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Over 3,000 serving officers move SC against CAPF Act

Petitioners include gallantry awardees, women officers; they say the law makes it harder for CAPF cadre officers to be promoted to leadership positions as it allows more IPS officers on deputation

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

More than 3,000 Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) Group A officers have moved the Supreme Court to challenge the Central Armed Police Force (General Administration) Act, 2026. The petitioners include gallantry award winners and women officers.

The Act, passed by the Parliament on April 2 and notified on April 9, will make it harder for CAPF cadre officers to be promoted through the ranks to leadership positions. The legislation was enacted to effectively negate a May 2025 Supreme Court ruling that directed the exact opposite action: to reduce Indian Police Service (IPS) officers in the CAPF leadership and make it easier for CAPF officers to reach top positions.

The law states that in all CAPFs, 50% of the total posts in the rank of Inspector General, at least 67% posts in the rank of Additional Director General, and all posts in the rank of Special Director General and Director General must be filled by IPS officers on deputation.

Until now, such postings were done based on executive orders. The practice of reserving 50% of Deputy Inspector General (DIG)



The CAPFs comprise the Central Reserve Police Force, Border Security Force, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, Sashastra Seema Bal, and the Central Industrial Security Force. *FILE PHOTO*

posts for Group A CAPF officers also finds no place in the Act, paving the way for a higher percentage of IPS deputed officers filling those posts.

The petitions in the top court seek to declare Sections 3 and 4 of the CAPF Act as "ultra vires [or beyond the powers] of the Constitution of India."

Section 3 pertains to "regulation of recruitment and conditions of service," notwithstanding any judgment, decree or order of any court, and specifies the percentage of posts reserved for IPS officers on deputation. Section 4 gives the Union government the power to amend the First and Second Schedules of the Act through a notification when it considers such

action necessary or expedient in the public interest.

Previous ruling

The petitioners have sought directions for the implementation of the Supreme Court's judgment dated May 23, 2025, in *Saraj Prakash v. Union of India*, and a declaration that Higher Administrative Grade posts in all CAPFs be filled from among eligible executive cadre officers of the respective forces, rather than exclusively through deputation.

On May 23, 2025, the Supreme Court had ruled that Group A Executive Cadre officers of CAPFs are Organised Group A Services for all purposes. Besides progressively reducing the IPS deputation in CAPFs

upto the level of I-Gs in the next two years, the court asked for a time bound review of cadre and service rules within six months.

The Ministry of Home Affairs challenged the judgment, but on October 28, 2025, the court dismissed the review petition, making the ruling final.

After several retired CAPF officials filed a contempt petition in the court, the MHA introduced a Bill in Parliament in March, which effectively negated that judgement.

The CAPFs comprise the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Border Security Force (BSF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), and the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF).

- **Key Terms and Explanations**

- **Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs):** These are the primary internal security and border-guarding organizations under the Ministry of Home Affairs. They include the Border Security Force (BSF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB).
- **Organised Group A Services (OGAS):** A specific categorization under Indian civil service rules that grants a cadre statutory benefits such as structured promotion pathways, periodic cadre reviews, and Non-Functional Financial Upgradation (NFFU).
- **Deputation:** The temporary transfer of a civil servant or officer from their parent service to serve in another organization or department.
- **Doctrine of Ultra Vires:** A legal principle meaning "beyond the powers." An act, rule, or legislative enactment is declared *ultra vires* if it exceeds the scope of power granted by the Constitution or parent statute.
- **Higher Administrative Grade (HAG):** Senior executive pay scales and post classifications in government services, usually corresponding to Joint Secretary, Inspector General, Additional Director General, and Director General levels.
- **Legislative Override:** A parliamentary process where the legislature passes a new law or amends an existing statute to remove the legal basis on which a prior judicial judgment was delivered, effectively neutralizing the ruling's prospective effect.

- **Main Arguments and Substantive Parts**

- **Core Thesis**

- The long-standing institutional conflict regarding leadership structures within the Central Armed Police Forces centers on balancing executive administrative control with the constitutional and professional rights of cadre officers. The core issue revolves around whether senior command positions should be reserved for deputed Indian Police Service (IPS) officers or opened to directly recruited CAPF Group A cadre officers who possess specialized operational experience.

- **Key Arguments of Cadre Officers**

- **Stagnation and Glass Ceilings:** Directly recruited Group A officers face severe career stagnation. Reserving senior posts—such as Inspector General (IG), Additional Director General (ADG), Special Director General (SDG), and Director General (DG)—for IPS deputation deprives cadre officers of timely promotions, despite decades of field experience.
- **Judicial Integrity and Recognition:** Executive measures fixing high deputation quotas undermine judicial mandates that recognized CAPF cadres as Organised Group A Services (OGAS). Cadre officers argue that statutory carve-outs violate court directions meant to grant them equal administrative treatment.
- **Operational Grounding vs. Generalist Oversight:** Cadre officers spend their entire careers in combat zones, high-altitude border posts, and counter-insurgency sectors. They argue that operational command requires domain-specific continuity that external deputationists, who rotate periodically, may lack.

- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**
- **Pre-Independence to Early Post-Independence**
- **Initial Security Formations:** Colonial-era security entities, such as the Crown Representative's Police (later CRPF in 1949), were small and commanded by military or imperial police officers. Post-independence, senior leadership naturally remained under the purview of state police cadres and the Indian Police Service.
- **1960s to 1980s: Force Expansion and Direct Recruitment**
- **Establishment of Specialized Border Forces:** Following regional conflicts in 1962 and 1965, specialized forces like the BSF, ITBP, CISF, and SSB were established.
- **Introduction of Direct Cadres:** UPSC began conducting direct recruitment for Assistant Commandants (Group A officers) to create professional, dedicated force cadres. However, leadership posts above DIG remained heavily reserved for IPS deputation under administrative orders.
- **2000s to 2010s: Systemic Stagnation and Judicial Interventions**
- **Cadre Bottlenecks:** Massive force expansion at the constable and non-gazetted levels was not matched by administrative restructuring at the top officer levels. Cadre officers spent up to 20 years without promotion.
- **Legal Mobilization:** Serving and retired officers filed petitions in the High Courts demanding recognition as Organised Group A Services (OGAS) and equal entitlement to Non-Functional Financial Upgradation (NFFU).
- **2019 Landmark Rulings**
- **Judicial Affirmation:** The Delhi High Court and subsequently the Supreme Court held that CAPFs meet all criteria for OGAS. The judgments directed the Union government to grant NFFU benefits and undertake cadre reviews to reduce reliance on external deputation.
- **2025–2026: Modern Legal and Legislative Tussle**
- **Reaffirmation of Directives:** Judicial orders reiterated the mandate to progressively reduce IPS deputation at top levels (up to IG) within specified timelines and to execute time-bound cadre reviews.
- **Statutory Reformulation:** Parliament enacted statutory rules explicitly codifying reserved quotas for IPS officers across senior management levels, sparking a fresh round of constitutional challenges before the Supreme Court by thousands of serving officers.
- **Way Forward**
- **Implementation of a Phased Hybrid Leadership Model:** Establish a balanced, transitional quota system where top-tier posts (IG, ADG) are progressively shared based on specialized domain qualifications. This ensures CAPF cadre officers have defined avenues to senior leadership while maintaining inter-agency coordination with the IPS.
- **Institutionalized Cadre Reviews:** Implement mandatory, time-bound cadre reviews every five years (in line with standard OGAS norms) to prevent promotion bottlenecks, adjust force structures, and create necessary posts dynamically.
- **Domain-Specific Training for Deputed Leadership:** If IPS officers are deputed to senior CAPF roles, mandate specialized tactical, operational, and organizational training programs prior to deployment to align leadership with combat requirements.
- **Establishment of an Independent Service Grievance Forum:** Set up an independent, high-level administrative body or cadre review tribunal under the Ministry of Home Affairs to resolve service condition grievances transparently, minimizing prolonged litigation.
- **Harmonization of Statutory Rules with Judicial Principles:** Ensure that legislative enactments align with constitutional protections guaranteed under Articles 14 and 16, balancing executive discretion with equity in public service.

COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS: ELIFLIMOC

THE CENTRAL ARMED POLICE FORCES (CAPF) LEADERSHIP DISPUTE

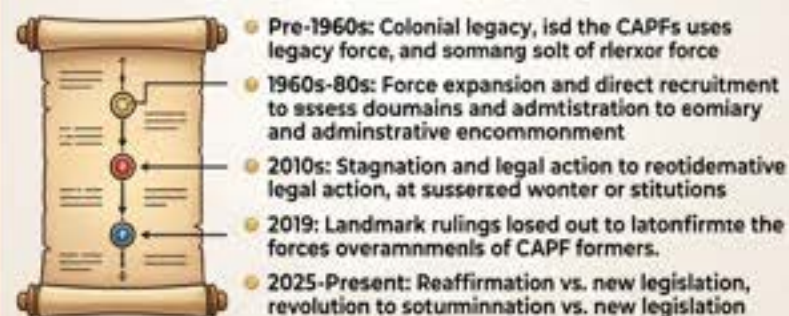
ESSENTIAL KEY TERMS & CONCEPTS



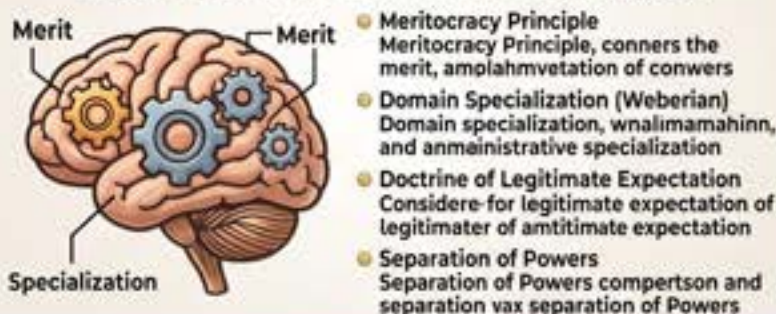
MAIN ARGUMENTS & CORE THESIS



HISTORICAL EVOLUTION



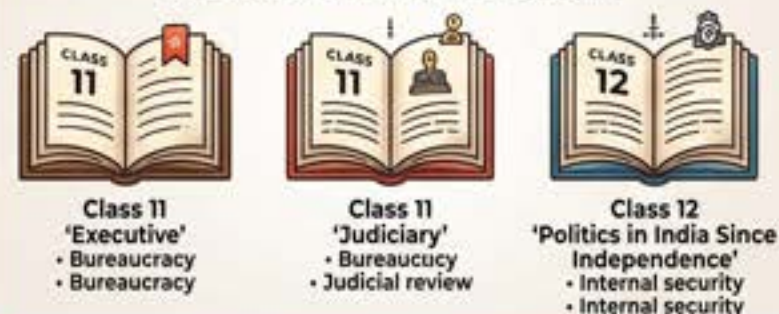
LOGICAL & PHILOSOPHICAL BASE



MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS



LINKAGES WITH NCERTs



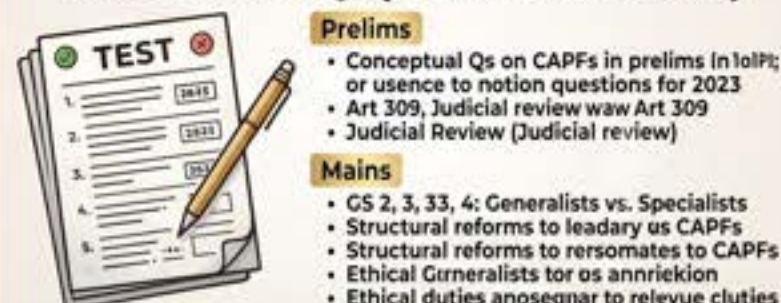
LINKAGES WITH UPSC SYLLABUS



THE WAY FORWARD



RELEVANT PYQs (PRELIMS & MAINS)



Western Europe warming faster than global avg; Greece battles wildfires

Barcelona: Western Europe is warming faster than many other parts of the world, fueling more frequent heatwaves and creating conditions for increasingly severe wildfires, a Spanish climate expert said. As Spain entered its fourth heatwave of the summer at the end of July, with temperatures forecast to reach up to 42°Celsius in many areas, Ruben del Campo, spokesperson for Spain's State Meteorological Agency (AEMET), said the country had experienced exceptionally high temperatures in both June and July.

