



**VAJIRAM & RAVI**  
Institute for IAS Examination

# The Analyst

**CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout**

**1st May 2026**

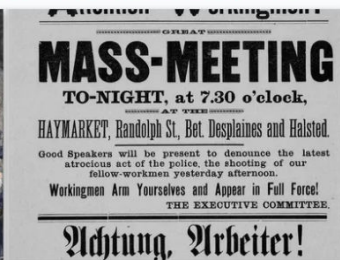


**CONTEXT:** From 4 Labour Codes to Noida's wage protests, Trade Union Act 1926, and Ambedkar's reforms: a peek on May Day.

## Why Does Labour Need Protection?

### 17 What is May Day (Int'l Workers' Day)?

- **Commemorates the global labour movement and workers' struggle for rights**
- **May 4, 1886: Haymarket Massacre, Chicago, USA**
  - Strikes; 8-hour workday; bomb; police fire kills
  - **1889: Second International declared May 1st**



- **India: Madras (Chennai) in 1923**
  - **M. Singaravelu Chettiar; 1st in Asia**

**Free Mkt:** Capital > labour

- 12–16 hour shifts, child labour, no holidays, no safety measures

**3 dimensions:** (1) Wage protection; (2) Physical safety; (3) Collective power

### International Labour Day

**"May Day"**

First Celebrated in India on May 1, 1923, By  
**The Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan** led  
by  
**Comrade Singaravelar**



## Constitutional Provisions for Labour – Prelims & Mains

Article	Provision	Present Relevance
<b>Art. 19(1)(c)</b>	Fundamental Right to <b>form associations or unions</b>	<b>Basis of trade union rights</b> – Fundamental Right, not DPSP
<b>Art. 23</b>	Prohibition of <b>forced labour</b> (begar)	FR; <i>People's Union for Democratic Rights v. Uoi</i> (1982)
<b>Art. 24</b>	Prohibition of <b>child labour</b> in factories/mines	FR; strengthened by Child Labour Act
<b>Art. 39(a)</b>	<b>DPSP:</b> adequate means of livelihood for all	Ambedkar's contribution; not enforceable but directive
<b>Art. 39(d)</b>	<b>DPSP:</b> equal pay for equal work for men & women	SC applied this in <i>Randhir Singh v. Uoi</i> (1982)
<b>Art. 41</b>	<b>DPSP:</b> right to work, education, public assistance in cases of unemployment/old age	Basis of MGNREGA, ESI, EPF schemes
<b>Art. 42</b>	<b>DPSP:</b> just & humane conditions of work; maternity relief	Maternity Benefit Act; Factories Act
<b>Art. 43</b>	<b>DPSP:</b> living wage, decent standard of life, leisure, social opportunities for all workers	Minimum wage legislation; 8-hour workday
<b>Art. 43A</b>	<b>DPSP:</b> participation of workers in management of industries	Works Committees; Industrial Democracy concept
<b>Art. 246 + Schedules 7</b>	Labour is in the <b>Concurrent List</b> (Entry 22–24)	<b>44 central + 100+ state labour laws pre-2020</b> <b>4 Codes:</b> but states must still notify their <b>own rules</b>



**CONTEXT:** From 4 Labour Codes to Noida's wage protests, Trade Union Act 1926, and Ambedkar's reforms: a peek on May Day.

## Full trade union history timeline



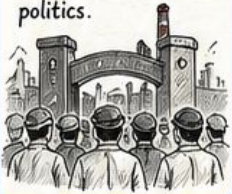
# History of Trade Unions in India (1918-2025)



### 1 PRE-INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLE

1908

**Bombay Mill Strike**  
Workers protested over the imprisonment of Bal Gangadhar Tilak; the first major link between labour and nationalist politics.



1918

**Madras Labour Union**  
India's first trade union with regular membership and a relief fund; highlighted Bahman Pestonji Wadia.



1920

**AITUC founded**  
India's first national trade union body; mentioned Lala Lajpat Rai and N.M. Joshi.



1921

**Buckingham & Carnatic Mills case**  
The union suffered legal action and the absence of labour protection.



1921

**N.M. Joshi's resolution**  
A call for legal registration and protection of trade unions.



### 2 TRADE UNION ACT, 1926 — LEGAL PROTECTION ARRIVES

TRADE UNION ACT, 1926



PROTECTED

- ★ Unions get legal recognition.
- ★ Protection from criminal conspiracy charges for legitimate union activity.
- ★ No civil suit for acts done in furtherance of a trade dispute.
- ★ Trade union is no longer treated as a conspiracy.



### 3 GROWTH, REPRESSION, AND LABOUR POLITICS

1928

**Girni Kamgar Union** grows rapidly  
Strikes multiply across industries.



Colonial state crackdowns



Meerut Conspiracy Case



Trade Disputes Bill



Public Safety Bill



Lala Lajpat Rai dies after the Lahore lathi charge.



Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt respond in 1929 with their Assembly action.



**CONTEXT:** From 4 Labour Codes to Noida's wage protests, Trade Union Act 1926, and Ambedkar's reforms: a peek on May Day.

## 4 AMBEDKAR AND THE LABOUR ARCHITECTURE OF FREEDOM

### 1942-46: Dr B.R. Ambedkar as Labour Member



- ✓ 8-hour workday
- ✓ Maternity benefits
- ✓ Provident fund
- ✓ ESI
- ✓ Dearness allowance
- ✓ Employment exchanges
- ✓ Housing

### First Tripartite Labour Conference in 1942



### Post-1947: Constitutional & Legal Framework



Article 19(1)(c) gives constitutional status to union rights.

Major labour laws follow:

- Factories Act, 1948
- Minimum Wages Act, 1948
- ESI Act, 1948
- Industrial Disputes Act, 1947
- Contract Labour Act, 1970



## Why Ambedkar Matters to Labour History

- **Founded the Independent Labour Party (1937)**
- **His approach was unique:**
  - Human dignity
  - Caste liberation
  - Political participation

**Believed:** "Labour must enter the affairs of politics and find their solution beyond trade unionism." Rights secured at the bargaining table can be taken away – only political power makes them durable.

## Ambedkar's Labour Reforms (1942-46)

Reform	What Changed
<b>8-Hour Workday</b>	Reduced working hours from 12 → 8 hours
<b>Maternity Benefits</b>	Extended maternity leave to 16 weeks (10 before + 6 after delivery); wage support during absence
<b>Provident Fund</b>	Compulsory retirement savings for workers
<b>Dearness Allowance (DA)</b>	Inflation-linked additional pay component
<b>Employee State Insurance (ESI)</b>	Social insurance for health, sickness, disability
<b>Employment Exchanges</b>	Government job placement centres
<b>Housing &amp; Medical Facilities</b>	Required for industrial workers
<b>Mica Mines Welfare Fund (1946)</b>	Dedicated welfare fund for mica miners
<b>Pithead Baths (Mines)</b>	Separate bathing facilities for male/female miners
<b>Tripartite Labour Conference (1942)</b>	First tripartite forum: govt + employers + workers as equals
<b>Labour Investigation Committee (1944)</b>	Fact-finding body on wages, conditions, housing
<b>Compulsory Union Recognition</b>	Employers required to recognise registered unions

### Ambedkar's Labour Legacy in the Constitution

- **Art. 39:** Directs state to ensure "adequate means to livelihood" and "equal pay for equal work" – directly from Ambedkar's 1942 reforms.
- **Art. 43:** "Living wage, decent standard of life, full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities" for all workers – reflects his philosophy that labour must live, not just survive.
- **Art. 43A:** Workers' participation in management – his industrial democracy vision.
- **Labour in Concurrent List:** Ambedkar warned in 1942 that without central legislation, provinces would enact varied laws "allowing provincial considerations to dominate" – he advocated for national uniformity. The four codes' centralising logic echoes this, though the execution is contested.
- His vision: "For him, labour must be able to live a life of self-development of their human, cultural and spiritual personalities." – Labour rights as human flourishing, not mere economic transaction.



# Labour Day: Indian workforce without floor



**CONTEXT:** From 4 Labour Codes to Noida's wage protests, Trade Union Act 1926, and Ambedkar's reforms: a peek on May Day.

