narrow Definition of Defection :** Clearly define defection to prevent misuse, while allowing independent thinking and expression.
- **Promote Intra-Party Democracy :** Encourage internal debate and acceptance of dissent within parties.
- **Ethics Committee Involvement :** Use Ethics Committee (as in Cash-for-Query case) to check horse-trading and unethical conduct.
- **Independent Decision-Making :** As per 2nd ARC, disqualification should be decided by President/Governor on EC's advice – not by partisan Speakers.
- **Make It an Internal Party Issue :** Allow parties to expel defectors without affecting their seat; defection to be treated as an intra-party matter.
- **Clarify 'Voluntarily Giving Up Membership' :** Define this term explicitly to avoid ambiguity and arbitrary interpretation.

Committee Recommendations :

- **Dinesh Goswami Committee (1990)**
 - a. transparent issuance of whips and measures to limit the Speaker's discretionary powers
- **Hashim Abdul Halim Committee (1994 and 2003)**
 - a. Independent tribunal
- **Law Commission's 170th and 255th Reports**
 - a. Speaker to a neutral body
- **National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (2002)**

Mains Practise Question

Question : Discuss the objectives and key provisions of the Anti-Defection Law. How far has it succeeded in achieving its purpose?
(10 Marks, 150 words)



India's LPG crisis is a wake-up call it can not ignore



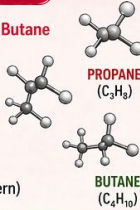
CONTEXT: A write up has appeared covering various aspects of LPG crisis in India.

Basics

1 COMPOSITION & NATURE



- Mixture of Propane + Butane
- Liquefied under moderate pressure
- Stored in cylinders
- Heavier than air (can accumulate near ground → safety concern)



LPG

(LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS)

CLEAN. CONVENIENT. EMPOWERING LIVES.



CLEAN
Low Smoke
Low Emission



SAFE
Controlled
Combustion



FAST
Heats Quickly
Saves Time

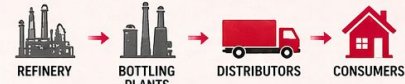


EFFICIENT
High Calorific
Value



2 SUPPLY & DISTRIBUTION

- Supplied via pressurized cylinders



- Supply chain: Refinery → Bottling plants → Distributors → Consumers

- Requires manual booking & delivery

3 EFFICIENCY & USAGE

- High calorific value → heats quickly
- Widely used for:
 - Domestic cooking
 - Commercial kitchens
 - Small industries



5 CURRENT STATUS (INDIA)



~33 CRORE
LPG CONNECTIONS

Key driver of clean cooking fuel access



6 SUPPLY & PRODUCTION

~60% LPG IMPORTED

~90% IMPORTS VIA STRAIT OF HORMUZ

DOMESTIC PRODUCTION INCREASED (~25% GROWTH)



4 HISTORY IN INDIA

1955 Introduced in 1955 by Burmah Shell (Mumbai)



1965 Organized distribution: Indane (IOC), 1965 (Kolkata)



Major expansion through Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)



7 KEY ISSUES

Import dependence → energy security concern

Cylinder logistics → costly & inefficient supply chain

Safety risks due to leakage accumulation (heavier than air)



LPG – FUELING PROGRESS, EMPOWERING LIVES

OTHER NATURAL GAS FORMS (CNG, LNG, PNG)

One Source, Multiple Forms – Powering a Cleaner Future

1 CNG (COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS)



Composition:
Mainly Methane



Formation:
Compressed to <1% of original volume



Storage:
High-pressure cylinders



Primary Use:
Transport fuel (cars, buses, autos)

★ **Features:**

- Cleaner than petrol/diesel
- Lower emissions (CO₂, NO_x)
- Cost-effective fuel



2 LNG (LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS)



Composition:
Methane (Natural Gas)



Formation:
Cooled to -162°C → liquid form



Storage/Transport:
Cryogenic tanks, special ships



Primary Use:
Long-distance transport (imports/exports)
Power plants, industries

★ **Features:**

- Volume reduces ~600 times → easy transport
- Enables global gas trade



3 PNG (PIPED NATURAL GAS)



Composition:
Methane



Supply: Pipeline (City Gas Distribution network)



Pressure:
Low pressure supply



Primary Use:
Domestic cooking
Commercial & industrial use

★ **Features:**

- 24x7 uninterrupted supply
- No storage required
- Lighter than air → safer (disperses quickly)
- No booking needed



Natural Gas in Every Form, Building a Cleaner, Greener Tomorrow



India's LPG crisis is a wake-up call it can not ignore

CONTEXT: A write up has appeared covering various aspects of LPG crisis in India.