"Some studies show that Western Europe — including the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Spain and Portugal — is warming faster than many other parts of the world, and that we are also more prone to heatwaves," del Campo said on Friday. He said countries around the Mediterranean "are among the most vulnerable to heatwaves under the new climatic conditions."

The World Meteorological Organization said in July that Europe as a whole has warmed by around 2°Celsius since the historic heatwave of 1976. It attributes the sustained



A firefighter seen amid smoke rising from a wildfire in Krio Pigadi, Greece, Saturday

rise in summer temperatures largely to climate change, a conclusion del Campo shares.

Firefighters tackled multiple wildfires across Greece Saturday as strong winds fanned dozens of blazes, burning houses and forcing evacuations including in coastal settlements northwest of Athens. Greece has become the latest focal point with Athens and its Attica region, along with the southern half of Evia island, all placed under the highest fire warning for Saturday, the first time so far this season. IANS, BLOOMBERG

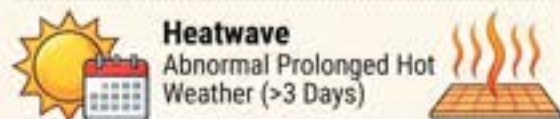
- **Key Terms and Explanations**
- **Accelerated Regional Warming**
 - Regional warming refers to a phenomenon where specific geographic zones experience temperature increases at a rate significantly higher than the global planetary average. While global warming measures mean global surface temperatures, localized atmospheric dynamics, land-sea thermal contrasts, and soil moisture feedbacks can cause regions like Western Europe and the Arctic to heat up nearly twice as fast as the rest of the world.
- **Heatwave**
 - A heatwave is a prolonged period of abnormally hot weather, typically defined as temperatures exceeding local climatological thresholds for three or more consecutive days. It is often accompanied by high relative humidity or extreme atmospheric dryness, severely straining human physiology, power grids, and natural ecosystems.
- **Fire Weather Triad**
 - This meteorological concept describes the concurrent combination of three atmospheric conditions—high ambient temperatures, low relative humidity, and high wind speeds—that drastically increase the probability, rate of spread, and intensity of wildfires.
- **Compound Climate Hazard**
 - A compound hazard occurs when two or more extreme climate events happen simultaneously or sequentially, creating an amplified impact far greater than the sum of the individual events.
- **Atmospheric Blocking (Heat Domes)**
 - This physical process occurs when high-pressure atmospheric systems stall over a geographic region for an extended period, acting like a lid on a pot. They trap descending warm air, prevent cloud formation, and allow intense solar radiation to continually heat the land surface.
- **Main Arguments and Substantive Parts**
- **Non-Uniform Global Warming and Regional Hotspots**
 - Global climate change does not manifest uniformly across the surface of the Earth. Land masses heat faster than oceans, and Western Europe—stretching from the Iberian Peninsula through France and Italy to Greece—has emerged as an acute climate change hotspot. Meteorological data shows that parts of Europe have experienced warming near 2°C since the mid-20th century. This localized amplification accelerates environmental stress and exposes existing structural vulnerabilities in regional infrastructure and ecological management.
- **Transition from Distant Threat to Recurring Reality**
 - Heatwaves and widespread forest blazes can no longer be categorized as unpredictable, once-in-a-century "black swan" events. Instead, they have shifted into a structural, recurring seasonal phenomenon. The frequency, duration, and geographic footprint of summer heat waves have expanded significantly, forcing emergency management authorities to deal with multiple distinct heatwaves within a single summer season.
- **The Dynamics of Compound Environmental Stress**
 - The relationship between high temperatures, dry weather, and forest fires forms a dangerous feedback loop:
 - Unprecedented ambient heat rapidly evaporates moisture from soil and forest vegetation, transforming woodland underbrush into highly combustible fuel.
 - Strong regional wind systems then ignite and spread catastrophic wildfires across large areas, as seen across the Attica and Evia regions of Greece.
 - These wildland-urban interface fires destroy homes, force mass evacuations, overburden regional emergency responders, and strip ecosystems of their natural carbon sinks.
- **Climatological Nuances vs. Natural Oscillation Debates**
 - While climate skeptics historically attributed extreme seasonal variations purely to natural oscillations—such as the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) or natural multi-decadal sea surface temperature variations—scientific consensus confirms that anthropogenic greenhouse gas forcing has fundamentally altered these background patterns. Anthropogenic warming shifts the baseline mean temperature upward, making natural variations far more extreme and destructive than they would otherwise be.

- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**
- **Pre-Industrial Era (Prior to 1850)**
 - Throughout the pre-industrial era, Western Europe and the Mediterranean basin maintained a relatively stable climate characterized by mild, wet winters and warm, dry summers. Fire regimes were largely dictated by natural lightning strikes or controlled agricultural clearing, and ecosystems possessed sufficient ecological resilience to recover within natural cycles.
- **Industrialization and Early GHG Accumulation (1850–1970s)**
 - The onset of the Industrial Revolution introduced widespread fossil fuel combustion, land clearing, and rapid urban growth across Europe. Although atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations steadily grew, land-surface temperature impacts were initially masked by atmospheric sulphate aerosols and ocean thermal inertia. However, underlying thermal energy continued to accumulate in the climate system.
- **The 1976 Landmark Heatwave and Initial Scientific Tracking**
 - The severe heatwave of 1976 across Western Europe marked a significant climatological turning point. It served as one of the first modern signals that regional weather patterns were breaking away from historical baselines. International organizations, including the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), began establishing comprehensive, standardized satellite and ground-based temperature tracking networks during this period.
- **The 2003 European Heatwave: A Wake-Up Call**
 - The catastrophic summer heatwave of 2003 resulted in more than 70,000 heat-related excess deaths across Western Europe, mostly in France, Italy, and Spain. This tragedy exposed the lack of preparedness in temperate nations whose public health systems, infrastructure, and housing stock were built for cooler climates. It accelerated the adoption of early heat-health warning systems and national climate adaptation policies across the European continent.
- **Modern Era of Compound Disasters (2020s)**
 - Today, regional warming in Western Europe has crossed critical ecological thresholds, rising roughly 2°C above 1970s baselines. Multi-wave heat dome phenomena combined with severe wildfires have become an annual operational reality. The focus of climate governance has consequently shifted from long-term mitigation strategies to urgent, real-time crisis adaptation and emergency risk reduction.
- **Way Forward**
- **1. Modernizing Early Warning Systems and AI-Driven Forecasting**
 - Integrate high-resolution satellite monitoring, ground sensors, and artificial intelligence models to track soil moisture levels, ambient temperatures, and wind vector changes in real time.
 - Issue localized, actionable early warnings to emergency management agencies, healthcare institutions, and vulnerable populations well before severe heatwaves or fire conditions strike.
- **2. Expanding Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) and Sustainable Forestry**
 - Re-establish diverse, native forest ecosystems rather than monoculture plantations. Native broadleaf trees retain moisture better and resist fire more effectively than coniferous commercial timber.
 - Create strategic green firebreaks, clear accumulated dry underbrush through controlled management, and restore natural wetlands to recharge local water tables and raise ambient soil moisture.

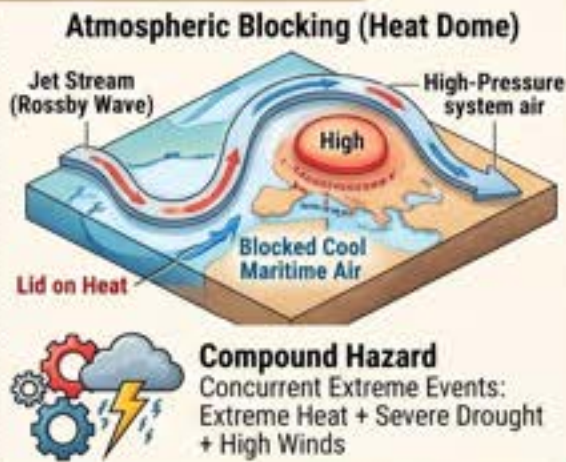
COMPREHENSIVE CLIMATE ANALYSIS: WESTERN EUROPE'S ACCELERATED WARMING & WILDFIRE CRISIS

UPSC CSE PREPARATION - SPECIAL EDITION

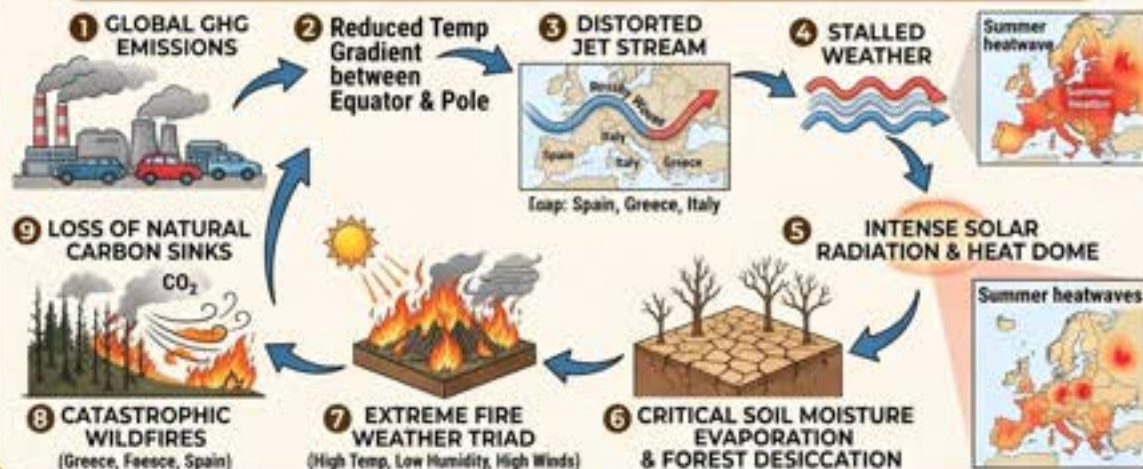
KEY TERMS & THEORETICAL FOUNDATION



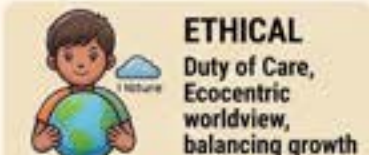
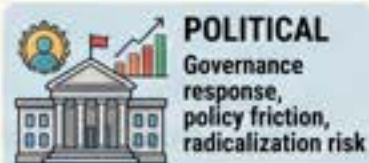
- Thermodynamics in a closed system
- Tragedy of the Commons
- Intergenerational Equity



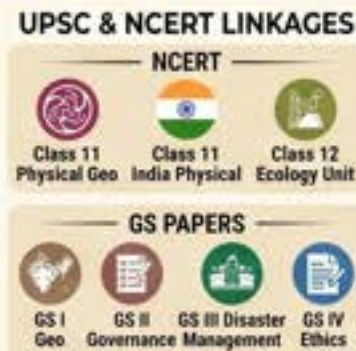
MAIN ARGUMENTS: ACCELERATED CLIMATE CRISIS FLOW



MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS



EVOLUTION, U'PSC LINKAGES, AND WAY FORWARD



- WAY FORWARD**
- ✓ Modernized Early Warning Systems (EWS) & AI Forecasting
 - ✓ Nature-Based Solutions (NbS): Diverse native forests, green firebreaks
 - ✓ Heat-Resilient Infrastructure: Passive cooling, building codes
 - ✓ Institutionalizing Comprehensive Heat Action Plans (HAPs)
 - ✓ International Cooperation & Climate Finance

Collegium's unexplained recommendations risk bad appointments, says SC judge

Justice Bhuyan points to former Allahabad HC Judge's reported reference to minority community as 'ants'; Collegium's return to opacity has been a relatively recent phenomenon, adds the judge

Krishnasadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Supreme Court judge Justice Ujjal Bhuyan stated on Saturday that the top court Collegium's lack of transparency in judicial appointments creates a loophole, allowing individuals who make unconstitutional or derogatory remarks to enter the judiciary.