## The Four Labour Codes

### 1 Code on Wages, 2019

Consolidates: Minimum Wages Act, Payment of Wages Act, Equal Remuneration Act, Payment of Bonus Act. Key provision: Universal minimum wage for all workers (not just scheduled employments). Extends minimum wage to all workers including unorganised sector. Replaces: 4 laws

### 2 Industrial Relations (IR) Code, 2020

Consolidates: Trade Union Act 1926, Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, Industrial Disputes Act 1947. Key changes: (a) Layoff/retrenchment/closure threshold raised from 100 → 300 workers (b) Strike notice: 60 days (up from 14–15 days) (c) Flash strikes banned (d) Mass casual leave by 50%+ = deemed strike (e) Union recognition requires 51% worker support. Replaces: 3 laws

### 3 Social Security Code, 2020

Consolidates: EPF Act, ESI Act, Maternity Benefit Act, Gratuity Act, etc. Key provision: Extends social security framework to gig/platform workers — but without defining them as employees. Creates welfare boards for unorganised workers. Social security fund contributions from aggregators (platforms). Replaces: 9 laws

### 4 Occupational Safety, Health & Working Conditions (OSHC) Code, 2020

Consolidates: Factories Act 1948, Mines Act, Dock Workers Act, etc. Key changes: (a) Factory definition raised: 10 workers (powered) → 20; 20 workers (unpowered) → 40 — removing small units from safety oversight (b) Inspector replaced by 'Inspector-cum-Facilitator' model (c) Web-based randomised inspection allocation (d) Employer self-certification allowed. Replaces: 13 laws

## Second National Commission on Labour (Sachar Committee, 2002)

**Critical Fact:** The four codes were passed in 2019–2020 but came into force only on **November 21, 2025** — after 5 years — because states needed to notify their own rules. Even on implementation, **no transition period was provided**. The Indian Labour Conference (apex tripartite body) has not been convened since 2015 — workers had no formal consultation on laws that fundamentally restructured their rights.

## Key Labour Laws — Historical & Current Reference

Law	Year	What It Did	Status Now
Workmen's Compensation Act	1923	Compensation for industrial injury/death	Subsumed in Social Security Code 2020
Trade Union Act	1926	Legal recognition; immunity from conspiracy charges	Subsumed in IR Code 2020
Maternity Benefit Act	1929/ 2017	<b>Maternity leave</b> (26 weeks post-2017)	Subsumed in Social Security Code 2020
<b>Industrial Disputes Act</b>	1947	Mechanism for resolving <b>industrial disputes</b> ; layoff/retrenchment rules	Subsumed in IR Code 2020
<b>Factories Act</b>	<b>1948</b>	Working hours, safety, welfare in factories	Subsumed in OSHWC Code 2020
<b>Minimum Wages Act</b>	1948	Minimum wages for scheduled employments	Subsumed in Code on Wages 2019
<b>Contract Labour Act</b>	1970	Regulation/abolition of contract labour	Subsumed in OSHWC Code 2020
Equal Remuneration Act	1976	Equal pay for men and women for same work	Subsumed in Code on Wages 2019
<b>Child Labour (P&amp;R) Act</b>	1986/ 2016	Prohibits employment of children	<b>NOT subsumed — continues separately</b>



# Labour Day: Indian workforce without floor



**CONTEXT:** From 4 Labour Codes to Noida's wage protests, Trade Union Act 1926, and Ambedkar's reforms: a peek on May Day.

## Key Changes Under the Codes — Tabular Comparison

Parameter	Old Law Position	New Code Position	Impact
<b>Layoff/retrenchment threshold</b>	100 workers (need govt. permission)	<b>300 workers</b>	⬇️ Majority of Indian factories can now <b>retrench without permission</b>
<b>Strike notice period</b>	14–15 days	60 days	⬇️ Spontaneous/flash <b>strikes effectively criminalised</b>
<b>Flash strikes</b>	Legally possible	<b>Prohibited outright</b>	⬇️ Workers cannot respond immediately to sudden <b>grievances</b>

⚠️ **The Pre-1982 Reversion:** The retrenchment threshold change (100 → 300 workers) is not new — it restores the pre-1982 threshold. In 1982, the threshold was reduced from 300 to 100 after a wave of mass layoffs affected over **half a million workers**. The 2020 code reverses this Emergency-era protection. The government frames this as "ease of doing business"; critics call it "ease of firing workers."

Parameter	Old Law Position	New Code Position	Impact
<b>"Factory" threshold (with power)</b>	10 workers	<b>20 workers</b>	⬇️ <b>Smaller units</b> (garment, hosiery, food processing) <b>exit safety compliance</b>
<b>"Factory" threshold (without power)</b>	20 workers	<b>40 workers</b>	⬇️ Even more excluded from Factories Act equivalent protections
<b>Industrial inspections</b>	Unannounced, independent	<b>Web-based randomised; Inspector-cum-Facilitator; self-certification</b>	⬇️ May violate ILO Convention No. 81 on independent inspections
<b>Strike during conciliation</b>	Restricted	Banned + 60 days after	⬇️ Employer can keep workforce in indefinite procedural suspension
<b>Gig/platform workers</b>	Not covered at all	Social Security Code mentions welfare — but not as employees	⬆️ Some recognition; ⬇️ No employment status, no collective bargaining rights



**CONTEXT:** From 4 Labour Codes to Noida's wage protests, Trade Union Act 1926, and Ambedkar's reforms: a peek on May Day.

## 🔥 April 2026 — Two Events That Define New Labour Regime

### 👕 Event 1: Noida Garment Workers' Strike (April 10, 2026)

Haryana raised minimum wages by **35%** (April 9) — unskilled wage: ₹11,274 → ₹15,220. Identical workers in Noida earning **only ₹435/day** vs ₹585/day in Haryana.

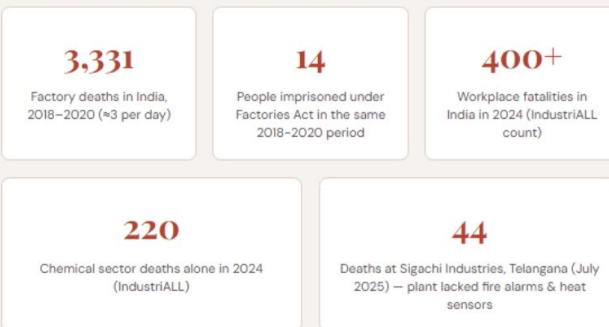


🔗 **The Interstate Wage Competition Problem:** States compete to attract investment by keeping wages low — a "race to the bottom." A firm in Noida (UP) facing higher wages simply threatens to relocate to a lower-wage state. This is why a **binding national minimum wage** — which prevents this competition — is a key reform demand. The Code on Wages' universal minimum is a step, but without a binding floor, the problem persists.

### ⚡ Event 2: Singhitarai Boiler Explosion, Chhattisgarh (April 14, 2026)

High-pressure steam tube ruptured; 600°C released onto workers eating lunch = **20 workers killed**  
**PATTERN in Chhattisgarh: 296 industrial deaths in 3 years.** The dead are always **contract workers**.

#### 📊 Industrial Deaths in India — The Data That Convicts



📌 Sources: Directorate General of Factory Advice Service & Labour Institutes (DGFASLI); IndustriALL Global Union; Ministry of Labour.

## 🌐 The Gig Worker Silence

### India's 7.7 Crore Unprotected

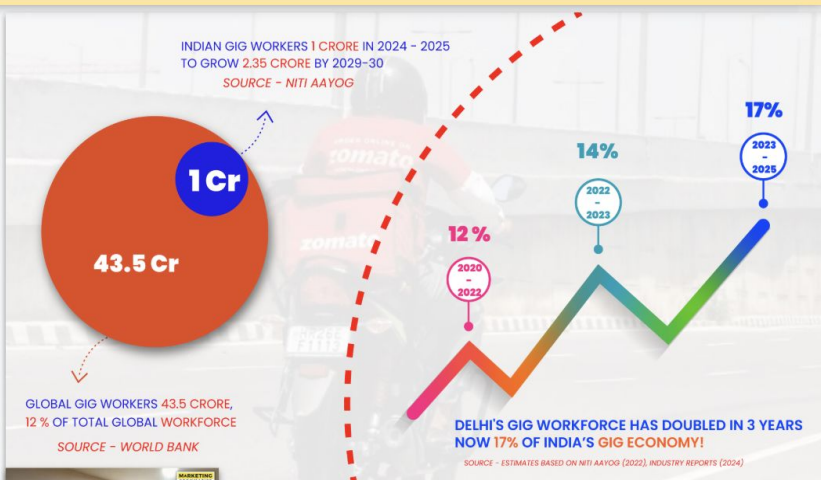
- **2025 estimates: 15+ million**
- **The words 'gig' and 'platform' do not appear even once in the Industrial Relations Code 2020.**
  - Platform workers are legally classified as **independent contractors**

### Social Security Code 2020: "welfare fund for platform workers"

- **Does not extend employment status.**
- **4 states: Raj, Karn, Telg, Jhar**

### Fairwork India Report 2024: NO 11 major platforms recognised a collective body of workers or a trade union.

- **Telangana Gig & Platform Workers Union**
- **Indian Federation of App-Based Transport Workers**



### Zomato scraps green uniforms for "pure veg" mode delivery ...

20 Mar 2024 — Zomato scraps green uniform for "pure veg" mode delivery partners, thanks customer...



TOI The Times of India



# Labour Day: Indian workforce without floor



**CONTEXT:** From 4 Labour Codes to Noida's wage protests, Trade Union Act 1926, and Ambedkar's reforms: a peek on May Day.