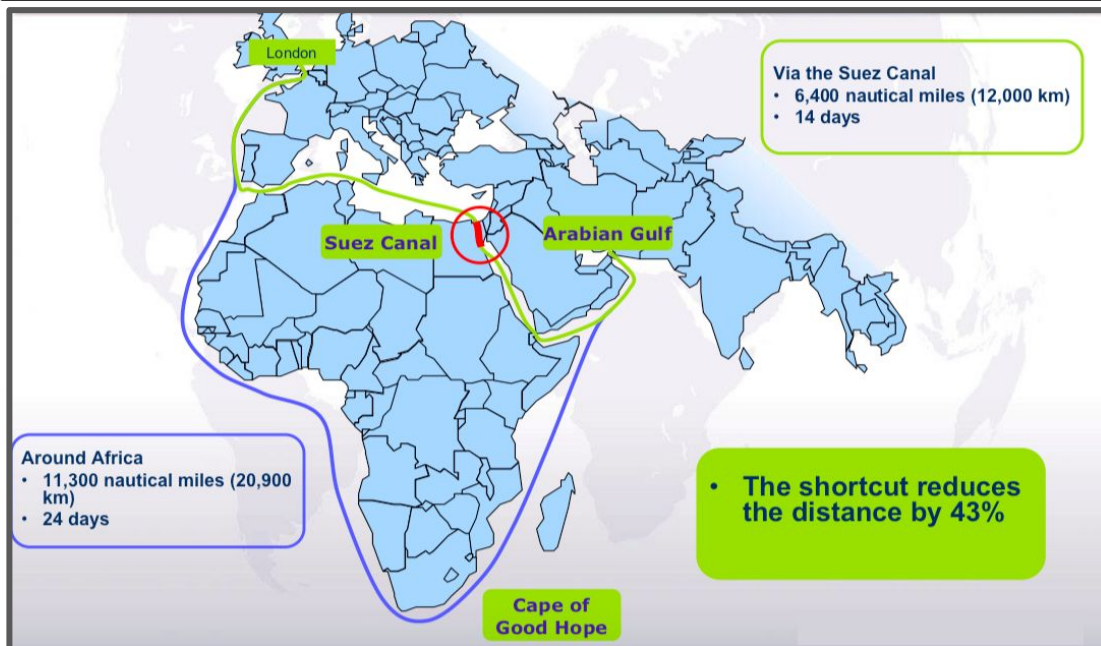
The Reasons for Current Shortage

1. Geopolitical Volatility

- Middle East conflicts + **Red Sea crisis (2023–24)** → shipping rerouting via Cape of Good Hope
- **Freight costs** ↑ **30–50%**, insurance premiums surge
- Example: Delays in LPG cargo from **Saudi Arabia/Qatar**

2. Import Vulnerability

- India imports **~60% of LPG demand**
- Domestic prices linked to **Saudi Aramco Contract Price (CP)**
- Example: CP rise in 2022 → sharp domestic LPG price hikes



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3. Logistical Bottlenecks

- Limited **bottling plants + LPG "bullets" (tankers)**
- Remote regions (e.g., **Northeast, J&K**) face supply delays
- Example: Road transport accounts for **>70% LPG movement**, raising costs

4. Currency Depreciation

- LPG traded in USD → **₹ depreciation (₹60 → ₹83/\$ in last decade)**
- Even stable global prices → higher domestic cost
- Example: 10% rupee fall → ~10% higher import bill



Multi-Dimensional Impact

1. Social Dimension (Health + Gender)

• Health Reversion

- ~**2.4 billion people globally** depend on solid fuels (WHO)
- India: fuel stacking persists despite **Ujjwala (~9.6 crore connections)**
- Example: Indoor air pollution → **PM2.5 exposure** → **COPD, cataracts**

• Gender Burden

- Women spend **2-4 hrs/day** collecting **fuelwood (rural India)**
- Leads to **"time poverty" + lower FLFP (~25%)**
- Example: States like **Bihar, MP** show high fuelwood dependence

THE LPG MATH

ACTIVE DOMESTIC LPG CONSUMERS



ANNUAL CYLINDERS CONSUMPTION IN FY23



₹37,230.2cr Total annualised cost of price cut and Ujjwala expansion

₹36,117.2 CR

Annualised cost of ₹200-per-cylinder price cut

₹1,113 CR

Annualised cost of relief to new Ujjwala consumers, assuming refill rate at FY23 levels

Additional Ujjwala connections approved **75 LAKH**

Analysis based on data from PPAC and MoPNG



India's LPG crisis is a wake-up call it can not ignore



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2. Economic Dimension

Fiscal Burden : LPG subsidy bill peaked at ₹40,000+ crore (2020–21)