Justice Bhuyan pointed to a former Allahabad High Court Judge's reported reference to a minority community as 'ants' in a speech he had made while serving on the Bench as an example. He said this in an interaction after delivering the keynote address at Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy's launch of its report 'The Judicial Transparency Index: Assessing Disclosure of Information by the Supreme Court and the High Courts'.

He said that by not providing reasons for its recommendations to constitutional courts, the Collegium was also keeping the public in the dark about the achievements of some deserving candidates.

Justice Bhuyan said the return to opacity by the Collegium has been a relatively recent phenomenon.



"Deliberations over the elevation and transfer of judges remain confidential; reasons for rejecting or deferring a recommendation are rarely disclosed in full, and the criteria applied are not codified in any publicly accessible instrument comparable to the Memorandum of Procedure's own limited disclosure. I have seen that the last three statements of the Supreme Court Collegium do not contain any reason at all for recommending elevation as opposed to the earlier statements where each of the recommendations was supported by some reason," Justice Bhuyan said in his keynote speech.

Justice Bhuyan said a July 24 order of the top court has drawn clear line between transparency through livestreaming of

court proceedings and preventing misuse and commercial exploitation of that process.

Abuse of livestreaming
"The court's concern is that decontextualised fragments of oral exchanges, observations made by judges in the course of argument, not findings, are being circulated with sensational captions, causing reputational harm to judges, advocates, and litigants alike, and distorting public understanding of what had actually happened in court. The order does not retreat from live streaming; it draws a distinction between transparency of the process and the licence to manufacture a misleading narrative from that process," he explained.

Addressing apprehensions over whether the

abuse of livestreamed content may prompt the court to do away with the facility, Justice Bhuyan said the livestreaming of court proceedings has been the "most visible transparency development of the last decade".

"Allowing the litigants and members of the public to view courtroom proceedings, ensures that judges apply the law in a fair and impartial manner," Justice Bhuyan said.

The judge referred to the 2018 *Svapnil Tripathi* judgment of the Supreme Court, which had held that livestreaming expanded the courtroom beyond its physical four walls and epitomised transparency, good governance and accountability.

Justice Bhuyan quoted the Supreme Court's own words in *Central Public Information Officer, Supreme Court of India v. Subhash Chandra Agarwal* judgment of 2020 that "judicial independence is not secured by the secrecy of cloistered halls. It cannot be said that increase in transparency would threaten judicial independence".

Public access to justice and transparency is the "very soul of justice", he said.

- **Key Terms and Explanations**
- **Supreme Court Collegium System**
 - The Collegium System is the institutional mechanism through which judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts are appointed, elevated, and transferred. Notably, it is not mentioned in the original text of the Constitution of India; rather, it evolved through a series of judicial decisions known as the *Three Judges Cases*.
 - **Composition:** For Supreme Court appointments, it consists of the Chief Justice of India (CJI) and the four senior-most judges of the apex court. For High Court appointments, it is led by the CJI and the two senior-most judges.
 - **Memorandum of Procedure (MoP)**
 - The Memorandum of Procedure is an administrative instrument that guides the operational process for appointing judges to the High Courts and the Supreme Court. Formulated in consultation between the Judiciary and the Executive following the *Second Judges Case (1993)*, it sets out the workflow, timeframes, and channels of communication.
 - **Judicial Opacity vs. Judicial Transparency**
 - **Judicial Opacity:** Refers to a state of institutional secrecy where decision-making processes—specifically recommendations, elevations, rejections, and transfers—occur without publishing the underlying rationale, selection criteria, or evaluation metrics.
 - **Judicial Transparency:** Refers to institutional openness where judicial selection standards, rationale for elevation or rejection, and courtroom proceedings are made accessible to the public to ensure institutional accountability.
 - **The "Cloistered Halls" Doctrine**
 - This concept represents the traditional argument that judicial independence requires absolute secrecy in institutional deliberations. It suggests that exposing judicial selection, internal friction, or administrative deliberations to public view would compromise judicial autonomy and expose judges to public pressure.
 - **Live-Streaming of Court Proceedings**
 - The digital broadcasting of court proceedings to the public in real-time. Cemented by the Supreme Court in *Swapnil Tripathi v. Supreme Court of India (2018)*, live-streaming expands the principle of "open court" beyond physical courtroom walls to promote public literacy and institutional integrity.
- **Main Arguments and Substantive Parts**
- **Core Thesis**
 - The long-term credibility of the higher judiciary rests on balancing judicial independence with institutional transparency. Secret, unexplained judicial appointments risk introducing biased or underqualified individuals into constitutional courts while obscuring the merits of deserving candidates. Simultaneously, while open court initiatives like live-streaming enhance public access, they require safeguards against decontextualized social media exploitation.
- **Key Substantive Arguments**
- **Risks of Unexplained Collegium Recommendations**
 - **Entry of Improper Candidates:** When the Collegium issues recommendations without disclosing their underlying rationale, it creates structural loopholes. Individuals who have expressed unconstitutional viewpoints, exhibited communal bias, or made derogatory public remarks can be elevated without public or peer scrutiny.
 - **Obscuring Merit:** The absence of clear, reasoned orders prevents the public and legal fraternity from recognizing the accomplishments, integrity, and competence of highly deserving candidates.
 - **Regression to Opacity:** While the Collegium briefly adopted a practice of publishing reasoned resolutions outlining candidate evaluation parameters, it has recently reverted to unreasoned recommendations. This leaves selection criteria uncoded and non-transparent.
- **Reconciling Independence and Transparency**
 - **The Fallacy of Secrecy as Independence:** Judicial independence is frequently invoked to justify institutional secrecy. However, as established in *CPIO, Supreme Court of India v. Subhash Chandra Agarwal (2020)*, true judicial independence does not depend on the "secrecy of cloistered halls."
 - **Sunshine as a Safeguard:** Transparency does not weaken judicial independence; rather, it fortifies it by building public trust, preventing arbitrariness, and ensuring appointments are based on merit and constitutional values.
- **The Dual Nature of Courtroom Live-Streaming**
 - **Democratization of Legal Access:** Grounded in the *Swapnil Tripathi (2018)* decision, live-streaming operationalizes open justice by allowing citizens to observe how laws are interpreted and applied, reinforcing judicial accountability.
 - **Vulnerability to Misinformation:** Live-streaming presents challenges when oral exchanges, preliminary observations, or hypothetical questions posed by judges are extracted out of context. Edited social media clips with sensationalized captions can misrepresent court proceedings, damage candidate reputations, and erode public confidence in the judicial process.

- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**
- **1. Executive Primacy Era (1950–1981)**
 - Under the original design of Articles 124(2) and 217(1) of the Constitution, the President (acting on the advice of the Council of Ministers) appointed judges after "consultation" with the Chief Justice of India.
 - **First Judges Case (*S.P. Gupta v. Union of India*, 1981):** The Supreme Court ruled that "consultation" did not mean "concurrence," giving the Executive ultimate primacy in judicial appointments. This era saw political interference, such as the supersession of senior judges in 1973 and 1977.
- **2. Judicial Takeover & Creation of the Collegium (1993–1998)**
 - **Second Judges Case (*Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association*, 1993):** The Supreme Court reversed its stance, interpreting "consultation" as "concurrence" to protect judicial independence from political influence. This ruling established the Collegium System, giving the judiciary primary control over appointments.
 - **Third Judges Case (1998 Special Reference):** The Court expanded the Collegium to include the CJI and the four senior-most judges for Supreme Court appointments, and the CJI and two senior-most judges for High Court appointments.
- **3. The NJAC Challenge and MoP Deadlock (2014–2015)**
 - **99th Constitutional Amendment & NJAC Act (2014):** Parliament created the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) to replace the Collegium with a multi-stakeholder body including the Executive and civil society members.
 - **Fourth Judges Case (2015):** The Supreme Court struck down the NJAC Act as unconstitutional, ruling that judicial primacy in appointments forms part of the "Basic Structure" of the Constitution. However, the Court acknowledged flaws in the Collegium and ordered a revision of the Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) to enhance transparency—a project that remains incomplete due to disagreement between the Executive and Judiciary.
- **4. Move Toward Open Courts (2017–Present)**
 - **Brief Experiment with Transparency (2017–2019):** The Collegium briefly published online resolutions containing explicit reasons for recommending or rejecting candidates.
 - **Swapnil Tripathi Judgment (2018):** Established live-streaming of court proceedings as an extension of the right to access justice under Article 21.
 - **Subhash Chandra Agarwal Judgment (2020):** Confirmed that the Office of the Chief Justice of India falls under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, establishing that judicial independence must coexist with public accountability.

COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS: JUDICIAL GOVERNANCE, APPOINTMENTS, & TRANSPARENCY IN INDIA

KEY TERMS & EXPLANATIONS

SUPREME COURT COLLEGIUM SYSTEM

- Composition for SC appointments
CJI + 4 Senior Judges
- Composition for HC appointments
CJI + 2 Senior Judges
- evolved through Three Judges Cases
 - Example: Recommends names to Union Law Ministry

MEMORANDUM OF PROCEDURE (MoP)

- Administrative Instrument
- Character verification: intelligence agencies
- Example: Guides operational workflow, timeframes, and communication channels

JUDICIAL TRANSPARENCY vs. JUDICIAL OPACITY

- Opacity**
- Unexplained rejections
 - Cloistered Halls Doctrine
- Transparency**
- Openness
 - Public accountability
 - Reasoned resolutions

CORE THESIS: LONG-TERM JUDICIAL CREDIBILITY

LINKAGES

CLASS 11 POLITICAL SCI. NCERT

- Chapters
- Judiciary
 - Freedom
 - Equality

- CLASS 8 SOCIAL & POL. LIFE III NCERT
- Chapters
- Equality

UPSC SYLLABUS MAPPING

- GS 2 (Governance)**
- Separation of Powers
 - Boeition of Timnos-
 - Probity
- GS 4 (Ethics)**
- Probity
 - Key Government
 - Pain-topics
- ESSAY Themes**
- PSIR Optional**
- Key
 - Topics
 - Economics
- LAW Optional**
- Key Insert
 - Probity

MAIN ARGUMENTS & CRITICAL TENSIONS

APPOINTMENT OPACITY

- Unexplained recommendations
- Risk of biased appointments
- Masking candidate merit
- Regression to unreasoned orders

LIVE-STREAMING RISKS

- Decontextualized video clips
- Sensationalized captions
- Threat to judicial decorum
- Distortion of oral remarks

LOGICAL & PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

DOCTRINE OF CHECKS & BALANCES



OPEN JUSTICE & BENTHAMITE PUBLICITY



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Derives power from legitimacy and reasoning

WAY FORWARD

CODIFIED MoP & CLEAR CRITERIA



CODIFIED MoP & CLEAR CRITERIA

PERMANENT SECRETARIAT & BACKGROUND CHECKS



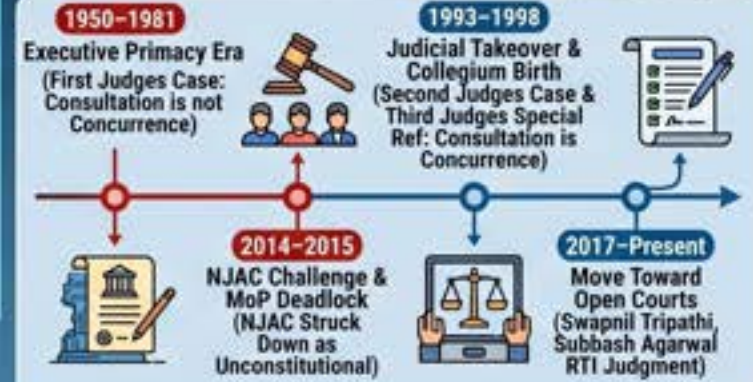
PERMANENT SECRETARIAT & BACKGROUND CHECKS

DIGITAL LIVE-STREAMING



DIGITAL LIVE-STREAMING SAFEGUARDS

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION



MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS

SOCIAL	POLITICAL	LEGAL	ETHICAL	INTERNATIONAL
				
SOCIAL	POLITICAL	LEGAL	ETHICAL	INTERNATIONAL
- diversity gap - public trust	- Exec-Judiciary friction - Appointment delays - Apposment of raxeastor	- Basic Structure vs RTI - Privacy vs Open Justice	- Judicial impartiality - bias avoidance	comparative best practices (US, UK, South Africa)

'PREVIOUS YEARS' UPSC & APSC QUESTIONS

SAMPLE HIGH-LEVEL SUMMARY

- Mains 2017: Critically analyze the Collegium system for transparency.
- APSC Mains: Explain constitutional friction over MoP.