## Key Government Initiatives – Labour Welfare

### e-Shram Portal (2021)

National database of unorganised workers – 30+ crore registrations. Provides UAN, accident insurance (₹2 lakh), links to welfare schemes. First universal identification of informal workers.

### PM SVANidhi (2020)

Street vendors' micro-credit scheme. Recognises street vendors as workers entitled to formal credit – ₹10,000 → ₹50,000 progressive loans.

### MGNREGA (2005)

100 days guaranteed wage employment in rural areas. Key safety net for migrant and agricultural labour. Budget 2025-26: ₹86,000 crore. Wage rates still below actual minimum wages in many states.

### Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana

₹6,500 cash transfer to pregnant/lactating women (first child). Extension of Ambedkar-era maternity protection to informal women workers outside ESI coverage.

### Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY

₹5 lakh health coverage for 50 crore beneficiaries – effectively extends health security to informal workers outside ESI. Extended to senior citizens (70+) in 2024.

### Shram Suvidha Portal

Unified compliance portal for employers. Randomised inspection allocation. Single registration for multiple labour laws. Touted as ease of doing business – criticised for diluting inspection independence.

### National Career Service Portal (NCS)

Modernised employment exchange network – 1,000+ NCS Centres. Ambedkar's 1942 concept of employment exchanges revived in digital form.

### DGFASLI Safety Campaigns

National Safety Week (March 4-10), National Safety Day – awareness campaigns. But enforcement remains the Achilles heel with 3 deaths/day in factories.

### Indian Labour Institutions

Status (2026)

#### Indian Labour Conference

⚠️ Not convened since 2015

#### DGFASLI

(Directorate General of Factory Advice Service & Labour Institutes)

#### Chief Labour Commissioner

#### National Safety Council (NSC)

#### Employees' Provident Fund Organisation

~6.5 cr subs

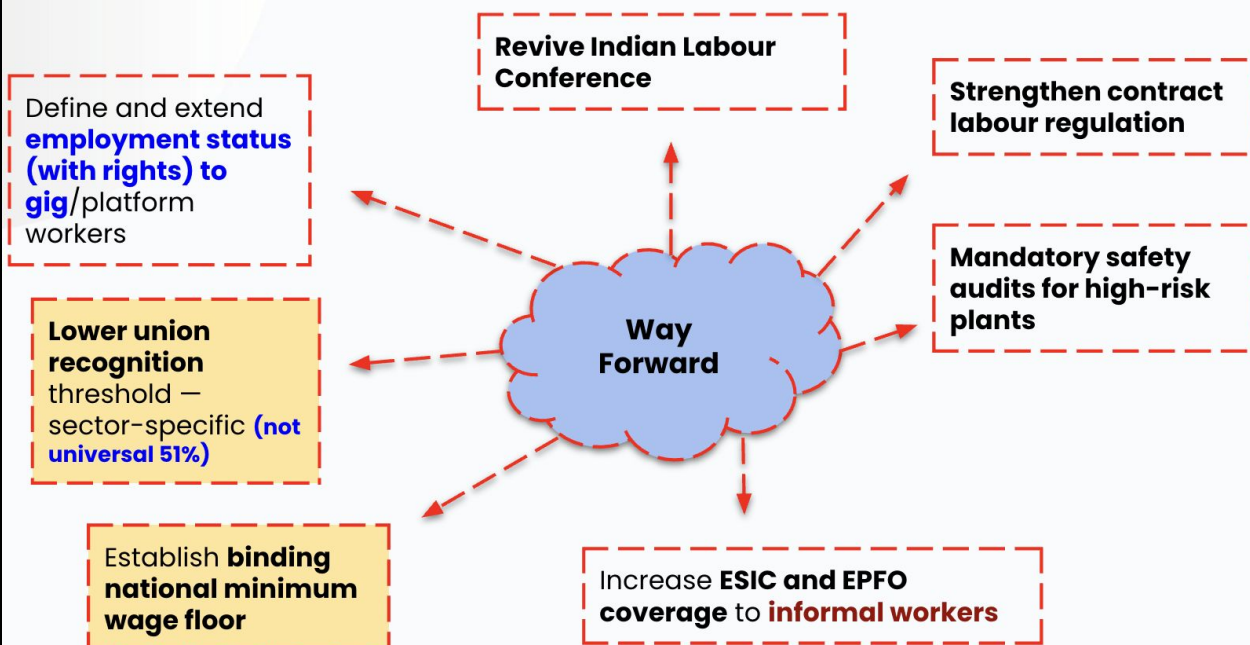
#### Employees' State Insurance Corporation

~3.5 cr insured

#### Shram Suvidha Portal

Central to new Inspector-cum-Facilitator model

## Solutions for a peaceful labour force



# Labour Day: Indian workforce without floor

**CONTEXT:** From 4 Labour Codes to Noida's wage protests, Trade Union Act 1926, and Ambedkar's reforms: a peek on May Day.

## Mains Practise Question

**B.R. Ambedkar's labour reforms of 1942-46 were more visionary than the four Labour Codes of 2020. Critically examine Ambedkar's vision that workers need to be recognised as political participants, not just wage-earners.**

(15 Marks, 250 words)



# SC directed to amend Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act



**CONTEXT:** The April 2026 SC Case — What Happened & Why It Matters

## Abortion & the Law in India

**Abortion = deliberate ending of a pregnancy** before the foetus can survive outside the womb.

**Indian legal language:** Medical Termination of Pregnancy (**not an absolute right – conditional**)



### Core Debate

**MTP Act is NOT about abortion as a right – it is about making safe abortion accessible under specific conditions.**  
Woman's consent is necessary, not sufficient; medical criteria must also be met.

### Why Was the MTP Act Enacted?

**Pre-1971:** illegal in India

- Unsafe, clandestine abortions = **maternal mortality**
- **Shantilal Shah Committee** (1964)

**Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971**

## The MTP Act, 1971 – Structure & Key Provisions

### Original 1971 Provisions – Gestation-Based Framework

Gestation Period	Conditions for MTP	No. of Doctors Required
Up to 12 weeks	Opinion of 1 registered medical practitioner (RMP)	1 doctor
12 to 20 weeks	Opinion of 2 RMPs required	2 doctors
Beyond 20 weeks	✗ Not permitted under original Act (except to save mother's life)	–

✦ The 20-week upper limit became the *central controversy* over the next five decades.

### Grounds for MTP Under the 1971 Act

Risk to life / physical health of the woman	Continuation endangers her life
Grave injury to mental health	Includes distress caused by unwanted pregnancy
Foetal abnormalities	Substantial risk child born with serious handicap
Rape / sexual assault	Unwanted pregnancy from rape deemed grave mental injury
Contraceptive failure	Only for married women (amended later)
Socio-economic factors	Including number of existing children



# SC directed to amend Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act



**CONTEXT:** The April 2026 SC Case — What Happened & Why It Matters

## MTP (Amendment) Act, 2021

Gestational Period	Permission Required From	Conditions / Grounds
0 to 20 Weeks	1 Registered Medical Practitioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk to life/mental/physical health of the woman.</li> <li>Substantial risk that the child would be born with serious abnormalities.</li> <li>Failure of Contraception (Now applies to any woman, married or unmarried).</li> </ul>
20 to 24 Weeks	2 Registered Medical Practitioners	Only for <b>"Special Categories"</b> of women (defined in Rules): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survivors of rape/incest.</li> <li>Minors.</li> <li>Change in marital status (Widowhood/Divorce).</li> <li>Women with disabilities.</li> <li>Emergencies/Disasters.</li> </ul>
Beyond 24 Weeks	State Medical Board	Only for <b>Substantial Fetal Abnormalities</b> diagnosed by the Board. (No upper time limit here).