- Trade-off: welfare vs fiscal deficit

OMC Stress

- **IOCL, BPCL, HPCL** face "under-recoveries"
- Example: 2022 freeze → losses despite rising crude prices

Inflation : LPG part of **CPI (fuel & light ~6–7%)**

- Example: LPG price rise → indirect food inflation (higher cooking cost)

3. Strategic Dimension (Energy Security)

Import Concentration : West Asia supplies >80% LPG imports

- Risk: war, chokepoints (Hormuz, Bab-el-Mandeb)

Storage Gap : Strategic LPG Storage: ~140,000 tonnes (Visakhapatnam: 60 TMT; Mangaluru: 80 TMT). **Coverage:** <2 days of national LPG consumption

States with the largest LPG consumer base



According to PPAC data as of

December 2025

State	No of LPG consumers
Uttar Pradesh	4.87 crore
Maharashtra	3.2 crore
West Bengal	2.72 crore
Tamil Nadu	2.4 crore
Bihar	2.33 crore
Karnataka	1.9 crore



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COMPRESSED BIO-GAS (CBG)

CLEAN FUEL. GREEN FUTURE.

1 DEFINITION

- Purified biogas (~90-95% methane) → similar to CNG
- Produced from agri-waste, dung, MSW
- Used as transport + cooking fuel

2 PRODUCTION (STEPS)

- ANAEROBIC DIGESTION**
Raw biogas
- UPGRADATION**
Remove CO₂, H₂S
- COMPRESSION**
CBG

BY-PRODUCT: BIO-SLURRY (ORGANIC MANURE)

3 SATAT SCHEME (2018)

(SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVE TOWARDS AFFORDABLE TRANSPORTATION)

- TARGET:** 5000 PLANTS | ~15 MMT/YEAR
- IMPLEMENTED BY:** OMCs (IOCL, BPCL, HPCL)
- EXAMPLE:** PADDY STRAW-BASED CBG PLANTS IN PUNJAB

4 ADVANTAGES

- ENERGY SECURITY**
Cuts LPG imports (~60%)
- ENVIRONMENT**
Reduces stubble burning, GHGs
- ECONOMY**
Extra farmer income + organic fertilizer

5 CHALLENGES

- FEEDSTOCK SUPPLY ISSUES (SEASONAL)**
- HIGH COST** (₹15-25 CRORE/PLANT)
- PRICING & OFFTAKE UNCERTAINTY**

FROM WASTE TO CLEAN ENERGY

CBG – POWERING A SUSTAINABLE TOMORROW

CLEANER ENVIRONMENT

STRONGER FARMERS

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT

The Path Ahead

1. Promoting E-Cooking (Electric Transition)

- **Saubhagya** → ~100% electrification achieved
- Induction cooking = ~90% efficient vs LPG ~60%
- Example: Kerala pilot for **electric kitchens**

2. Scaling Bio-LPG & CBG

- **SATAT Scheme target: 5000 CBG plants**
- Uses agri-waste → reduces stubble burning
- Example: Punjab CBG plants converting paddy straw

3. Strengthening DBT (Targeted Subsidy)

- Focus on **bottom 20-30% households**
- Use **SECC + Aadhaar DBT**
- Example: PAHAL scheme → world's largest DBT program

4. Strategic Storage & Infrastructure

- Build **15-30 days LPG reserves (salt caverns)**
- Expand pipelines → reduce cost vs trucking
- Example: LPG pipeline network expansion by **GAIL/IOCL**



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Mains Practise Question

Question : "India's LPG shortage reflects deeper structural issues in energy security." Discuss the root causes of the LPG crunch and suggest measures to address them.

(10 Marks, 150 words)



SYLLABUS : G.S. 3: Banking Sector & NBFCs, Growth and Development
Newspaper : The Indian express Page No : 19

INSOLVENCY AND BANKRUPTCY CODE (IBC)

Toward Timely Resolution, Stronger Economy

1 OVERVIEW

- Unified legal framework for insolvency & bankruptcy in India
- Covers: Individuals, Companies, LLPs, Partnerships, Personal Guarantors

2 OBJECTIVES

- Resolve corporate bankruptcy crisis
- Consolidate multiple laws/processes
- Ensure time-bound resolution & revival of firms

3 ADJUDICATING AUTHORITIES

NCLT → Companies & LLPs

DRT → Individuals & Partnerships

A BALANCE BETWEEN CREDITORS' RIGHTS & BUSINESS REVIVAL

4 CORPORATE INSOLVENCY RESOLUTION PROCESS (CIRP)

- Initiated by creditor or debtor
- Application filed before NCLT
- On admission → Insolvency Resolution Professional (IRP) appointed
- Management shifts to Committee of Creditors (CoC)
- CoC supervises process & approves resolution plan