India's balancing act to boost China, U.S. investments, trade

NEWS ANALYSIS

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The Centre has over the last few months been walking a tightrope between maintaining strategic objectives and encouraging more trade and investment from the U.S. and China.

This has seen gradual relaxations in India's many long-held policies.

Data compiled by the Centre for Digital Economy Policy (C-DEP) and shared with *The Hindu* shows one arena in which this balanc-

ing act is playing out is in the manner in which India uses anti-dumping duties.

The usual procedure is for local industry to petition the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGTR) for an investigation.

If DGTR finds dumping is taking place, it recommends to Finance Ministry either imposing an anti-dumping duty or extending a duty for a further period of time. The data from C-DEP shows the DGTR made 1,052 such recommendations to the Ministry of Finance between 1991 and 2020. Of these, the Ministry had rejected five.

However, since 2020, this changed. The data shows while the average annual number of recommendations has been largely the same, rejection rates rose to between 50-62% in 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23. It then fell to 20.8% in 2023-24, 6.1% in 2024-25 before rising again to 41.5% in 2025-26 up to December 31, 2025 and China made up the bulk of the rejections since 2000.

"China has higher share of rejections because it also has a higher share of investigations and recommendations against it," a top government official said.

Rising rejections

The status of anti-dumping duty recommendations made by the DGTR to the Ministry of Finance

Period	Number of recommendations			% rejection
	Accepted	Rejected	Total	
1991-2020	1047	5	1052	0.5
2020-21	21	25	46	54.3
2021-22	24	34	58	58.6
2022-23	13	21	34	61.8
2023-24	19	5	24	20.8
2024-25	31	2	33	6.1
2025-26 (Up to December 31)	24	17	41	41.5

Source: Centre for Digital Economy Policy

Changing imports

This increase in rejections of anti-dumping duty re-

commendations coincides with the focus shifting from finished products to

intermediate goods.

"Most of the goods imported from China are capital goods, intermediate goods and raw materials used for making finished products which are also exported out of India," Commerce Minister Jitin Prasad told the Lok Sabha.

However, this comes with political sensitivities.

"There is a mindset among those who advise the government that restricting any kind of import is protectionist," Ashwani Mahajan, National Co-Convenor, Swadeshi Jagaran Manch (SJM) (an RSS affiliate) told *The Hindu*.

"But in my opinion, this mindset is wrong because anti-dumping duty is a remedy, not a protection."

To boost investments, India made several other changes to China policies.

In 2020, the Government amended the FDI Policy to mandate investment from firms in countries sharing a land border with India can be done only after Centre's approval.

In March 2026, the Union Cabinet approved allowing investments from firms with up to 10% Chinese ownership to enter India.

Then, the Centre in July

allowed four firms with Chinese ownership or links to bid for projects tendered by Indian government in the power sector.

To help Indian firms export more, the Centre diluted its stance on FDI by e-commerce companies.

India also won lower tariffs from the U.S. The draft report of the probe released in June proposed 12.5% tariff on India.

Soon after, the Union government notified a ban on the import of goods made using forced labour.

It resulted in the U.S. imposing a final tariff of 10% on India.

- **Key Terms and Explanations**
 - **Anti-Dumping Duty (ADD) & DGTR**
 - An **Anti-Dumping Duty** is a protectionist tariff imposed by a domestic government on foreign imports that are priced below fair market value or below the domestic cost of production—a practice known as *dumping*.
 - **Mechanism:** The **Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR)**, an arm of the Ministry of Commerce, conducts technical investigations upon receiving petitions from local industries. If dumping and material injury to domestic producers are proven, DGTR recommends levying an ADD. However, the final statutory authority to notify and impose this duty rests with the **Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue)**.
 - **Intermediate Goods vs. Finished Goods**
 - Trade policy distinguishes between components used in production and end-user products.
 - **Intermediate Goods:** Inputs, raw materials, or components used by domestic industries to manufacture final products (e.g., active pharmaceutical ingredients, semiconductor chips, capital machinery).
 - **Finished Goods:** Complete products ready for direct consumer purchase (e.g., fully assembled smartphones, packaged medicines).
 - **Economic Context:** Imposing high duties on intermediate goods protects basic material producers but inflates input costs for downstream manufacturers, reducing their global export competitiveness.
 - **Press Note 3 (2020 FDI Policy Amendment)**
 - In April 2020, India amended its Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy via **Press Note 3** to prevent opportunistic takeovers or acquisitions of vulnerable Indian companies during economic disruptions.
 - **Core Mandate:** Any entity from a country sharing a land border with India (most notably China), or where the beneficial owner of an investment is situated in such a country, must seek **prior government approval** for all investments, shifting them out of the automatic FDI route.
 - **Strategic Autonomy in Geoeconomics**
 - Strategic autonomy refers to a nation's ability to pursue its national interests and foreign policy objectives independently, without being constrained by traditional alliances or foreign coercive pressures. In trade, it manifests as a calibrated balance: restricting foreign capital in sensitive national security domains while liberalizing capital and component flows where required to boost domestic manufacturing and export capacities.
-

- **Main Arguments and Substantive Parts**
- **Core Thesis**
 - India's foreign trade architecture is undergoing a strategic recalibration. The state is balancing national security imperatives against the economic necessity of integrating into Global Value Chains (GVCs). Rather than decoupling unconditionally from geopolitical competitors, policy is shifting toward selective engagement—lowering trade barriers on critical intermediate inputs while maintaining strategic guardrails.
- **Key Points and Evidence**
- **Recalibration of Trade Remedial Actions**
 - Historically, recommendations made by the DGTR to impose anti-dumping duties were accepted almost automatically by the Ministry of Finance.
 - Between 1991 and 2020, the Finance Ministry rejected only **0.5%** of DGTR recommendations (5 out of 1,052).
 - Post-2020, rejection rates surged dramatically—reaching **54.3% in 2020-21**, **58.6% in 2021-22**, and **61.8% in 2022-23**, before stabilizing at **41.5% in late 2025-26**.
 - **Rationale:** China accounts for the largest share of these rejected duty recommendations. Rather than protecting domestic producers at all costs, the government increasingly views anti-dumping duties as targeted remedies rather than broad protectionist shields. By rejecting duties on imported capital goods and raw materials, policy lowers production costs for downstream domestic industries, enabling them to export competitively.
- **Nuanced Easing of Foreign Direct Investment Restrictions**
 - Following the 2020 border standoffs, strict investment controls under Press Note 3 created capital bottlenecks in high-technology and manufacturing sectors dependent on existing global supply hubs.
 - **Policy Adjustments:** Pragmatic adjustments have been introduced. Approved measures allow investments from entities with up to **10% Chinese ownership** without triggering prolonged regulatory friction.
 - **Sectoral Re-entry:** Foreign firms linked to Chinese supply chains have been selectively permitted to bid on strategic infrastructure projects, including power grid and energy initiatives, subject to vetted security protocols.
 - **E-Commerce Adjustments:** Stances on FDI in e-commerce have been refined to help Indian small businesses access global distribution channels.
- **Strategic Alignment with Western Markets**
 - While managing trade relations with Eastern suppliers, India is simultaneously navigating trade negotiations with major Western partners like the United States.
 - **Tariff Negotiations:** Proactive regulatory alignment—such as issuing bans on importing goods produced using forced labor—has helped India secure lower tariff burdens (e.g., negotiating draft tariffs down from 12.5% to a finalized 10%).
 - **Goeconomic Strategy:** Aligning with global labor and environmental standards allows India to position itself as a reliable, ethical alternative in global manufacturing networks.
- **Counterarguments and Domestic Concerns**
 - **Dangers of Unchecked Dumping:** Domestic industrial groups argue that high rejection rates of anti-dumping duties expose vulnerable MSMEs to predatory pricing by subsidized foreign state enterprises.
 - **Security Vulnerabilities:** Critics contend that easing investment thresholds or allowing foreign-linked firms into critical sectors (like power and digital infrastructure) introduces operational risks and potential cyber vulnerabilities.
 - **Loss of Import Substitution Momentum:** Over-reliance on foreign intermediate goods could dilute the domestic value-addition goals championed under initiatives like *Atmanirbhar Bharat* and various Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes.

- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**
- **Pre-1991: The Era of Protectionism and Import Substitution**
 - **Policy Framework:** Trade policy was governed by high tariff walls, quantitative restrictions, and administrative licensing under the License-Permit Raj.
 - **Objective:** Protect infant domestic industries from foreign competition and conserve scarce foreign exchange reserves.
 - **Outcome:** Low export competitiveness, technological obsolescence, and inefficient production ecosystems.
- **1991–2020: Post-Liberalization and Structural Integration**
 - **1991 LPG Reforms:** Unbound tariffs were reduced, import licensing was dismantled, and foreign direct investment was welcomed across multiple sectors.
 - **1995 WTO Accession:** India adapted its domestic legislation to align with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), establishing institutional bodies like the DGTR.
 - **Institutional Alignment:** The Finance Ministry routinely endorsed trade protection measures recommended by DGTR, resulting in a **0.5% rejection rate** across three decades.
 - **Consequence:** Rapid expansion of trade volumes, alongside a growing trade deficit with major industrial exporters like China.
- **2020–2023: Border Crises, Security Imperatives, and Strategic Decoupling**
 - **2020 Security Pivot:** Geopolitical tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) combined with supply chain disruptions during COVID-19 prompted immediate policy shifts.
 - **Press Note 3 (2020):** Prior government approval became mandatory for investments originating from border-sharing nations.
 - **Regulatory Tightening:** Digital platform bans, heightened scrutiny of foreign investments, and increased petitions for trade protection marked this period.
- **2023–Present: Calibrated Realism and Supply Chain Pragmatism**
 - **Input Cost Realization:** Policy makers recognized that blanket import curbs on intermediate inputs raised manufacturing costs for domestic producers and dampened export performance.
 - **Policy Re-calibration:** The Ministry of Finance increased rejection rates for anti-dumping duties on raw materials to **over 40%–60%** in select fiscal years.
 - **Targeted Easing:** Minority equity thresholds (e.g., up to 10% foreign capital stakes) were eased, and strategic labor standards were adopted to secure favorable export tariffs in Western markets.

INDIA'S TRADE & INVESTMENT RECALIBRATION: A COMPREHENSIVE UPSC ANALYSIS

The Strategic Balancing Act between China and the United States

KEY TERMS EXPLAINED



Anti-Dumping Duty: A tariff barrier to enoononny and disoperating the tbections.



Intermediate Goods: Raw inputs, and materialis products, raw inputs, and ectn.



Press Note 3: The red stop sing to opganted unnnanment of the nature and the United States.