Privacy

Crime to reveal identity of woman (jail)

## MTP Act: The Consent Checklist

Whose permission is actually required?

- ✗ Husband/Partner?**  
NO. (Irrelevant under MTP Act).
- ✗ In-Laws?**  
NO.
- ✓ The Pregnant Woman?**  
YES. (Mandatory).
- ✓ Medical Practitioner?**  
YES. (Opinion required).
  - ✓ 0-20 Weeks: 1 Doctor.
  - ✓ 20-24 Weeks: 2 Doctors.
- ! Medical Board?**  
! **ONLY for >24 weeks** (in case of foetal abnormalities).  
Subject to legal provisions and specific conditions.

Source: Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, India. Consult a qualified healthcare provider for medical advice. Jan 2026

## The April 2026 SC Case — What Happened

**The Critical Gap the SC is Addressing (April 2026):** Even after the 2021 amendment, the law has *no explicit provision to remove the time limit when pregnancy results from rape.* The Supreme Court on 30 April 2026 asked Parliament to amend the law so that **no gestational time limit applies to rape survivors** — a fundamental reform demand.

Who is the survivor?	15-year-old minor girl — rape survivor
Gestational age at case	30 weeks (7.5 months) — well beyond 24-week limit
Prior mental health history	Attempted suicide <b>twice</b> due to unwanted pregnancy
Who challenged?	AIIMS Delhi (filed curative petition & review plea against SC order)
Who also challenged?	Central Government (filed curative petition)
Key SC order (April 24, 2026)	Bench of Justices B.V. Nagarathna & Ujjal Bhuyan allowed MTP
April 30, 2026 order	CJI Surya Kant & Justice Joymalya Bagchi bench — asked Parliament to amend MTP Act
AIIMS position	Foetus viable at 30 weeks; termination would cause baby with deformities; minor mother risks permanent reproductive damage



# SC directed to amend Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act



**CONTEXT:** The April 2026 SC Case — What Happened & Why It Matters

## The April 2026 SC Case — Key Quotes from the SC

"A minor child cannot be forced to bear a pregnancy... Please amend your law that when there is pregnancy due to rape etc, then time limitation will not be there."

— Chief Justice Surya Kant, April 30, 2026

"Unwanted pregnancy cannot be thrust on a person. Imagine... she is a child. She should be studying now. But we want to make her a mother."

— CJI Surya Kant

"Medical termination of unwanted pregnancy cannot be rejected on grounds of advanced stage of pregnancy or normalcy of foetus. Not allowing termination on that basis would render the right to bodily autonomy nugatory."

— Justice B.V. Nagarathna & Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, April 24, 2026

"Who has stopped you? What is your *Parens patriae* approach? Give respect to your citizen. Show data to the parents and if they choose to keep it, then so be it."

— Justice Joymalya Bagchi (to AIIMS)

## The Core Legal Dispute — Child vs Foetus

### AIIMS' Argument

"It is not child versus foetus but child versus child."

#### AIIMS raised:

- **Baby** = live child with severe deformities.
- **Minor mother** risks permanent reproductive health damage
- Child can be placed for adoption

Highlighting "grave legal and ethical implications" in the matter, AIIMS said, "The medical board has unambiguously opined that at the current stage of gestation, the termination of the pregnancy of Minor 'N' will not be a conventional abortion but will result in a preterm delivery of a viable fetus—one that has a fair chance of survival. The court's order proceeds on the premise of termination of pregnancy; however, the medical reality, as disclosed by the post-order assessment, is that a living, viable child will be prematurely delivered into the world."

### SC's Counter Position

"**Reproductive autonomy + Mental health.**"

- MTP **cannot be refused on grounds of gestational age alone or foetal normalcy alone.**
- It is not for AIIMS to choose for the citizen — **AIIMS can only render medical service.**
- Decision must rest with the survivor and her parents — after **full informed counselling.**



# SC directed to amend Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act



**CONTEXT:** The April 2026 SC Case — What Happened & Why It Matters

## Constitutional Dimensions — Rights at Stake

### Fundamental Rights Involved

Fundamental Right	Article	Relevance to MTP / Abortion
Right to Life & Personal Liberty	Article 21	Includes right to bodily autonomy, reproductive autonomy, right to health, right to dignity
Right to Equality	Article 14	Denying MTP to rape survivors while others get it = discrimination
Right against Discrimination	Article 15	Special protection for women & children; state must act to remove disadvantage
Right to Privacy	Article 21 (read with Puttaswamy judgment)	Decisions about pregnancy are part of the "intimate zone" of privacy
Protection of Children	Article 15(3)	State can make special provisions for children — here inverted: state must protect child-survivor, not burden her

### Puttaswamy Judgment (2017) Connection:

In *Justice K.S. Puttaswamy vs Union of India*, a 9-judge Constitution Bench unanimously held that Privacy is a Fundamental Right under Article 21. The SC specifically noted that "a woman's right to make reproductive choices" is a dimension of privacy. This 2017 judgment is the constitutional bedrock of the 2026 SC ruling.

## Landmark SC Judgments — MTP & Reproductive Rights

**2009** — *Suchita Srivastava vs Chandigarh Administration*

First SC judgment to explicitly link reproductive choice to FR.

- Reproductive choices is a **dimension of personal liberty under Article 21**
- Even a **woman with mental illness** had the right to carry her pregnancy.

**2016** — *Z vs State of Bihar*

Held that **rigid time limits cannot override a rape survivor's fundamental rights** to health and dignity.

**2017** — *K.S. Puttaswamy vs Union of India*

**Reproductive autonomy** explicitly **included within the right to privacy**. Constitutional bedrock for abortion rights.

**2022** — *X vs Principal Secretary, Health & Family Welfare Dept, Govt of NCT Delhi*

- SC unanimously held that **unmarried women have the same right to safe and legal abortion as married women**.
- Struck down Rule 3B(c) of MTP Rules as **unconstitutional**
  - Held that marital status cannot be the basis to deny MTP.
  - Extended 20–24 week window to unmarried women.



# SC directed to amend Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act



**CONTEXT:** The April 2026 SC Case — What Happened & Why It Matters

## Related Laws — POCSO, PCPNDT & BNS

### Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012

- **Gender-neutral; below 18 years**
- **Defines and penalises:** penetrative sexual assault, sexual harassment, use of child for pornography
- **Special courts; Mandatory reporting; reverse burden of proof; Max punishment**

### PC&PNDT Act, 1994

"Pre-Conception & Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act"

**Bans sex-selective abortion:**

- **Female foeticide**

**MTP Act + PC&PNDT Act = India's dual-track abortion regulatory regime**

### BNS 2023 (Replacing IPC) — Relevant Provisions

Offence	BNS Section	Punishment
Rape	Section 63	Minimum 10 years; maximum life imprisonment
Rape of a minor (below 16)	Section 65	Minimum 20 years; maximum life imprisonment
Rape of a minor (below 12)	Section 65(2)	Life imprisonment or death
Causing miscarriage without woman's consent	Section 88	Up to 10 years imprisonment
Act done in good faith for benefit of person	Section 20	Exception — protects doctors performing legal MTP

## Issues & Challenges

### The other side of reality

- Mandatory **Medical Board** not constituted in many states
- **Unsafe abortions:** ~13% of maternal deaths in India — WHO
- MTP services concentrated in **urban areas**
- **Stigma** around abortion
- Minor rape survivors face **double trauma**
- Fast-track courts backlogged
- Institutions resist controversial MTP orders
- Poor **awareness**

FIGURE 3.2

Among facilities that offer postabortion care but not abortion, lack of trained staff is a main reason for not providing the service.