5 KEY INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- Insolvency Professionals (IPs) → Conduct resolution
- Insolvency Professional Agencies (IPAs) → Regulate IPs
- Information Utilities (IUs) → Store financial data
- Regulator: IBBI → Supervises entire ecosystem

6 COMMITTEE OF CREDITORS (CoC)

Composed of financial creditors

Powers:

- Appoint/replace IP
- Approve resolution plan

7 INSOLVENCY AND BANKRUPTCY BOARD OF INDIA (IBBI)

Established under IBC, 2016

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Corporate Affairs

Regulates: IPs, IPAs, IUs

8 TYPES OF CREDITORS

FINANCIAL CREDITORS

- Loan-based relationship (loans, bonds, guarantees)
- Have voting rights in CoC

OPERATIONAL CREDITORS

- Provide goods/services/employment
- Generally no voting rights in CoC

Time-bound Resolution

Business Continuity

Maximization of Value

Credit Discipline Strengthened

Balanced Stakeholder Interests

“IBC is not just about exit, it's about revival and renewal.”

AMENDMENTS TO IBC (2021)

Stronger Framework, Faster Resolution, Business Revival

AMENDMENTS TO IBC (2021)

1 KEY AMENDMENT

- IBC (Amendment) Act, 2021
- Introduced **Pre-Packaged Insolvency Resolution Process (PIRP)**
- Target: MSMEs with defaults up to **₹1 crore**

2 PIRP VS CIRP

Aspect	PIRP	CIRP
Initiation	Debtor-driven (only debtor can initiate PIRP)	Creditor or debtor can initiate
Resolution Plan	Requires base resolution plan beforehand	Resolution plan prepared during the process
Management Control	Management remains with debtor	Management shifts to Committee of Creditors (CoC)
Control	Debtor-in-possession model	Creditor-in-control model

PRE-PACKAGED INSOLVENCY RESOLUTION PROCESS (PIRP)

1 BACKGROUND

- Introduced in 2021 (COVID-19 period)
- Aim: Address stress in MSMEs & small businesses

2 ELIGIBILITY

- Primarily MSMEs
- Also extended to other eligible corporate debtors

3 KEY FEATURES

- Debtor-in-possession model
- Pre-negotiated resolution plan with creditors
- Faster & cost-effective process
- Ensures business continuity (no disruption of operations)

Resolves Stress, Saves Time, Sustains Business

SIGNIFICANCE OF IBC

1 BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

Promoters avoid defaults → fear of losing control

2 IMPROVED CREDIT DISCIPLINE

Gross NPAs reduced:

11.2% (FY18) → 2.8% (FY24)

3 BETTER CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

More independent directors & professional management

Improved compliance (IIM-B study)

4 LOWER COST OF CREDIT

Reduced lender risk → **~3% drop in borrowing costs for stressed firms**

IBC TRANSFORMS DISTRESS INTO OPPORTUNITY

Time-Bound Resolution

Maximizes Value of Assets

Protects Creditors' Interests

Boosts Investor Confidence

IBC – A Catalyst for Economic Growth & Business Revival

SYLLABUS : G.S. 3: Conservation, Environmental Pollution & Degradation
Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 04

Livelihood of Mumbai fishers at risk as mangroves make way for road

Snehal Mutha
MUMBAI

At first light, Pujan Bhende, 30, sets out from Versova for the Arabian Sea in his blue fishing boat and spends at least nine hours at the edge of vast, tangled clusters of green-brown mangroves, casting his net, checking the trapped fish and crabs as the water recedes, and repeating the process.

Fishing near mangroves is the only source of livelihood for about 400 fisherfolk residing at Versova, Charkop, Dahisar, Malvani, and Gorai in Mumbai.

However, ongoing work to cut 45,675 mangroves across 103.6 hectares of forest land for the 23-km-long Versova-Bhayandar Coastal Road project has left them worried. "When these mangroves are gone, I will probably end up



Ongoing work to cut 45,675 mangroves for the construction of the 23-km-long Versova-Bhayandar Coastal Road project. SNEHAL MUTHA

working as a labourer," says Mr. Bhende.

Krishnahari Sathe, 70, and his wife earn a living by selling fish that they buy from small fishermen.

"Mangroves are breeding grounds for fish. We are practically living on them," Dipati Bhandari, 45, a fisherwoman from Charkop, 17 km from Versova, where the Brihanmumbai

Municipal Corporation (BMC) has begun work on the coastal road, says, "We raised objections, but no BMC official mentioned compensation or attempts to resolve our concerns about loss of livelihood."

The BMC has assured compensation of up to ₹6 lakh for affected fisherfolk. However, fisherfolk claim that the civic body did not

consult them about the felling of mangroves.