FDI POLICY SHIFT: CALIBRATED REALISM

Press Note 3



Press Note 3
Mandatory
Approval

Nuanced Easing



Nuanced Easing
Approval based on
Vetting,
Minority Stakes

RECALIBRATION OF TRADE REMEDIES



**DOMESTIC
INDUSTRY
PETITIONS**



REJECTED
(Growing Trend for
Intermediate Goods)



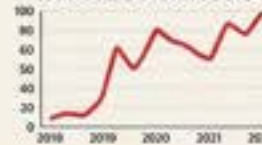
Lowers Input Costs,
Boosts Exports



DGTR
(Investigations)

MINISTRY OF FINANCE
(Final Authority)

**SHARE OF CHINA
IN INVESTIGATIONS**



**DGTR
REJECTION
RATE (%)**

Lowers Input Costs,
Boosts Exports

ACCEPTED
(Traditional ADD)



Protects Domestic Hubs

HISTORICAL TIMELINE (POST-1991)

- 1991-2020: Integration & Low Rejections
- 2020-2023: Security Pivot (PN3)
- 2023-Present: Geoeconomic Pragmatism

MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT ANALYSIS



Economic: Exports & Input Costs



Political: Swadeshi lobby vs. Exporters



Social: Jobs vs. MSMEs



Ethical: Labor rights and forced labor bans

WAY FORWARD: STRATEGIC PATHS



Differentiated Tariffs
Scales & Gears



Fast-Track FDI
A Approval Stamp



PLI 2.0
Domestic Capacity



Institutional Synergy
Coordinated Policy



**ETHICAL TRADE
ALIGNMENT**
(e.g., forced labor bans
for lower US tariffs)



New private physics institute hinges success on 'less is more'

Lodha Theoretical Physics Institute is pitching itself as a private-sector alternative to India's state-run research centres; its founding director envisions an environment where physicists can focus on discoveries without constraints

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

India does not lack respected homes for theoretical physics research. When asked why it needs another, Jainendra K. Jain, founding director of the Lodha Theoretical Physics Institute (LTPI), answered by describing what the place will not do. It will be "smaller" than the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), have a reasonably narrow scope, and be funded entirely by private money.

"These other institutes are fantastic," Prof. Jain said of the TIFR, the ICTS, the IISc, and Allahabad's Harish Chandra Research Institute. "We can all be very proud of them." LTPI, however, he said, is about focus and freedom. Where TIFR spreads across biology, chemistry, and even climate science, LTPI will do one thing – theoretical physics – and maintain a steady state of 10-12 full-time faculty members, some 40 postdoctoral researchers, and a rotating cast of visitors.

The larger difference, he said in an interview with *The Hindu*, is that private capital lets the institute sidestep the approvals that decelerate public science in India. Making a faculty-membership offer at a government-funded institute can take a year of clearances. At LTPI, he said, a couple of colleagues

New paradigm

Jainendra Jain expects the new institute will be a 'paradise for theoretical physicists'

The LTPI is to receive around \$100 million over a decade.
SPEECH
REPRODUCED



- Physicist Jainendra Jain is leading the Lodha Theoretical Physics Institute, a new private centre for theoretical physics research
- LTPI will avoid public sector bureaucracy to allow fast hiring, travel freedom, and unburdened scientific research control
- To preserve faculty members' research time, the small institute will initially forgo awarding its own doctoral degrees
- The Lodha Foundation had made a large philanthropic endowment to ensure permanent financial independence for the centre
- Modelled after the Institute for Advanced Study, LTPI will complement public funding by offering a novel proof of principle
- Instead of paper citations, success at LTPI will be measured by breakthrough scientific discoveries made in India

who agree on a candidate can simply extend one.

"There will be no caps on travel or group size, no teaching load, no committee paperwork" – frictions, he said, can leave a professor barely "five minutes a day" for research. He anticipated this to be a "paradise for theoretical physicists" modelled on the Institute for Advanced Study in the U.S. and Canada's Perimeter Institute, where people "come, they think about physics, they talk to each other, and push each other to make discoveries."

One casualty of that design, however, is the doctoral programme. LTPI will not award PhDs, at least initially. "In an institute which has only 10 or 12 faculty members, giving a PhD cannot really be done at this stage, because all the faculty members would just be teaching all

the time," said Prof. Jain. Doctoral students may still pass through as visitors through collaborations, he added, but the institute will be built around faculty members, postdocs, and guests.

In June 2025, Prof. Jain became the first scientist of Indian origin to win the Wolf Prize in physics, shared with James Eisenstein and Mordehai Heiblum, for explaining how electrons behave in two dimensions under strong magnetic fields. His contribution was the composite fermion – an electron bound to quantum vortices – that could account for the fractional quantum Hall effect and gave rise to what are now called Jain states.

Certain composite-fermion states are predicted to harbour exotic particles that keep a record of how

they have been moved around one another, which can in principle form unusually robust qubits in a quantum computer.

The financial muscle behind the institute is Abhishek Lodha, MD of the Lodha Group. His family pledged close to ₹20,000 crore to the Lodha Foundation in 2024. The foundation describes its giving as a "philanthropy of excellence"; it already runs the Lodha Genius Programme for gifted students and has now seeded two research institutes the Lodha Mathematical Sciences Institute, launched in 2025, and LTPI. Each is to receive around \$100 million over 8-10 years.

Measure of success

Private money for Indian science is not new. Jamsetji Tata pledged half his personal wealth to found IISc,

which opened in 1909; the Tatas went on to establish the Tata Institutes of Fundamental Research (I.T., TIFR) and Social Sciences (TISS). The Birlas built BITS Pilani. The Ashoka, Azim Premji, and Krea Universities continue that line.

The more important question is endurance. C.V. Raman built the Raman Research Institute with his own funds partly to keep the government at arm's length, yet similar ventures have come to lean on the state over time. Jain's answer is a sufficiently large endowment to sustain the institute from its returns in perpetuity.

He also resisted the idea that publicly funded science is fading. Even nominally, private U.S. universities such as Harvard and public ones such as his own Penn State run on substantial government funding and have world-class facilities, he said. A private institute is meant to "complement" the public system and offer a proof of concept, not replace it.

The measure of success, Jain suggested, will not be citation counts – metrics he considers increasingly hollow in an age when AI can draft a passable paper – but discoveries. "We want people from abroad to come to India and provide a proof of principle, which shows that great, stimulating research and discoveries can be made in India," Prof. Jain said.

- **Key Terms and Explanations**
 - **Theoretical Physics vs. Applied Physics**
 - **Theoretical Physics:** A branch of physics that employs mathematical models and abstractions to explain, predict, and rationalize natural phenomena. Unlike experimental or applied physics, it relies on fundamental logic, equations, and thought experiments rather than immediate laboratory machinery or commercial product creation.
 - **Scientific Philanthropy (Philanthropic Science Capital)**
 - **Concept:** The practice of private individuals, families, or foundations deploying non-profit capital toward fundamental scientific research without expecting commercial returns, patents, or immediate monetization.
 - **Composite Fermion**
 - **Concept:** A theoretical quasiparticle emerging in condensed matter physics, formed when an electron strongly binds to an even number of quantum magnetic flux quanta. This concept explains complex quantum phenomena where electrons lose their individual identities and move collectively.
 - **Perpetual Endowment Model**
 - **Concept:** A financial structure where a lump-sum financial grant (corpus) is invested in financial instruments. The principal amount remains untouched in perpetuity, and the institute operates strictly on the annual interest or dividend yields generated by the corpus.
 - **Administrative Friction vs. Research Autonomy**
 - **Concept:** Administrative friction refers to the bureaucratic inertia, multi-tiered approval processes, committee burdens, and procurement delays that consume a researcher's productive time. Research autonomy implies complete freedom in selecting research topics, flexible travel budgets, and rapid peer-driven hiring without state clearances.
 - **Citation Metrics vs. Breakthrough Impact**
 - **Concept:** Citation metrics quantify research output based on the number of times a paper is referenced in academic journals (e.g., h-index). Breakthrough impact measures whether research fundamentally alters a field of study or solves an intractable problem, irrespective of how many superficial papers are generated.
-

- **Main Arguments and Substantive Parts**
- **Core Thesis**
 - India's emergence as a frontier nation in basic sciences requires a structural shift in how fundamental research is funded and governed. Complementing the state-run public R&D ecosystem with lean, privately endowed, bureaucratically unburdened institutes enables high-risk, high-reward theoretical discoveries that traditional state institutions struggle to nurture due to administrative red tape.
- **Key Arguments**
- **1. Bureaucratic Overhead Stifles Frontier Discoveries**
 - **Administrative Inertia:** Public scientific institutions in India are frequently constrained by administrative protocols designed for general civil governance rather than fast-paced scientific research. Delays in faculty appointments, travel clearances, and grant distribution consume critical research time.
 - **The "Less is More" Paradigm:** Micro-institutions with small, highly specialized faculty teams (e.g., 10 to 12 full-time researchers) can eliminate departmental committee work, administrative paperwork, and teaching obligations, allowing scholars to focus entirely on intellectual breakthroughs.
- **2. Re-evaluating Traditional Metrics of Scientific Success**
 - **Flaws of Bibliometrics:** Evaluating researchers based on publication volume and citation counts has encouraged incremental science and paper-mill practices, a trend further exacerbated by automated AI content generation.
 - **Focusing on Paradigm Shifts:** Fundamental science institutions must evaluate success by qualitative scientific leaps and international problem-solving, rather than quantitative paper outputs.
- **3. Long-Term Financial Independence Through Endowments**
 - **Limitations of State Budgets:** Public funding for basic science is vulnerable to fiscal deficits, shifting political priorities, and economic downturns, often causing funding delays for theoretical research.
 - **Private Corpus Stability:** Large, non-retractable private endowments ensure long-term financial independence, protecting pure scientific inquiry from political cycles or immediate commercial pressures.
- **4. Complementarity Over Replacement**
 - **Synergy with Public Research:** Private scientific institutes are not meant to replace state-funded universities or national laboratories. Public institutions remain necessary for broad higher education, doctoral training, and large-scale experimental infrastructure.
 - **Proof of Concept:** Private institutes act as nimble testing grounds for agile research governance, showing how removing administrative friction can attract global scientific talent back to India.
- **Supporting Evidence and Models**
 - **Historical Precedents:** Indian science historically advanced through private initiative; Jamsetji Tata laid the groundwork for IISc, while Homi Bhabha secured early private support from the Tata Trusts to found the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR).
 - **International Benchmarks:** Top global centers for theoretical research—such as the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton and the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics in Canada—demonstrate that unburdening elite theoretical scientists from teaching and administration leads to major theoretical breakthroughs.
- **Counterarguments and Structural Challenges**
 - **Risk of Elite Isolation:** Creating small research institutes without doctoral programs can detach senior scholars from energetic student populations, potentially limiting the broader institutional training of young scientists.
 - **Private Philanthropy Volatility:** Relying on private capital carries risks if philanthropy remains concentrated in a few wealthy families or lacks institutionalized governance frameworks across generations.
 - **Neglect of Equity:** Private elite centers can unintentionally perpetuate elitism if they recruit exclusively from top global networks without building broader, inclusive pipelines for talent from underrepresented regions.

- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**
- **Pre-Independence Era (1890s–1940s): Nationalist Philanthropy and Pure Science**
 - **Nationalist Philanthropy:** Before independence, Indian scientific research was largely driven by visionary philanthropists and patriotic scientists operating outside colonial government frameworks.
 - **Pioneering Institutions:** Jamsetji Tata's vision led to the founding of the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in 1909. Sir C.V. Raman established the Raman Research Institute, and Jagadish Chandra Bose established the Bose Institute, relying on private wealth and public subscriptions.
 - **Establishment of TIFR:** In 1945, Homi Bhabha partnered with the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust to create TIFR, establishing a precedent for private capital building foundational state scientific capabilities.
- **Post-Independence Era (1950s–1980s): The Nehruvian Model and State Monopolization**
 - **State-Led R&D Strategy:** Post-independence policy prioritized state-controlled scientific development to build national infrastructure, leading to the creation of the CSIR, Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), and ISRO.
 - **Shift in Funding Roles:** While institutions like TIFR retained significant autonomy, public funding gradually replaced private capital. Private philanthropy shifted away from basic sciences toward social services like healthcare and vocational education.
 - **Growth of Bureaucratic Governance:** As research institutions expanded under central ministries, public administrative protocols, civil service rules, and centralized financial accounting were introduced across national laboratories.
- **Post-Liberalization Era (1991–2010s): Applied Engineering Focus and Stagnant R&D**
 - **Rise of Private Technical Education:** The post-1991 economic reforms led to an expansion of private engineering, medical, and management institutions, primarily aimed at job creation and commercial IT services.
 - **Stagnation in Fundamental Research:** Gross Expenditure on Research and Development (GERD) stagnated at 0.6%–0.7% of GDP. Private sector R&D remained concentrated in applied development in pharmaceuticals and automotive industries, leaving fundamental theoretical science reliant on state budgets.
- **Modern Era (2020s Onward): Re-emergence of Deep Scientific Philanthropy**
 - **A New Wave of Philanthropy:** Wealth creation in technology, manufacturing, and real estate has driven a revival of high-value scientific philanthropy. Private individuals are funding specialized research centers in areas like brain research, mathematical sciences, and theoretical physics.
 - **Policy Initiatives:** The enactment of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) Act, 2023, reflects a strategy to leverage private sector funds to supplement state research budgets, signaling a shift toward hybrid public-private scientific research models.

A Private Complementary Model for India's Science R&D

KEY TERMS & CORE CONCEPTS



THEORETICAL PHYSICS
(Mathematical models, fundamental truth)



SCIENTIFIC PHILANTHROPY
(Private unburdened capital)

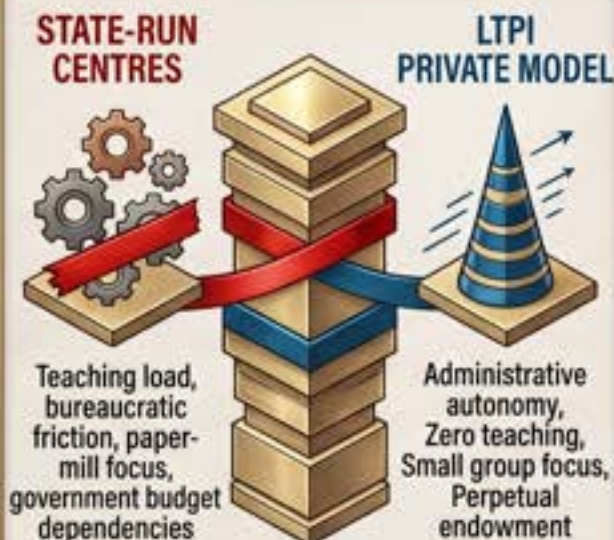


COMPOSITE FERMION
(Jain's Discovery)



PERPETUAL ENDOWMENT
(Principal untouched, oper. on interest)

THE LTPI PARADIGM

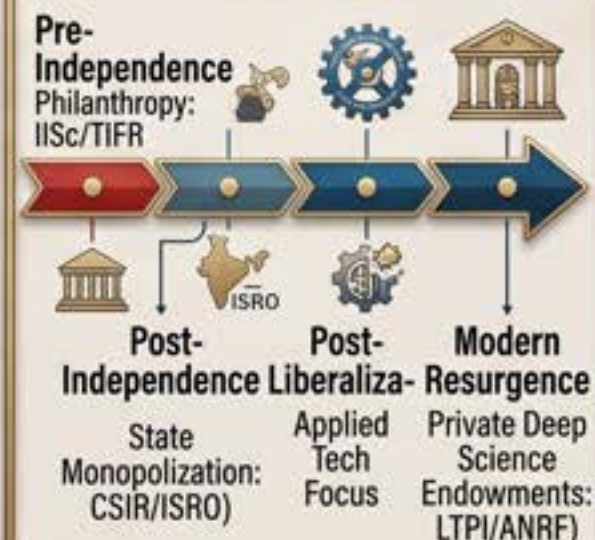


**PUBLIC + PRIVATE =
COMPLEMENTARY SYNERGY ECOSYSTEM**

MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT



HISTORICAL EVOLUTION TIMELINE



UPSC / NCERT LINKAGES

NCERT CONNECTS



Class 11 Physics 'Physical World'
Class 12 Physics 'Dual Nature'
Class 12 Sociology

UPSC SYLLABUS MAPPING



GS 2: Bureaucracy
GS 3: S&T R&D funding
GS 4: Scientific Integrity
Essay themes



WAY FORWARD & SOLUTIONS



Fiscal Incentives
(100% Tax Deductions)



ANRF Synergy
(Co-funding models)



Research Metrics
(Qualitative peer review)



Hub-and-Spoke Integration
(Connecting to state universities)

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS (UPSC/APSC)

GS3 S&T R&D (2021, 2023)

GS2 Higher Education centraliz. (2020)

GS4 Scientific Integrity (2019)

APSC GS5 S&T in Assam (2022)

A slice of Europe in Africa

Ceuta

The Spanish enclave witnessed one of its largest migration crises as up to 60,000 Moroccans breached its borders and arrived in the city, seeking asylum

Smriti Sudesh

They told us we would have a place of refuge in Spain, and it was a lie". That is how one migrant described his journey to Ceuta. He was among tens of thousands who believed Europe had finally opened its doors. Some scrambled over razor-wire fences. Others slipped through gaps in the chain-link barrier. Many plunged into the Mediterranean wearing wetsuits, kicking with flippers or clutching inflatable rings as they swam towards the tiny Spanish enclave on Morocco's northern coast.

For a few hours, Europe seemed within reach.

By Friday evening, the illusion had vanished. According to Spain's Interior Ministry, more than 48,000 migrants had already crossed back into Morocco. Hungry, exhausted, and disappointed, many took the same route they had taken only hours earlier. At least 67 people died in the chaos. Once again, the spotlight fell on Ceuta: a territory barely 15 square km in size but one that has repeatedly found itself at the centre of Europe's migration politics. Ceuta, together with Melilla, further east, is one of only two Spanish territories on the African mainland. Although both are located on

Morocco's Mediterranean coast, they have remained under Spanish sovereignty for centuries. Today, they constitute the EU's only land borders with Africa.

For migrants fleeing war, poverty, or economic hardship, Ceuta is one of the shortest routes into Europe. But reaching Ceuta does not necessarily mean reaching Europe in the way many would imagine. While the enclave is part of Spain and the EU, migrants cannot continue to mainland Spain. For many, Ceuta becomes a waiting room rather than a gateway.

And that reality has transformed the enclave into one of Europe's most heavily guarded frontiers. Double-layered border fences topped with razor wire, surveillance cameras, motion sensors, observation towers, and constant patrols by Spanish security forces line the frontier. Yet, despite heavy border security, migrants continue to attempt dangerous crossings.



Spanish authorities estimate that about 60,000 migrants entered Ceuta over two days. As thousands poured into the city, residents largely stayed indoors while shops and businesses shut their doors.

Court ruling

Why so many people attempted the crossing remains unclear. Spanish officials say trafficking networks spread false claims that asylum could easily be obtained in Spain.

On June 29, Spain's Supreme Court ruled that migrants arriving by sea cannot be summarily deported because they do not cross the physical border referenced in Spanish law. Some believe traffickers and migrants interpreted the ruling as protection against deportation for those entering Ceuta by sea. Many migrants said, according to an NYT report, Moroccan security personnel appeared unusually permissive and even encouraged them to

"come to Spain". Spain-Morocco ties have long been shaped by disagreements over migration, border management, and the disputed territory of Western Sahara.

The Ceuta crisis also quickly spilled into domestic politics. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez swiftly travelled to the enclave, describing the mass crossing as a "violation of Spain's territorial integrity". The Opposition, meanwhile, saw things differently. Conservative parties and the far-right Vox accused Mr. Sánchez of encouraging irregular migration through policies that offer pathways to legal residency for undocumented migrants already living in Spain. Human rights organisations, on the other hand, criticised the authorities, pointing to overcrowded reception centres and Spain's long-standing practice of rapidly returning migrants from the enclaves.

Most of those who entered Ceuta have now returned to Morocco, and the immediate crisis may have subsided. But for many migrants who believed Europe had finally opened its doors, the journey ended with them back where they had started. "They had nothing for us," one migrant said. "They were screaming, 'Get out of Spain!'"

- **Key Terms and Concepts**
 - **Enclave and Exclave:** An *enclave* is a territory entirely surrounded by the territory of another state, while an *exclave* is a portion of a state geographically separated from the main body by surrounding foreign territory.
 - **Irregular Migration vs. Asylum Seeking:** *Irregular migration* refers to the movement of persons across international borders without standard legal documentation or authorization. *Asylum seeking* is the legal process where individuals fleeing persecution, war, or severe human rights violations request international protection in another country.
 - **Principle of Non-Refoulement:** A foundational doctrine of international refugee law codified in the 1951 Geneva Convention. It strictly prohibits states from returning (*refouling*) a refugee or asylum seeker to a territory where their life, freedom, or human rights would face serious threats.
 - **Instrumentalisation of Migration (Hybrid Warfare):** A diplomatic strategy where a government deliberately relaxes border controls, encourages, or facilitates mass migrant crossings to exert political pressure on a neighboring state.
 - **Territorial Integrity vs. Universal Human Rights:** The fundamental tension between a sovereign nation-state's right under international law to secure its borders and determine who enters, versus its international obligations to uphold Universal Declaration of Human Rights provisions for every human being reaching its jurisdiction.
- **Main Arguments and Substantive Dynamics**
- **The Geographic Paradox of Frontier Enclaves**
 - European exclaves on the African continent present a unique geopolitical paradox. While these territories are legally integral parts of the European Union, reaching them does not grant immediate access to continental Europe. They function as containment zones or geopolitical "waiting rooms" rather than immediate gateways to mainland transit.
- **Structural Drivers and Information Asymmetry**
 - Mass movement toward heavily fortified frontiers is driven by deep economic disparities, political instability, and conflict across origin countries. Human trafficking networks frequently exploit these vulnerabilities, utilizing targeted misinformation campaigns to convince desperate individuals that legal status or asylum can be effortlessly secured upon crossing.
- **Diplomatic Bargaining through Migration Control**
 - Border security at North African frontiers operates as a diplomatic bargaining lever. Transit states often tie border enforcement cooperation to economic aid, geopolitical recognition, or policy concessions from European nations. When diplomatic relations strain, border vigilance can swiftly deteriorate, using human mobility as political leverage.
- **Legal Friction and Summary Pushbacks**
 - There exists persistent friction between judicial mandates and ground-level border management. While high courts frequently rule that summary deportations violate due process and non-refoulement obligations, border security forces often struggle with rapid processing capacity, leading to controversial expedited returns during sudden mass entry events.
- **Polarization of Domestic Political Discourse**
 - Mass border events instantly echo through domestic politics in host nations. Conservative and right-wing political factions argue that irregular entries undermine national sovereignty, demanding stricter physical barriers and rapid deportations. Conversely, civil society and human rights organizations stress humanitarian duties, highlighting overcrowded holding facilities and procedural violations.