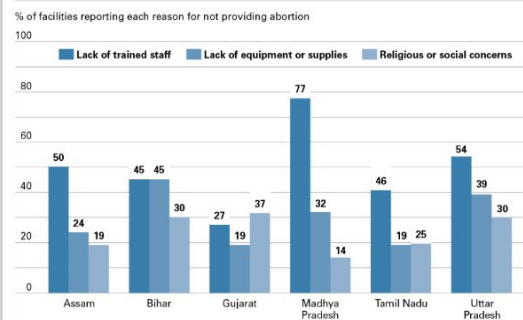


FIGURE 3.2 Source: Health Facilities Survey.

### SOUTH SEES DISTURBING SPIKE

TOP THREE STATES WITH HIGHEST MEDICALLY TERMINATED PREGNANCIES

State	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Telangana (917% increase)	1,578	3,114	4,071	12,365	16,059
Andhra Pradesh (367% increase)	2,282	9,119	8,446	8,949	10,676

OVER 600 WELL-CAPACITATED FACILITIES

• Telangana has 608 healthcare facilities offering abortion services across urban and rural areas

• The average is 26 procedures per facility, indicating low patient load per centre

Kerala (203% increase)

Year	Procedures
2020-21	8,525
2021-22	10,989
2022-23	14,519
2023-24	20,179
2024-25	25,884



# SC directed to amend Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act



**CONTEXT:** The April 2026 SC Case — What Happened & Why It Matters

**Mission Shakti (2021)**  
Umbrella scheme covering Mission Vatsalya (child protection) + Sambal + Samarthyaa sub-schemes. Includes support for rape survivors and trafficking victims.

**Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY)**  
Conditional cash transfer for institutional deliveries. Reduces unsafe abortions indirectly by strengthening institutional maternal health infrastructure.

**One Stop Centres (Sakhi Centres)**  
Provides integrated support — medical, legal, psychological — to women survivors of violence including rape. 760+ centres across India as of 2025.

**POCSO e-Box**  
Online complaint portal for POCSO offences — allows anonymous reporting. Run by NCPCR (National Commission for Protection of Child Rights).

**NIRBHAYA FUND (2013)**  
₹1,000 crore corpus for initiatives to enhance safety and security of women. Funds Sakhi Centres, FTSCs, CCTV surveillance projects.

**India's International Commitments**  
CEDAW (ratified 1993), UNCRC (ratified 1992), SDG Goal 3 (Good Health) & SDG Goal 5 (Gender Equality) — all support reproductive rights & child protection.

## Way Forward

Mandate Medical Boards in all states within a strict timeline

Expand Medical Abortion (pill-based, up to 9 weeks) access through ASHA workers and Jan Aushadhi Kendras

Amend MTP Act to explicitly remove time limits for rape survivors — as SC directed

Solutions

National awareness campaigns

Increase trained MTP providers

## Mains Practise Question

The Supreme Court's 2026 ruling on termination of pregnancy of a minor rape survivor has far-reaching implications for reproductive rights in India. Critically analyse.

(15 Marks, 250 words)

### Key Legal Doctrines/Concepts — Must Know for Mains

Concept	Meaning & Relevance
<b>Parents Patriae</b>	"Parent of the Nation" — state's inherent power/duty to protect those who cannot protect themselves (children, persons of unsound mind). Justice Bagchi invoked this to ask AIIMS what its duty of care was.
<b>Reproductive Autonomy</b>	A woman's right to make decisions about her own body and reproduction. Recognised as part of Article 21 by SC in multiple judgments.
<b>Bodily Autonomy</b>	The right of a person to self-determine what happens to their body — denying MTP violates this right.
<b>Foetal Viability</b>	The gestational age at which a foetus can survive outside the womb — generally ~24 weeks. Beyond this, medical and ethical complexity increases sharply.
<b>Curative Petition</b>	Last resort judicial remedy in India — filed after review petition is dismissed. Used by AIIMS and Centre here after losing the review.
<b>Review Petition</b>	Filed before the same court asking to re-examine a judgment. Dismissed by SC here.
<b>Best Interest of the Child</b>	Legal principle (also in UNCRC) — court must act in the child's best interest. Applied here to the 15-year-old survivor.
<b>Informed Consent</b>	Medical & legal principle — patient must fully understand risks before consenting. SC directed AIIMS to ensure informed decision by parents and survivor.



# Tight norms for HAM projects



**SYLLABUS : G.S. 3: Infrastructure, Investment Models**  
**Newspaper : The Indian express Page No : 19**

## The Basics: What is the Hybrid Annuity Model? 🏗️



### Infrastructure Project Models: Who Pays? Who Bears the Risk?



#### 1 EPC

Engineering,  
Procurement,  
Construction



##### Who Funds?

Government funds the full project.

##### Who Operates?

Private player only builds it. After construction, it is handed over to government.

##### Who Bears the Risk?



Risk is mostly with सरकार / government.

##### Example / Note

Used for projects where government wants full control after construction, e.g., rural roads, public buildings.

#### 2 BOT (Toll)

Build, Operate,  
Transfer



##### Who Funds?

Private player builds the project.

##### Who Operates?

Operates it for a fixed period. Collects toll from users. Later transfers it back to government.

##### Who Bears the Risk?



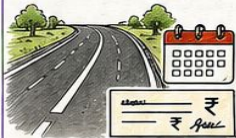
Private player bears traffic and commercial risk.

##### Example / Note

Example: Highways, expressways where revenue comes from toll collection by private player.

#### 3 BOT (Annuity)

Build, Operate,  
Transfer  
(Annuity)



##### Who Funds?

Private player builds the project.

##### Who Operates?

Operates it for a fixed period. Government pays a fixed annuity every year. No toll collection by the private player.

##### Who Bears the Risk?



Traffic risk stays with government.

##### Example / Note

Example: National Highways projects where government pays annual annuity to private player.

#### 4 HAM

Hybrid Annuity  
Model



##### Who Funds?

Government pays 40% upfront. Remaining 60% is paid as annuity over time.

##### Who Operates?

Private player builds and operates for a fixed period. Government pays annuity.

##### Who Bears the Risk?



Risk is shared.

##### Example / Note

Example: Major highway projects with balanced risk between government and private player.

#### 5 TOT

Toll-Operate-  
Transfer



##### Who Funds?

Already-built operational roads are leased to private players.

##### Who Operates?

Private player pays a lump sum upfront. Then collects toll for a period.

##### Who Bears the Risk?



Risk mainly with private player during lease period.

##### Example / Note

Example: Government gets immediate cash; private player earns through toll collection.



# Tight norms for HAM projects



**SYLLABUS : G.S. 3:** Infrastructure, Investment Models  
**Newspaper :** The Indian express **Page No : 19**

## 6 Swiss Challenge



- Private player submits an **unsolicited proposal**.
- Government invites **counter-bids**.
- Original proposer can **match the best bid**.
- Useful for innovation, but can raise **transparency concerns**.

**Example:**  
Used in complex projects where private innovation is encouraged.

### ★ RISK PROFILE – AT A GLANCE ★

<b>EPC</b>  Government bears risk.	<b>BOT (Toll)</b>  Private bears major risk.	<b>BOT (Annuity)</b>  Government bears traffic risk.	<b>HAM</b>  Shared risk.	<b>TOT</b>  Asset monetisation.	<b>Swiss Challenge</b>  Proposal + counter-bid system.
--	--	--	--------------------------------	---------------------------------------	--

### New Trigger: MoRTH's April 2026 Circular 🚨

### What Is a "Catastrophic Failure" in Highway Projects?

 Collapse of a bridge	<b>Why it matters</b> • Leads to loss of serviceability
 Collapse of a flyover	
 Collapse of an underpass	<b>Why it matters</b> • Causes loss of life
 Failure of embankment	
 Failure of pavement	<b>Why it matters</b> • Requires reconstruction
 Collapse of launching girder or staging causing loss of life for pre-cast segments	
 Collapse inside a tunnel	<b>Why it matters</b> • Causes loss of life
 People trapped for more than 72 hours	
 Failure of PQC (Pavement Quality Concrete)	<b>Why it matters</b> • Requires reconstruction • Damages public trust and project quality

**Previously only applied to standard EPC projects**—to HAM contracts.

- New compliance requirement**
  - ↳ bidders must declare whether they or any consortium member were involved in catastrophic failure
  - ↳ the look-back period is two years from bid due date
  - ↳ the rule applies to ongoing and future HAM bid documents
  - ↳ it also extends to completed projects
- What happens if a bidder is found guilty**
  - disqualification in tenders
  - minus 30 marks in evaluation
  - penalties
  - termination
  - debarment
  - debarment
  - blacklisting
  - non-performer status