'Failure in planning'
According to B.N. Kumar, who heads the Mumbai-based NGO NatConnect, public consultations for such projects are often reduced to formalities and authorities continue to overlook practical alternatives. "Such projects reflect a deeper failure in urban planning, especially in the face of warnings like the Mumbai Climate Action Plan, which projects submergence risks by 2050."

The Supreme Court on March 20 had refused to interfere with the Bombay High Court's February 25 decision to clear the project, says species such as *Avicennia marina*, *Excoecaria agallocha*, *Avicennia officinalis*, and *Rhizophora mucronata* are being felled but replaced only with saplings of *Ceriops tagal*.

However, environmentalists have questioned whether compensatory plantation will benefit Mumbai as the proposed areas for reforestation are located on its outskirts.

Mumbai-based NGO Vanshakti's director Stalin D., who filed a special leave petition in the Supreme Court against the BMC challenging the Bombay High Court's February 25 decision to clear the project, says species such as *Avicennia marina*, *Excoecaria agallocha*, *Avicennia officinalis*, and *Rhizophora mucronata* are being felled but replaced only with saplings of *Ceriops tagal*.

An official from the BMC's Mangrove Cell points out that certain saplings are prone to mortality but there is provision for replacement. "We are doing channel deepening work. So far, 37,764 trees

have been planted in Bhayandar," he says.

The deadline for the project is December 2028. It is expected to cut travel time between Versova and Bhayandar from two hours to 15-20 minutes. BMC officials say the project is aimed at decongesting traffic and reducing overcrowding in local trains.

However, transport analyst A.V. Shenoy says while the road will ease congestion, it is a "facade" as such roads are primarily designed for high-speed vehicular traffic, specifically cars and taxis, with two wheelers, three-wheelers and heavy goods vehicles restricted from using the route. "Hence, congestion on the Western Express Highway (the 25-km-long arterial road in Mumbai connecting Bandra in the south to Mira Road in the north) will continue."

Features of Mangroves



Salt Tolerance

Excrete salt via leaf glands or shed salt-laden leaves.



Aerial Roots (Pneumatophores)

Enable oxygen intake in waterlogged, low-oxygen soil.



Prop & Stilt Roots

Anchor trees in soft, unstable coastal mud.



Vivipary

Seeds germinate on the parent tree and disperse via tides



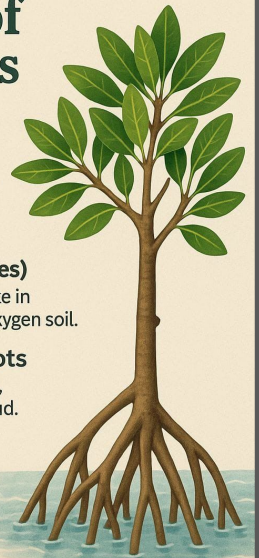
Coastal Shield

Reduce storm impact, tidal surges, and shoreline erosion.



Biodiversity Habitat

Support fish nurseries, migratory birds, reptiles, and crustaceans.



MANGROVES

Diverse group of salt-tolerant plant communities found in tropical/subtropical coastal intertidal zones

CHARACTERISTICS

- Survive under hostile environments (high salt, low oxygen)
- Roots (pneumatophores) absorb oxygen from atmosphere
- Thick succulent leaves to store fresh water

SIGNIFICANCE

- Stabilise the coastline and reduce soil erosion
- Protection against cyclones
- Improve water quality by absorbing nutrients
- Important carbon sink

MANGROVE COVER

Global: Asia > Africa > North & Central America > South America

THREATS

- Commercialisation of coastal areas
- Emergence of shrimp farms
- Temperature fluctuations (cannot survive freezing temperatures)

CONSERVATION MEASURES

GLOBAL

- Inclusion of mangroves in Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks
- Mangroves for the Future Initiative (IUCN & UNDP)
- Mangrove Alliance for Climate (UNFCCC COP27)

INDIA

- National Mangrove Committee (1976)
- MISHTI Scheme (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes) – Union Budget 2023–24

IMPORTANT FACT

International Day for Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem:

26 JULY (UNESCO)

Note: Sundarbans – World's largest single patch of mangrove forests



SYLLABUS : G.S. 3: Conservation, Environmental Pollution & Degradation
Newspaper : The Hindu **Page No : 04**



DELIVERY ON BUDGET PROMISES (2023-24)

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes (MISHTI)



ANNOUNCEMENT

Building on India's success in afforestation, 'Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes', MISHTI, will be taken up for mangrove plantation along the coastline and on salt pan lands, wherever feasible, through convergence between MGNREGS, CAMPA Fund and other sources.