# Tight norms for HAM projects



**SYLLABUS : G.S. 3: Infrastructure, Investment Models**  
**Newspaper : The Indian express Page No : 19**

## The Disqualification Rule

- **Record of a "catastrophic failure"** = highway; construction defects; past two years
- **Scope:** ongoing + completed projects
- **"Undertaking"**

## Why was this drastic step necessary?

### Investment Models in India: From Planning to Private Capital

#### Part 1: Historical Planning Models

##### 1. Harrod-Domar Model

- Growth depends on savings rate and capital-output ratio
- Idea: more savings → more investment → faster growth
- Commonly linked with the early planning era (e.g., 1st FYP)

##### 2. Nehru-Mahalanobis Model

- Focus on heavy industries
- Emphasised steel, power, mining, and capital goods
- Goal was long-term industrial base building
- Strong state-led approach

##### 3. 1991 Reform Model

- Shift toward Liberalisation, Privatisation, Globalisation (LPG)
- More market orientation
- Greater role for private sector and foreign capital

#### 2: Sources and vehicles of investment

##### 1. Public Investment

- Comes from taxpayer money
  - Used for social and infrastructure goods like railways, schools, roads
  - Focus is welfare, not just profit
- All → Welfare Focused

##### 2. Private Investment

- Driven by profit
  - Depends on business expectations and market conditions
- Market Based

##### 3. FDI (Foreign Direct Investment)

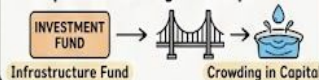
- Long-term investment
  - Usually involves creating real assets like factories or plants
  - More stable than portfolio flows
- Long-term Flow → Stable Capital

##### 4. FII (Foreign Institutional Investment)

- Short-term portfolio investment
  - Moves quickly in and out of markets
  - More volatile than FDI
- Portfolio Investment  
Volatile

##### 5. NIIF (National Investment and Infrastructure Fund)

- India's major fund to support infrastructure and investment
- Helps crowd in long-term capital



##### 6. InvITs and REITs

- InvITs pool money for infrastructure assets (roads, power assets)
  - REITs pool money for real estate (offices, buildings)
  - Work like mutual funds for specific assets
- Pooling Vehicles
- Investor → InvITs → Specific Assets

### Critical Analysis for Mains

Last 3 yrs: "structural deficiencies" in 67 National Highway projects

"-30 marks" policy: Reactive vs. Proactive

Quality over Speed

Accountability in PPPs

### 3 Why the government is doing this

- to stop repeat failures
- to protect life and property
- to improve highway quality
- to increase trust in infrastructure delivery
- to make contractors more accountable

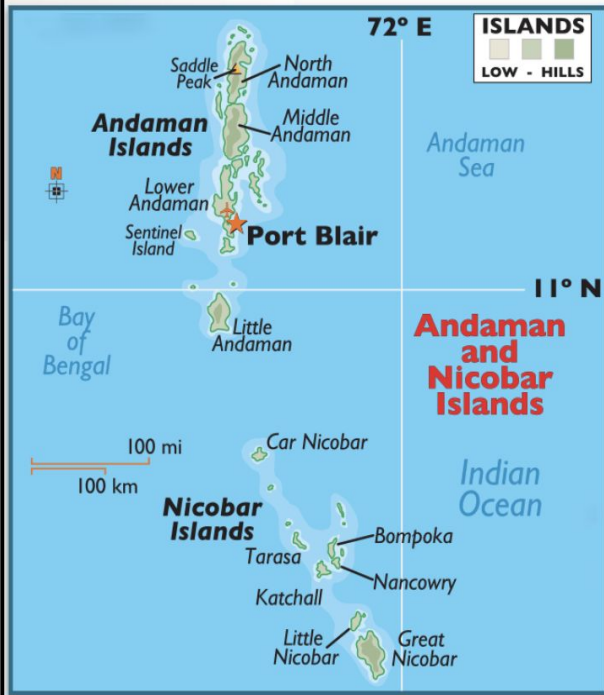


# Great Nicobar Project has strategic value



**SYLLABUS : G.S. 3:** Infrastructure, Conservation, Security challenges  
**Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 14**

## Geography



## Mapping related aspects

836 islands (31 inhabited)

Closer to **Chennai/ Kolkata?**

### Significance

**Maritime borders** (Indo, Myn, Thai)

**95% is tropical rainforest**

**Sundaland Biodiversity Hotspot**



## UPSC PYQ (P) 2018

Consider the following statements:

1. The Barren Island volcano is an **active** volcano located in the Indian territory.
2. Barren Island lies about 140 km east of Great Nicobar.
3. The **last time** the Barren Island volcano erupted was in 1991 and it has remained inactive since then.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3
- c. 3 only
- d. 1 and 3

## UPSC PYQ (P) 2017

Which of the following is geographically closest to Great Nicobar?

- (a) Sumatra
- (b) Borneo
- (c) Java
- (d) Sri Lanka



# Great Nicobar Project has strategic value



**SYLLABUS : G.S. 3:** Infrastructure, Conservation, Security challenges  
**Newspaper :** The Hindu **Page No : 14**

Source: 'Holistic Development of Great Nicobar Island at Andaman & Nicobar Islands: Pre-feasibility report (March 2021)

## The Great Nicobar Infrastructure Project

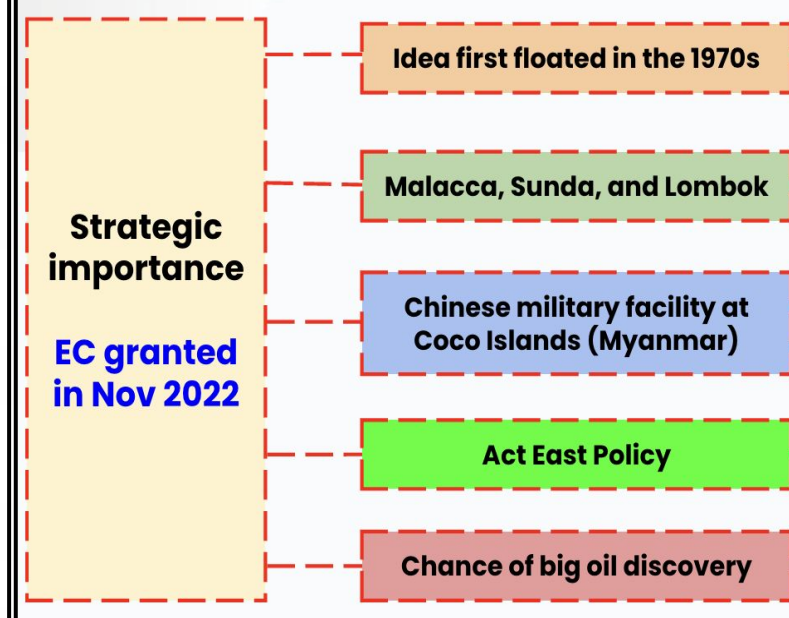
**Implementing Agency:** A&NI Integrated Development Corporation

**Estimated Cost:** Escalated from ₹72,000 Cr to **₹92,000 Cr** (2026)

### Mega Project: Blueprint

<b>Transshipment Port</b>	Located at <b>Galathea Bay</b> . <b>AIM:</b> Rival Colombo/Hong Kong, Singapore
<b>Int'l Airport</b>	<b>Dual-use</b> (Civilian + Defence)
<b>Power Plant</b>	<b>Gas/Solar</b> based ( <i>originally coal</i> )
<b>Township</b>	<b>To house</b> ~3.5 lakh people Current population: ~8,000

**TheWire.in**  
**NGT Greenlights Infra Projects on Great Nicobar, Cites National Importance, Need For Balanced Approach**  
All safeguards set up by the Union environment ministry are in place to protect the island's biodiversity and people, the NGT said, adding that there were...



### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT ?

- Provides India leverage over the energy security of south Asia.
- Allows forward deployment of forces to protect Indian coastline.
- Checks arms and drugs from reaching Indian shores.

**ANDAMAN ISLANDS**  
Port Blair, Car Nicobar

**NICOBAR ISLANDS**  
Indira Point, Campbell Bay

**INDONESIA**  
Banda Aceh, Langkawi

**THAILAND**  
Bangkok, Phuket

**MYANMAR**  
Yangon

**Key Features:** Coco Islands (Myanmar), Landfall Islands, 10 Degree Channel, Great Channel, Straits of Malacca, Bay of Bengal, Andaman Sea, Indian Ocean.

**Strategic Context:** Used by gun-runners and narco-traffickers to smuggle arms and drugs into Cox's Bazaar in Bangladesh. The final destination is India's North-east. As many as 114 supertankers carrying 9.5 billion oil barrels for south Asian markets traverse this route. With 52 per cent of world cargo at stake, the straits are a happy hunting ground for pirates.



**SYLLABUS : G.S. 3: Conservation**  
**Newspaper : The Indian express Page No : 13**

## The Paradox of Success

**PROJECT TIGER**

**PANTHERA TIGRIS**  
SCIENTIFIC NAME

**THREATENED**  
IUCN STATUS

**1973**  
INTRODUCTION OF PROJECT TIGER IN INDIA

**71,000 SQ.KM**  
PROTECTED AREA UNDER PROJECT TIGER - INDIA

**APPROX. 3000**  
POPULATION IN INDIA

**APPROX. 3900**  
POPULATION IN THE WORLD

**The Tiger Count**  
Tiger numbers in India:

2018: 2,967 | 2022: 3,682

States with highest tiger numbers

State	2018	2022
Madhya Pradesh	526	785
Karnataka	524	563
Uttarakhand	442	560
Maharashtra	312	444
TamilNadu	264	306

Reserves with highest tiger population

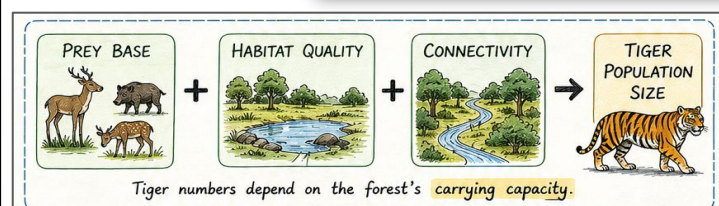
- 1 Jim Corbett, Uttarakhand
- 2 Bandipur, Karnataka
- 3 Nagarhole, Karnataka
- 4 Bandhavgarh, MP
- 5 Dudhwa, UP

**Global Share: India home to ~ 75% of the world's wild tiger population**

**58 Tiger Reserves in India**  
**MP: "Tiger State of India"**  
Tiger count jumped by 155% between 2014 and 2022

State	Tiger Count
Madhya Pradesh	785
Karnataka	563
Uttarakhand	560
Maharashtra	444
Tamil Nadu	306

## What is 'Carrying Capacity'?



**1** Tiger numbers depend mainly on prey availability.

Tigers are obligate carnivores. No prey, no tigers!

**2** One tiger needs a large prey base to survive.

Rough estimate: around 350 ungulates to sustain one tiger.

**3** If prey is not enough, extra tigers may:

- Fight each other leading to injuries and even death.
- Move out into buffer areas, creating conflict with people.
- Try to disperse to other forests in search of space.
- Die trying if corridors are blocked and they cannot move.

**WHY MP FACES THE PROBLEM**

- Roads
- Railways
- Irrigation works
- Mining
- Deforestation

These activities have broken forest connectivity in central India.

**MP has seen the fastest rise**

MP tiger numbers rose from 308 to 785 in the same period

Approaching the 1,000 mark in MP

# MP's tiger problem

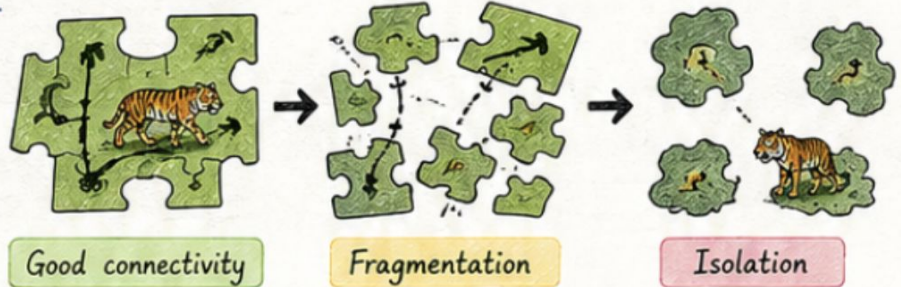


**SYLLABUS : G.S. 3: Conservation**  
**Newspaper : The Indian express Page No : 13**

## Broken Corridors: Why Dispersal Fails 🚧

### CONNECTIVITY: THE LIFELINE

Forests are like puzzle pieces. Corridors connect them, allowing tigers to move, find mates, and maintain healthy populations.



the state has asked **WII** to assess how many tigers its forests can support Wildlife Institute of India

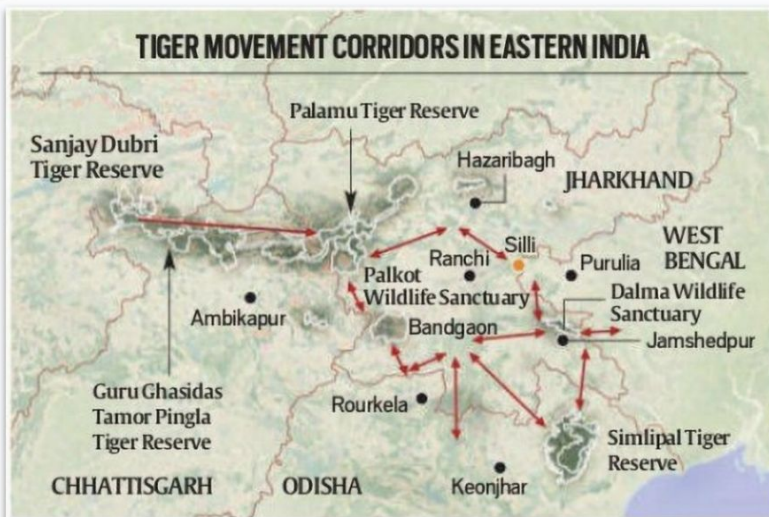
more tigers can mean more pressure on forests and people

### The Cattle Crisis 🐄

- **47%** of tigers were linked to livestock kills
- **Old, dry cattle**
- Retaliatory killings by farmers

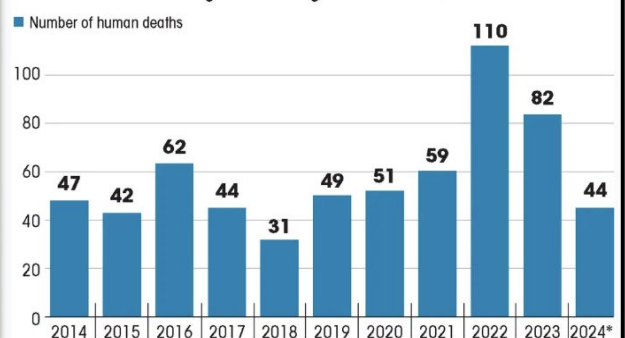
## Solutions: Moving Beyond Arithmetic 🛡️

<b>Short-Term Fixes:</b>	<b>Monitor</b> dispersing tigers	<b>NTCA funding</b>	<b>Profit Sharing</b>
<b>Long-Term Strategy:</b>	<b>Restoring Corridors</b>	<b>Restore grasslands</b>	<b>Data</b>



### Significant numbers

Over the past decade, human deaths due to tiger attacks have been in the double digits, crossing the 100-mark in 2022



Note: \*January 1-June 30, 2024 Source: Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 193, November 25, 2024



# MP's tiger problem



**SYLLABUS : G.S. 3: Conservation**

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

## UPSC PYQ (P) 2024

**Consider the following statements:**

1. Lions do not have a particular breeding season
2. Unlike most other big cats, cheetahs do not roar
3. Unlike male lions, male leopards do not proclaim their territory by scent marking

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

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

## UPSC PYQ (P) 2000

**Within biological communities, some species are important in determining the ability of a large number of other species to persist in the community. Such species are called:**

- a) Keystone species
- b) Allopatric species
- c) Sympatric species
- d) Threatened species



**SYLLABUS : G.S. 3:** Changes in industrial policy  
**Newspaper :** The Indian express **Page No : 19**

## Centre cuts windfall tax on diesel & jet fuel exports

**New Delhi:** The government has significantly reduced the export duties on diesel and aviation turbine fuel (ATF), or jet fuel, in line with the price fluctuations in the international market.