PROGRESS SO FAR

- Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes (MISHTI) was launched on the World Environment Day on 5th June 2023 by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.
- MISHTI to help 'Restoration of mangrove forests' by undertaking mangrove reforestation/ afforestation measures along the coast of India by adopting best practices in India and globally.
- Operational Guidelines shared with the States in June 2023, being implemented in convergence with Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), MGNREGS, and other State specific schemes.
- A sum of Rs.100 crore allocated through CAMPA as initial Project outlay for the MISHTI Scheme.
- Approximately 22,561 hectares of degraded mangrove area brought under restoration in the 13 States/UTs through convergence.
- A sum of ₹ 64.44 crores have been released to the 5 States and 1 Union Territory for the treatment of 4536 ha of degraded mangroves through gap-funding from National CAMPA.

FinminIndia | Finmin.goi | www.finmin.nic.in | Ministry of Finance | @finminindia | Ministry of Finance

India's Mangrove Cover (ISFR-2023)

- Total mangrove cover: **4,991.68 km²** (0.15% of India's geographical area).
- State-wise share: **West Bengal (42.45%), Gujarat (23.66%), Andaman & Nicobar Islands (12.39%).**
- **Gujarat's mangroves increased by 253.06 km² (2001-2023).**



SYLLABUS : G.S. 3: Major Crops and Cropping Patterns
Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 13

Prices of cotton increase 8.5% in April on lower production

M. Soundariya Preetha
COIMBATORE

The price of widely-used Shankar 6 variety of cotton, grown largely in Gujarat, touched ₹60,500/ candy or about 8.5% higher than a month ago.

The Committee on Cotton Production and Consumption in India estimates Indian cotton output in the current cotton marketing season ending September 30 at almost 291 lakh bales or 0.42% lower than in the 2024-2025 season.

'Review import duty'

Consumption by textile mills is on the rise and they are projected to use 312 lakh bales against 306 lakh bales last year. "There is an urgent need to review the import duty on cotton as there is a shortage of the



Polyester pricing dynamics are forcing a shift to cotton.

commodity in India, affecting the textile industry, which is the largest cotton user, said Durai Palanisamy, chairman, Southern India Mills Association.

Nishanth Asher, secretary of the Indian Cotton Federation, added that globally, cotton futures prices for July are rallying.

From around 64.5 U.S. cents for a pound of cotton in December 2025 and January 2026, it has gone up

to 79.8 cents. "This is significant as in the last three years it's been in the range for 64-70 cents," he said.

Lower output

Global production is expected at 1.5-2.5 million bales lower than the earlier estimates. Production is likely to drop mainly in the U.S. and Brazil, two major cotton producing countries, on lower rainfall, though it is too early to forecast, he added.

"With the rise in crude oil prices, polyester and cotton economics are playing out. Polyester is turning out to be expensive because of the U.S., Israel, Iran war.

"This is shifting some demand to cotton, pushing the prices up. Even small shifts matter," he added. Further, there is a steady rise in textile demand.

PRELIMS 2020

Q87. "The crop is subtropical in nature. A hard frost is injurious to it. It requires at least 210 frost – free days and 50 to 100 centimeters of rainfall for its growth. A light well-drained soil capable of retaining moisture is ideally suited for the cultivation of the crop." Which one of the following is that crop?

- (a) Cotton
- (b) Jute
- (c) Sugarcane
- (d) Tea



Fig 3.11: Cotton Cultivation

Pakistan, Brazil and Egypt are the leading producers of cotton. It is one of the main raw materials for the cotton textile industry.

and Mexico.

Cotton: Cotton requires high temperature, light rainfall, two hundred and ten frost-free days and bright sunshine for its growth. It grows best on black and alluvial soils. China, USA, India,



SYLLABUS : G.S. 3: Major Crops and Cropping Patterns
Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 13

1 CLIMATE & GROWTH CONDITIONS

Temperature: 20–35°C (ideal during flowering)
Frost-free period: 180–210 days
Rainfall: 50–100 cm
Frost is highly harmful to the crop

2 SOIL & SEASON

Best soil: Black soil (Regur) of Deccan & Malwa Plateau
Season: Kharif crop

3 SPECIES OF COTTON

India grows all four cultivated species:

- Gossypium arboreum (Desi)
- Gossypium herbaceum (Desi)
- Gossypium hirsutum (American upland – dominant)
- Gossypium barbadense (Egyptian – long staple)

India is the only country growing all 4 species

4 PRODUCTION PROFILE

2nd largest producer in the world
Largest consumer
Share in global production: ~22–24%
~67% rain-fed, ~33% irrigated

5 DISTRIBUTION IN INDIA

Major states: Maharashtra, Gujarat, Telangana, MP, Karnataka, AP, TN, Punjab, Haryana, UP
Leading producers: Gujarat > Maharashtra > Telangana (approx.)

6 COTTON & TEXTILE INDUSTRY

Tamil Nadu: largest producer of mill-made cotton yarn
Ahmedabad: “Manchester of India”
Industry now decentralised (Surat, Coimbatore, Tiruppur, etc.)

7 GM COTTON (Bt COTTON)

Bollgard I & II (Bt cotton varieties)
Developed by Monsanto (now owned by Bayer)

8 HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

India is the original home of cotton
Cultivated since Indus Valley Civilization

9 AGRONOMIC FEATURES / ISSUES

Shallow root system
Fields often left bare → soil erosion risk

Cotton (White Gold)

India is the only country growing all 4 species



SYLLABUS : G.S. 2: Judiciary

Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 04

Assam govt. assures HC of filing reply to PILs against CM's 'hate speech' by next hearing

Press Trust of India

GUWAHATI

The Assam government on Tuesday assured the Gauhati High Court of filing its response by the next date of hearing in connection with a bunch of PILs that accused Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma of giving "hate speech".

The Division Bench of Chief Justice Ashutosh Kumar and Justice Arun Dev Choudhury listed the matter for hearing on May 28.

The three separate PILs that accused the CM of giving "hate speech" were taken up by the Bench on February 26, and observing that there was a "fissiparous tendency", issued notice to Mr. Sarma, the Centre, the State government and the Director General of Police in the matter.

The Supreme Court had on February 16 refused to



CM Himanta Biswa Sarma

entertain petitions seeking action against the Chief Minister over a now-deleted controversial video on X, purportedly showing him taking aim and firing with a rifle at members of a particular community.

A Bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M. Pancholi asked the petitioners to approach the Gauhati High Court with their grievances.

The petitioners alleged that remarks made by Mr. Sarma could divide society.

"The Respondent No 3

(Sarma), while addressing reporters openly admitted to having directed members of his political party to deliberately file complaints against Bengali-origin Muslims, referred to by him pejoratively as 'Miyas', with the express object of causing them harassment and hardship," alleged the petition filed by three prominent citizens.

'Inciting violence'

The PIL also alleged that Mr. Sarma is making speeches and releasing videos that are overtly inciting violence against the minority community by instigating civilians to take law and order into their own hands.

It alleged that the CM has indulged in "blatant hate speech" against the minority community by calling for their social and economic boycott and using derogatory words to describe them.



SYLLABUS : G.S. 2: Judiciary

Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 04

PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION (PIL)

Justice Beyond Boundaries, Rights for All

1 ORIGIN & MEANING

- Borrowed from American jurisprudence
- Aimed to give legal access to marginalised groups (poor, minorities, environment activists, etc.)
- PIL = litigation for protection of **public interest** (pollution, safety, rights violations)

Where Justice Reaches the Unreached

2 NATURE & FEATURES

- Not defined in any statute → evolved through judicial interpretation
- Tool of **judicial activism**
- Filed by any **public-spirited** individual/group
- Must be **bona fide** (not frivolous or for personal gain)
- Courts can act **suo motu** (on their own)

3 SCOPE (ISSUES COVERED)

- Bonded labour, undertrial prisoners
- Child neglect, labour exploitation, minimum wages
- Atrocities on women
- Environmental protection & ecology
- Food adulteration
- Heritage & cultural preservation

4 CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS

- ARTICLE 32** Supreme Court
- ARTICLE 226** High Courts
- Relaxed **locus standi** → anyone can approach court on behalf of affected persons

PIL EMPOWERS THE VOICELESS, PROTECTS THE VULNERABLE & PROMOTES SOCIAL JUSTICE.

EVOLUTION & LANDMARK JUDGEMENTS

1 EARLY PHASE

- Mumbai Kamgar Sabha vs. Abdul Thai (1976)**
Justice Krishna Iyer laid foundation

KEY CASES

M.C. Mehta vs. Union of India
Environmental protection (Ganga pollution)

Vishaka vs. State of Rajasthan (1997)
Sexual harassment = violation of Articles 14, 15, 21
Led to **POSH Act, 2013**

SIGNIFICANCE

- Enhances **access to justice**
- Protects fundamental rights of **vulnerable sections**
- Ensures **accountability** of state & institutions
- Instrument for **social transformation & governance reforms**

2 EXPANSION PHASE

- Hussainara Khatoon vs. State of Bihar (1979)**
Highlighted plight of undertrial prisoners
Established Right to Speedy Trial (Art. 21)
- S.P. Gupta vs. Union of India (1981)**
Justice P.N. Bhagwati expanded PIL scope
Allowed any public-spirited person to file PIL
Made PIL a tool for enforcing public duties