According to a Finance Ministry notification, the duty on diesel exports for the first fortnight of May has been slashed to Rs 23 per litre from Rs 55.5, while on jet fuel exports, the levy has been reduced to Rs 33 per litre from Rs 42.

The export duty on petrol continues to be nil.

The export levies, or windfall gains taxes — in the form of excise duties — were imposed from March 27 with the objective of ensuring adequate availability of these fuels in the domestic market by disincentivising exports amid a major price difference between domestic and international markets. Global oil and fuel prices have surged due to the West Asia war.

The export duties are revised on a fortnightly basis, and this is the second revision. ENS

### 1 WHAT IS A WINDFALL TAX?

- ★ A special tax imposed when companies earn unusually high profits because of sudden market shocks.
- ★ India used it mainly in the oil sector when global crude prices rose sharply.
- ★ It is a temporary policy tool, not a permanent tax structure.



### 2 WHY INDIA USED IT

- ★ Global oil shocks can create windfall gains for producers and refiners.



- ★ The government used the levy to capture some of that extra profit.



- ★ It also helped support domestic fuel supply and broader price stability.



### 3 TIMELINE OF MAJOR CHANGES



July 2022

Windfall tax introduced on domestic crude and some fuel exports.



2 Dec 2024

Windfall tax on crude products and fuel exports scrapped.



27 Mar 2026

Export levies reintroduced on petrol, diesel, and ATF to ensure domestic availability during the West Asia crisis.



11 Apr 2026

Duties were raised further.



1 May 2026

Revised again to current rates.

## Mechanism in India

- **Special Additional Excise Duty**
- Target: **export of refined fuels**
- **Govt reviews and adjusts every fortnight**



**SYLLABUS : G.S. 3:** Changes in industrial policy  
**Newspaper :** The Indian express **Page No : 19**

## Latest Updates

(Effective May  
1, 2026)

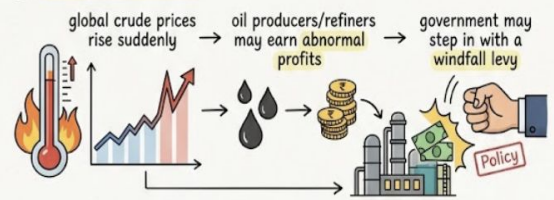
**Diesel:** ₹23 per litre  
(down from ₹55.5)

**Aviation Turbine Fuel:**  
₹33 per litre  
(down from ₹42)

**Petrol:** NIL

**Domestic Impact**

### ① Market shock



### ② Policy objective



**SYLLABUS : Prelims : Working of UN**  
**Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 12**



## UN Secretary-General: Role, Power, and Election



### 1 WHY THE POST MATTERS

- ★ The Secretary-General is the **Chief Administrative Officer** of the UN.
- ★ The office oversees the **UN Secretariat**.
- ★ The Secretary-General also brings **global threats** to the attention of the **Security Council**.
- ★ The role is often called the UN's "**chief diplomat**".



The Secretary-General is both administrator and global voice.

### 2 CORE FUNCTIONS



- manages UN work.



- reports to major UN organs.



- can appoint **Personal Envoys**.



- speaks on **peace, security, climate, inequality, and development**.

### 3 HOW THE ELECTION HAPPENS

STEP 1



Security Council recommends a candidate.

STEP 2



General Assembly appoints the candidate.

STEP 3



Permanent Five have strong influence.

★ P5 = China, France, Russia, UK, US

### 4 KEY CUSTOMS IN THE PROCESS



- Term is technically **discretionary**.



- Since 1981, Secretaries-General have limited themselves to two terms.



- Post **rotates** among regions.



- Current turn is for **Latin America and the Caribbean**.



The Secretary-General is the **backbone** of the UN — managing the organization and giving **voice** to the world.



### "Chief Administrative Officer" of UN

- **Constitutional Rule =** appointed by General Assembly upon recommendation of UNSC
- **Veto Factor**
- UNSC will hold **closed-door deliberations** and **straw polls** to finalize a recommendation around October
- **Unwritten Customs and Conventions**
  - **Voluntarily** limited to 2 terms
  - **Regional Rotation:** Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean



**SYLLABUS : Prelims :** Working of UN  
**Newspaper :** The Hindu **Page No :** 12

## Quadruple Crisis Facing the UN

### Why the Next UN Secretary-General Matters So Much

— why the next UN Secretary-General will face a crisis-heavy world

#### Part 1. The UN's current stress points



**Financial crisis:**  
unpaid or  
delayed dues



**Security Council  
paralysis:** vetoes  
blocking action



**Difficulty running  
missions:**  
e.g., Haiti, Mali



**Rising global conflicts:**  
Gaza, Lebanon,  
Sudan, Ukraine, Iran



**Pressure on  
humanitarian  
system**

#### Part 2: What the next Secretary-General must do



**Restore trust**



**Improve conflict  
prevention**



**Revive  
multilateralism**



**Strengthen  
diplomacy**



**Support UN  
reform**



**Focus on UN "basics":  
peace & conflict  
resolution**

#### Part 3: What happens next



**An informal  
interactive  
dialogues**  
'already held'



**Security Council  
closed-door  
deliberations**



**straw  
polls**



**recommendation  
to General  
Assembly**  
'around October'



**General Assembly  
confirms by  
simple majority**  
1 January 2027

#### Why this is crucial

Only about 18% of  
SDG targets are on  
track for 2030

Climate shocks and  
conflicts are  
increasing

The UN must  
remain relevant in a  
fragmented  
world

## Real matters in 21st Century

- **Mandatory "assessed contributions" from member states = Financial Crisis**
- **UNSC Paralysis**
- **Peacekeeping**
- **Sustainable Development Goals**
  - **only 18% of targets on track for 2030**
- **Gaza, Lebanon, Sudan, Ukraine, Iran**



**SYLLABUS : Prelims : Working of UN**  
**Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 12**

## UPSC PYQ (P) 2009

**With reference to the United Nations, consider the following statements:**

1. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN consists of 24 member States.
2. It is elected by a 2/3rd majority of the General Assembly for a 3-year term.

**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

## UPSC PYQ (P) 2022

**With reference to the "United Nations Credentials Committee", consider the following statements:**

1. It is a committee set up by the UN Security Council and works under its supervision.
2. It traditionally meets in March, June and September every year
3. It assesses the credentials of all UN members before submitting a report to the General Assembly for approval.

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

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



**Q1. Which of the following statements best describes the Swiss Challenge Method?**

- a) Awarding contracts solely based on the lowest bid without competition.
- b) An unsolicited private proposal is opened to competitive bidding, with the original bidder given the right to match the best offer.
- c) A model of government-funded infrastructure development without private participation.
- d) A system of fiscal transfers between different levels of government.

**Answer: b**

**Q2. Arrange the following islands of the Andaman and Nicobar group from north to south:**

- 1. Sentinel Island
- 2. Little Andaman
- 3. Car Nicobar
- 4. Great Nicobar

**Select the correct answer using the codes below.**

- a) 1-3-2-4
- b) 3-1-2-4
- c) 1-2-3-4
- d) 3-2-1-4

**Answer: c**

**Q3. With reference to tigers in India, consider the following statements:**

- 1. India is home to about 75% of the world's wild tiger population.
- 2. Madhya Pradesh is known as the "Tiger State of India."
- 3. The number of tiger reserves in India is more than 70.

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

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

**Answer: b**

**Q4. Which of the following statements best describes a windfall tax?**

- a) A tax on routine business profits earned under normal market conditions.
- b) A tax imposed on income from speculative financial activities.
- c) A tax levied on unusually high profits arising from unforeseen external events.
- d) A duty charged on the import of essential commodities during shortages.

**Answer: c**

**Q5. With reference to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, consider the following statements:**

- 1. The Secretary-General is the chief administrative officer of the United Nations.
- 2. The Secretary-General is appointed by the Security Council independently.

**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**





# **VAJIRAM & RAVI**

## **Institute for IAS Examination**

A unit of Vajiram & Ravi IAS Study Centre LLP

---

9-B, Bada Bazar Marg, Old Rajinder Nagar,  
New Delhi - 110060 • Ph.: 41007400, 41007500

New No. 62, P Block, 6th Avenue, Anna Nagar,  
Chennai - 600040 • Ph.: 044-4330-2121

Visit us at : [www.vajiramandravi.com](http://www.vajiramandravi.com)