PIL – A POWERFUL TOOL FOR JUSTICE, EQUITY & HUMAN DIGNITY

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE, POWER OF THE CONSTITUTION

3 FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

- Courts accepted even letters as writ petitions
- Private cases can be treated as PIL in larger public interest

JUSTICE FOR ALL

CONSTITUTION OF INDIA



SYLLABUS : G.S. 2: Bilateral Groupings & Agreements, Important International Institutions

Newspaper : The Indian express **Page No : 20**

NATO intercepts Russian military aircraft flying over the Baltic Sea

Associated Press
Lithuania, April 21

NATO INTERCEPTED Russian strategic bombers and fighter jets that flew over the Baltic Sea on Monday, a muscular display of air power on the alliance's eastern flank away from the spotlight on the Middle East.

French Rafale fighters were deployed from a Lithuanian air base where they are stationed as part of a decades-long NATO air-policing effort.

The fighters armed with air-to-air missiles joined jets from Sweden, Finland, Poland, Denmark and Romania.

They all took to the skies to inspect and keep watch on the Russian flight, the French detachment said.

The Russian mission included two supersonic Tu-22M3s, as well as about 10 fighters — both SU-30s and SU-35s — that took turns escorting the larger strategic bombers, according to the statement.

The Russian Defense Ministry said the long-range bombers' flight was scheduled and occurred in airspace over the neutral waters of the Baltic Sea. The flight took more than four hours, the ministry said Monday on Telegram. "At certain stages of the route, the long-range bombers were accompanied by fighters of foreign states," the ministry said.

- **1949 , Washington Treaty**, Security alliance of 30 countries from North America and Europe.
- System of collective defence where independent member states agree for mutual defence in case of any attack by external party.
 - **Article 5** of the Washington Treaty -an attack against one Ally is an attack against all.
- **Headquarter** - Brussels, Belgium.

Functions:

- **Political: promotes democratic values and, build trust and, in the long run, prevent conflict.**
- **Military: committed to the peaceful resolution of disputes.**
 - If diplomatic efforts fail, it has the military power to undertake crisis-management operations.

UPSC Prelims PYQ 2025

21. Consider the following countries :

- I. Austria
- II. Bulgaria
- III. Croatia
- IV. Serbia
- V. Sweden
- VI. North Macedonia

How many of the above are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization?

- (a) Only three (b) Only four
(c) Only five (d) All the six



North Atlantic Treaty Organization



SYLLABUS : G.S. 2: Bilateral Groupings & Agreements, Important International Institutions

Newspaper : The Indian express **Page No : 20**

Alphabetical list of NATO member countries

 Albania 2009	 Belgium 1949	 Bulgaria 2004	 Canada 1949
 Croatia 2009	 Czechia 1999	 Denmark 1949	 Estonia 2004
 Finland 2023	 France 1949	 Germany 1955	 Greece 1952
 Hungary 1999	 Iceland 1949	 Italy 1949	 Latvia 2004

 Lithuania 2004	 Luxembourg 1949	 Montenegro 2017	 North Macedonia 2020
 Norway 1949	 Poland 1999	 Portugal 1949	 Romania 2004
 Slovakia 2004	 Slovenia 2004	 Spain 1982	 Sweden 2024
 The Netherlands 1949	 Türkiye 1952	 United Kingdom 1949	 United States 1949



Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Insolvency and Bankruptcy framework in India:

1. Operational creditors have voting rights in the Committee of Creditors.
2. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India functions under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
3. The adjudicating authority for corporate insolvency resolution is the National Company Law Tribunal.

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

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

Answer: a

Q2. Consider the following statements regarding mangroves in India:

1. As per the India State of Forest Report 2023, West Bengal has the highest share of mangrove cover in India, followed by Gujarat.
2. Mangrove ecosystems help in coastal protection by reducing the impact of storm surges and erosion.
3. Gujarat has recorded a decrease in mangrove cover between 2001 and 2023.

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

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

Answer: b

Q3. Consider the following statements regarding cotton cultivation:

1. India is the only country in the world that cultivates all four species of cotton.
2. Cotton is a rabi crop with a shallow root system.

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

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding Public Interest Litigation (PIL):

1. It is clearly defined in the Constitution of India.
2. PIL can be filed in matters related to bonded labour, child rights & food adulteration affecting public health.
3. Courts cannot take suo motu action in PIL cases.

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

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

Answer: a

Q5. Consider the following countries:

1. Finland
2. Sweden
3. Ukraine
4. Poland
5. Austria

Which of the countries given above are members of NATO?

- a) 1, 2 and 4 only
- b) 2, 3 and 5 only
- c) 1, 3 and 4 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: a





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