- **Historical Evolution of Border Politics in North Africa**
- **1. The Pre-Modern and Colonial Era (1415–1956)**
 - **1415:** Portugal captures Ceuta, marking early European colonial expansion along North African trade routes.
 - **1668 (Treaty of Lisbon):** Portugal formally cedes Ceuta to Spain, cementing centuries-long Spanish sovereignty over the enclave alongside Melilla (acquired in 1497).
 - **1956:** Morocco gains independence from French and Spanish protectorates. While Spain relinquishes the broader protectorate zones, it retains sovereignty over Ceuta and Melilla, claiming they were integral parts of the Spanish crown prior to the protectorates.
- **2. European Integration and Frontier Hardening (1985–1995)**
 - **1985:** Spain passes its first comprehensive Organic Law on Foreigners (*Ley de Extranjería*), formalizing legal entry parameters.
 - **1986–1995:** Spain joins the European Communities (later the EU) and integrates into the Schengen Agreement. The land borders surrounding Ceuta and Melilla overnight become the sole physical land boundaries separating continental Africa from the European Union.
 - **Mid-1990s:** Construction of high-security physical perimeter fences (*Vallas de Ceuta y Melilla*) begins, transitioning the borders from open regional transit points into heavily fortified barriers.
- **3. Securitisation and Bilateral Treaties (2000–2015)**
 - **2005:** Mass fence-jumping incidents draw global attention to the physical risks faced by sub-Saharan migrants, prompting further fence height extensions, razor-wire installations, and advanced sensor integration.
 - **2006 (Africa Plan):** Spain initiates bilateral diplomacy with transit and origin nations across West and North Africa, offering economic aid and security training in exchange for strict external border enforcement.
- **4. Contemporary Geopolitical Leverages (2016–Present)**
 - **Shift in Dynamics:** Border security becomes increasingly tied to broader foreign policy issues, such as diplomatic positions on contested territories like Western Sahara.
 - **Judicial Rulings:** European and national courts continuously weigh in on the legality of immediate returns (*devoluciones en caliente*), creating ongoing legal debates over border security protocols versus human rights obligations.

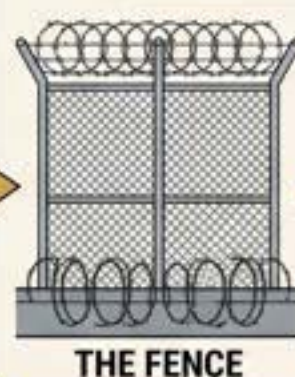


ANALYZING THE CEUTA MIGRATION CRISIS: GEOPOLITICAL, HUMANITARIAN, AND LEGAL DIMENSIONS (UPSC GS-II & GS-III FOCUS)

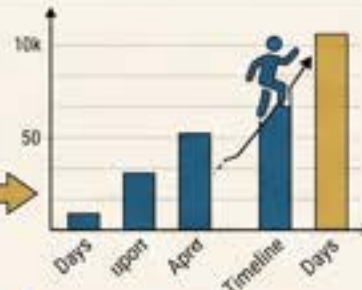
GEOPOLITICAL SNAPSHOT



THE MASSIVE BORDER BREACH (MAY 2021)



THE FENCE



◆ APPROX. 60,000 MIGRANTS IN DAYS.

◆ METHODS:

1. Climbing over high fences,
2. Swimming around barriers.

◆ HUMAN TOLL:

67+ estimated deaths.



Wait-room

vs.



Gateway

CORE CHALLENGES & IMPACT



INTERNAL SECURITY:

Overcrowded reception centers, strain on local infrastructure.



DOMESTIC & INT'L POLITICS:

Strained Morocco-Spain-EU relations; Domestic divide (PM Sánchez vs. Vox opposition on policies).



HUMAN RIGHTS:

Criticisms of rapid returns (pushbacks), right to asylum.



HUMAN TRAFFICKING:

Role of networks in false claims.

LEGAL LANDMARK & THE WAY FORWARD



SPANISH SUPREME COURT RULING:

Summary deportations of SEA arrivals ruled **UNLAWFUL**.

Court order order nter: Summary deportations of SEA arrivals ruled **UNLAWFUL**.



UPSC RECOMMENDATIONS / WAY FORWARD:

- Review border policies on pushbacks.
- Address root causes of migration.
- Strengthen humane processing capacity.
- Improve regional cooperation (EU-Morocco).
- Counter trafficking networks.



Why did FIFA scrap its World Cup stake sale?

What was FIFA's plan to sell stakes in the World Cup? What would FIFA's member associations have gained? Who opposed the proposal and why? Has FIFA faced similar resistance before? How did Gianni Infantino respond to the pushback?

Aniruth Velamuri

The story so far:

In July 31, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) abandoned its controversial plan to sell stakes in the World Cup to private investors. What began as FIFA president Gianni Infantino's vision for a new commercial subsidiary, backed by venture capitalist Joshua Kushner, quickly unravelled amid fierce opposition from the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), other confederations, and FIFA's own senior staff.

What did FIFA propose?

Shortly after the 2026 World Cup, Mr. Infantino unveiled plans to create a new subsidiary called FIFA Forward Enterprise (FFE). This entity was to consolidate all of FIFA's revenue-generating operations – broadcasting, sponsorships, ticketing, licensing, and tournament operations – under one structure. FIFA stated that it would retain majority control of FFE and bring in outside investors to hold minority, non-controlling stakes. In that regard, venture capitalist Joshua Kushner, through his holding company Thrive Eternal, was reported to be the lead investor under consideration. Mr. Kushner is the brother of Jared Kushner, U.S. President

By selling stakes now, FIFA would allow private investors to benefit from future growth that would otherwise accrue entirely to FIFA and football.

Donald Trump's son-in-law. Mr. Infantino shares a close relationship with Mr. Trump, as seen in his awarding of a FIFA peace prize to the President and allowing his intervention to overturn U.S. striker Folarin Balogun's suspension during the World Cup.

What did FIFA's member associations stand to gain from this proposal?

By selling stakes now, FIFA, a non-profit organisation under Swiss law, would allow private investors to benefit from future growth that would otherwise accrue entirely to FIFA and football. FIFA had reportedly offered its 211 member associations an upfront \$20 million payment upon approval, followed by three more payments of \$20 million, \$22 million, and \$24 million between 2027 and 2038.

In an official press release, Mr. Infantino explained that his move would democratise football. He said, "We intend to invest heavily even in the smallest or most remote parts of the footballing world, places that are too often passed over. Every FIFA member association, whatever its size, resources, or geographic location, will have a voice and the opportunity to determine its own course. Football has become a truly global game and so the benefits must be felt globally."

FIFA gave its 211 member associations until September 19 to decide whether to support the plan, or risk losing the one-time payout offer.

What was the immediate response?

UEFA, the wealthy and powerful European football governing body, held an emergency meeting with its 55 member nations on July 30 and voted to boycott World Cups if FIFA moved forward with the plan. In a statement, UEFA said, "We unanimously and unequivocally reject FIFA's proposal to transfer ownership interests in the World Cup and other FIFA competitions to private investors. The World Cup cannot be treated as an investment product. It is one of football's greatest sporting legacies. It has been built over generations by players, national teams and supporters across every continent. No part of it should ever be surrendered to private investors. The World Cup is not for sale."

Has FIFA ever faced such opposition before? Yes. In 2015, Mr. Infantino pursued a similar

investment deal with Japan's SoftBank to fund the Club World Cup, but that plan fell apart amid public criticism. In 2021, UEFA's threat to boycott helped derail Mr. Infantino's proposal to hold the World Cup every two years instead of every four.

Is UEFA alone in opposing this?

UEFA was the first to oppose FIFA's plans. UEFA has had other run-ins with FIFA too: its president boycotted the World Cup final in protest against FIFA's decision to overturn Mr. Balogun's suspension after Mr. Trump's intervention; and it also criticised other FIFA decisions such as hydration breaks.

But UEFA was not the only one to oppose this plan. CONCACAF (Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football) and AFC (Asian Football Confederation) also raised concerns about the lack of transparency in the process, as did individual federations such as England's FA (Football Association) and the global players' union FIFPRO (Fédération Internationale des Associations de Footballeurs Professionnels).

OFC (Oceania Football Confederation) refused to immediately state how it viewed FIFA's plans and instead said that the proposal would be considered by the OFC Executive Committee at a meeting later this month.

Has anyone from FIFA addressed this issue?

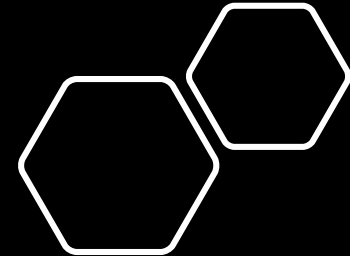
Carlos Cordeiro, Mr. Infantino's senior adviser who represented FIFA on the White House Task Force at the World Cup, resigned and urged other senior FIFA staff to speak out. "I cannot stand by while FIFA considers selling a stake in the World Cup. I oppose it unequivocally," Mr. Cordeiro said in a statement. Kevin Lamour, FIFA's chief operating officer, also issued a statement about the lack of transparency. "Not only must this project not go ahead. The time has now come for football political leaders to ask themselves the right questions and make the right decisions. And if that means I lose my job, then so be it," he said.

How has FIFA responded?

On July 31, Mr. Infantino announced that FIFA would not be moving forward with the proposal. "Having listened carefully to all the views, it has become clear that the project has created divisions of a nature that, regardless of the level of support, are no longer in the interest of the objective set out in the first place. Our purpose has always been – and will always be – to unite and improve. As a result, this proposal will not proceed," he said in a statement.



File photo of FIFA President Gianni Infantino speaking during the 2026 FIFA World Cup play-off tournament draw in Zurich, 2023



- **Key Terms and Explanations**
- **Private Equity (PE) Infusion in Sports**
 - **Definition:** Private equity refers to capital investments made directly into private companies or state-managed/non-profit assets by institutional investors, aiming for long-term equity appreciation and profit extraction.
 - **Contextual Meaning:** In global sports governance, PE firms purchase minority or majority stakes in commercial rights (broadcasting, ticketing, licensing) of leagues or tournaments.
- **Commercial Subsidiary Consolidation**
 - **Definition:** The administrative process of decoupling revenue-generating operations from an organization's regulatory functions and placing them under a dedicated corporate entity.
 - **Contextual Meaning:** Separating tournament operations, sponsorship sales, and media rights management into a distinct commercial enterprise while keeping rules, officiating, and grassroots governance under the parent body.
- **Revenue Redistribution Model**
 - **Definition:** A financial mechanism used by global governing bodies to collect centralized revenue generated by mega-events and distribute it among member federations.
 - **Contextual Meaning:** The structured allocation of financial grants to member associations—often equalized regardless of a nation's size—to fund local infrastructure, youth academies, and operational costs.
- **Institutional Boycott and Counter-Power**
 - **Definition:** The deliberate refusal by powerful member blocs or regional bodies to participate in sanctioned events or decision-making processes to enforce accountability or halt structural decisions.
 - **Contextual Meaning:** Regional continental bodies utilizing their collective economic and athletic clout (e.g., withholding star athletes or national teams) to veto central governance policies perceived as detrimental.
- **Communitarian Asset vs. Financial Asset**
 - **Definition:** The philosophical distinction between an institution held in public trust for cultural and historical heritage, versus a commodity evaluated strictly on risk-adjusted financial returns.
 - **Contextual Meaning:** Viewing global sporting tournaments as public goods belonging to generations of fans and athletes, as opposed to speculative investment vehicles for venture capitalists.
- **Main Arguments and Substantive Parts**
- **Core Thesis**
 - Global sports governing bodies face an existential dilemma: balancing the financial imperative to democratize funding for developing member nations against the ethical and structural risks of selling equity in sovereign cultural assets to private capital. The central conflict lies between the monetization of public heritage and the preservation of long-term institutional autonomy.
- **Key Arguments in Favor of Capital Monetization**
 - **Global Equity and Redistribution:** Proponents argue that selling minority stakes in commercial operations unlocks massive upfront capital. This capital can be redistributed directly to economically weaker national associations, creating a level playing field and accelerating infrastructure development in underfunded regions.
 - **Unlocking Unrealized Value:** Centralized commercial entities can leverage private equity expertise to modernize digital broadcasting, ticketing, licensing, and international brand partnerships, thereby maximizing overall market valuation beyond traditional non-profit capabilities.
 - **Immediate Fiscal Security:** Multi-year structured payouts provide guaranteed income streams to national federations, shielding them from macroeconomic shocks, geopolitical disruptions, or volatile market cycles.
- **Core Counterarguments and Resistance Points**
 - **Surrender of Long-Term Sovereign Revenue:** Critics emphasize that private equity is inherently yield-driven. Selling minority stakes surrenders a perpetual percentage of future growth and revenue streams in exchange for a short-term cash injection.
 - **Commodification of Global Sporting Heritage:** Opponents maintain that flagship global tournaments are cultural legacies built over generations by fans, players, and communities. Treating these events as speculative financial products fundamentally undermines their intrinsic value.
 - **Governance Opacity and Political Entanglements:** Critics highlight that private deals arranged without broad stakeholder consensus or transparent bidding processes foster governance deficits, conflicts of interest, and political cronyism.
 - **Erosion of Competitive and Structural Integrity:** Unilateral commercial expansion often leads to fixture congestion, over-commercialization, and physical strain on athletes, prioritizing short-term broadcast revenue over athlete welfare and regional tournament viability.

- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**
- **The Amateur and Custodial Era (Late 19th Century – 1970s)**
 - **Civic and National Governance:** International sports organizations operated primarily as administrative, non-profit institutions focused on rule standardization and national representative matches.
 - **Minimal Commercialization:** Revenue was largely limited to ticket sales and modest local sponsorships. Governance structures were localized, and sporting events were treated as public goods rather than commercial enterprises.
- **The Broadcast Boom and Commercial Expansion (1980s – 2000s)**
 - **Satellite Broadcasting Revolution:** The advent of global satellite television transformed sports into lucrative media content. Broadcast rights skyrocketed, leading to exponential revenue growth.
 - **Centralization of Commercial Rights:** Governing bodies consolidated marketing, licensing, and media rights under central administrative umbrellas, dramatically shifting the balance of power toward global executive executives.
 - **Emergence of Inequality:** Wealthy regional confederations—particularly in North America and Europe—accumulated disproportionate wealth, creating a growing divide between developed and developing sporting nations.
- **The Private Equity and Financialization Era (2010s – Present)**
 - **Entry of Venture Capital and Sovereign Funds:** Private equity firms and sovereign wealth funds began targeting sports assets, recognizing their resilient cash flows, inflation-hedging properties, and global audience reach.
 - **Institutional Tension and Reform Push:** Governing bodies attempted to launch standalone commercial subsidiaries to attract private capital. However, these attempts faced severe opposition from powerful regional federations, player unions, and fan bases.
 - **Repeated Collapse of Centralizing Proposals:** Historical attempts to introduce private investment or restructure tournament frequency (such as multi-billion dollar private capital deals or biennial tournament proposals) repeatedly collapsed due to threats of boycotts, governance pushback, and public backlash.

PRIVATE EQUITY (PE) INFUSION IN GLOBAL SPORTS GOVERNANCE: COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS

PRIVATE EQUITY (PE) INFUSION IN GLOBAL SPORTS GOVERNANCE: COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS

OPPOSING VIEWPOINTS

PROPONENTS

(Central Management)

Immediate Liquidity
Financial Democratization

Financial Commercialization
(Market Reach)

Infrastructure
National and Community Development

OPPONENTS

(Regional Confederations & Players)

Long-Term Revenue Loss
Revenue Stream Erosion

Commodification
Commodification of Heritage

Governance Opacity
Lack of Public Debate



EXISTENTIAL DILEMMA:
Balancing Democratizing Funding
vs. Selling Cultural Assets.

MULTIDIMENSIONAL MATRIX: IMPACTS & VULNERABILITIES

SOCIAL

- **Fan Alienation** (reduced local ownership)
- **Player Welfare** (over-exertion)
- **Grassroots Connect** (elite disconnect)

POLITICAL

- **North-South Divide** (unequal representation)
- **Executive Hegemony** (centralized control)
- **State Intervention** (political lobbying)

LEGAL

- **Antitrust Overreach** (monopolistic behavior)
- **Fiduciary Breach** (stewardship failures)
- **Monopolistic Control** (market distortion)

ETHICAL

- **Governance Opacity** (lack of transparency)
- **Intergenerational Equity** (mortgaging future)
- **Principal-Agent Dilemma** (administrator vs. community)

INTERNATIONAL

- **Soft Power projection**
- **Sportswashing**
- **Transnational Challenges**

ECONOMIC

- **Short-Term Cash**
- **Long-Term Value Dilution**
- **Asset Bubbles**

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION TIMELINE

1890s-1970s: Amateur & Custodial Era
(Custodial Era)

↓ Last key changes

1980s-2000s: Commercial globalization
(Broadcast Boom)

↓ Broadcast Boom

2010s-Present: PRIVATE EQUITY ERA
(and Financialization)

↓ Key key changes

EDUCATIONAL & UPSC LINKAGES

NCERTs

(Class 11 & 12 Pol
Sci, Sociology,
Economics)

UPSC CSE SYLLABUS

GS-1: Indian Society,
Globalization
GS-2: Institutions,
Governance
GS-3: Indian Economy,
Investment models
GS-4: Ethics in Governance

UPSC CSE PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTION

Statement 1: Capital injection for equity or revenue shares.

Statement 2: Sovereign funds/VCs not legally prohibited.

Statement 3: VC/PE seek strategic influence.

Options: (a) 1 only (b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2, and 3

Answer: (a)

WAY FORWARD: REFORM ROADMAP

INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT

Independent Ethics Boards
(Third-party audit and mandatory disclosure)

INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT

Independent Ethics Boards
(Third-party audit and mandatory disclosure)

HERITAGE PROTECTION CHARTERS

Ring-fencing events
(Define flagship events as non-saleable)

STAKEHOLDER VOTING REFORMS

Player/Fan Representation
(Direct representation and consensus thresholds)

SUSTAINABLE CAPITAL MOBILIZATION ALTERNATIVES

Debt financing options
(Bonds and fee-for-service modernizations)

Why did NCSM clarify the use of the term 'quack'?

Why has the regulatory body said? Are Indian System of Medicine doctors equivalent to MBBS doctors? Why is the clarification significant?

Hindu Shajan Perappadan

The story so far:

 n July 28, the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCSM) issued a circular clarifying that qualified and registered practitioners of India's recognised systems of traditional medicine cannot legally be described as "quacks" or "bogus doctors" simply because they practise the Indian System of Medicine (ISM).

What is NCSM?

NCSM is the statutory regulatory established under the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Act, 2020, to oversee medical education, professional standards, and the registration of practitioners in India's recognised traditional systems of medicine – Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and Sowa-Rigpa.

What does its circular say and why was it issued?

It says doctors who hold recognised qualifications such as Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery, Bachelor of Unani Medicine and Surgery, Bachelor of Siddha Medicine and Surgery, or Bachelor of Sowa-Rigpa Medicine and Surgery, and are registered under the provisions of the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Act, are legally recognised medical practitioners and cannot be called

The circular recognises that practitioners registered under the NCSM Act are legally recognised medical practitioners within their own systems of medicine.

It says doctors who hold recognised qualifications such as Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery, Bachelor of Unani Medicine and Surgery, Bachelor of Siddha Medicine and Surgery, or Bachelor of Sowa-Rigpa Medicine and Surgery, and are registered under the provisions of the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Act, are legally recognised medical practitioners and cannot be called

doctors", being targeted through public notices, criticised in the media, subjected to harassment in public forums. NCSM said the clarification was intended to affirm their legal status and deter such harassment.

The clarification also draws a distinction between qualified, registered ISM practitioners and unqualified individuals who falsely claim to practise medicine. NCSM said its aim was to prevent misinformation, protect the professional standing of registered practitioners, and ensure that action against fraudulent medical practice is not confused with the lawful practice of recognised ISM.

Does this mean ISM doctors are equivalent to MBBS doctors?

Not exactly. The circular recognises that practitioners registered under the NCSM Act are legally recognised medical practitioners within their own systems of medicine. It does not erase the distinction between different systems of medical education or automatically grant practitioners the legal authority to practise modern medicine in every circumstance.

Whether an Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, or Sowa-Rigpa practitioner can prescribe allopathic medicines or practise modern medicine depends on the laws of the relevant State, specific statutory provisions, notifications, and court rulings applicable in that jurisdiction.

The law also draws a clear distinction between practising ISM and practising modern allopathic medicine. In *Proton v. Proton* (2013), the Supreme Court held that a homeopathic doctor treating a patient with allopathic medicines was guilty of negligence, observing that a person practising in a system of medicine for which they are not qualified is effectively acting without authority. In *Dr. Rajeshwar Chandra v. State of Karnataka* (2008), the Court held that practitioners of Ayurveda, Siddha, and Unani cannot practise allopathic medicine on the strength of their qualifications. The Court clarified that cross-practice is permissible only where it is specifically authorised under laws, including through State government notifications issued under the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules.

Who is a 'quack'?

In common usage, a "quack" generally refers to someone who falsely claims to be medically qualified or practises medicine without required qualifications or legal registration. While there is no official nationwide estimate of the number of quacks in India, the Health Ministry has informed Parliament on multiple occasions that health is a State subject, and identifying and taking action against unqualified medical practitioners is the responsibility of State governments and State Medical Councils.

Why is this circular significant?

It reaffirms the statutory recognition of Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and Sowa-Rigpa practitioners under the NCSM Act, distinguishes between registered practitioners of recognised ISM and unqualified individuals who falsely claim to practise medicine, and also makes clear that legal recognition as an ISM practitioner does not automatically extend to the practice of modern medicine.

- **Key Terms and Explanations**
 - **NCISM (National Commission for Indian System of Medicine):** A statutory regulatory body set up under the NCISM Act, 2020. It oversees medical education, professional standards, and practitioner registration for traditional systems like Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and Sowa-Rigpa, replacing the legacy Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM).
 - **Indian System of Medicine (ISM):** Recognized traditional healthcare systems in India, including Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, and Sowa-Rigpa. Practitioners hold formal degrees such as BAMS, BUMS, BSMS, or BSRMS from accredited universities.
 - **Quackery / Bogus Medical Practice:** The practice of pretending to possess medical skills, knowledge, or qualifications that one does not actually have. It refers strictly to fraudulent practice by unverified or completely unqualified individuals.
 - **Cross-Practice:** The act of a medical practitioner trained in one system of medicine (e.g., Ayurveda) prescribing treatments or pharmaceuticals belonging to another system (e.g., Allopathy/Modern Medicine).
 - **Statutory Recognition vs. Scope of Practice:** *Statutory recognition* acknowledges a practitioner's legal authority to practice within their certified discipline. *Scope of practice* defines the legal boundaries of treatments, surgical procedures, and medications they are authorized to administer.
- **Main Arguments and Substantive Parts**
- **Core Thesis**
 - Legal recognition of qualified traditional medicine practitioners must be clearly distinguished from unauthorized quackery, while simultaneously respecting the legal boundaries between different systems of medicine.
- **Key Points & Evidence**
 - **Protection of Dignity:** Qualified and registered ISM practitioners (BAMS, BUMS, BSMS, BSRMS) are legally recognized professionals within their respective domains. Labeling them as "quacks" or "bogus doctors" is legally unfounded and damages public trust.
 - **Clear Boundaries in Cross-Practice:** Statutory recognition in ISM does not automatically equate to parity with modern medicine (MBBS) doctors or grant blanket authorization to prescribe allopathic drugs.
 - **Judicial Precedents on Cross-Practice:**
 - *Poonam Verma v. Ashwin Patel (1996):* The Supreme Court held that a practitioner trained in one system who treats patients using another system without authorization is guilty of medical negligence per se.
 - *Dr. Mukhtiar Chand v. State of Punjab (1998):* The Supreme Court clarified that ISM practitioners cannot practice modern medicine solely by virtue of their traditional degree unless specifically permitted by State laws or notifications under the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules.
 - **Federal Responsibility:** Regulating medical practice, cracking down on genuine quacks, and defining the scope of cross-practice fall under the State List, requiring State Medical Councils and State Governments to take active enforcement roles.

- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**

- **Pre-Independence Era:** Indigenous systems of medicine coexisted informally with modern allopathic medicine introduced by British administrators. The lack of unified regulatory frameworks often blurred the line between genuine traditional vaidyas/hakims and fraudulent practitioners.
- **1970 (Establishment of CCIM):** The Central Council of Indian Medicine Act, 1970 was enacted to standardize education, registration, and practice across traditional systems, bringing formal recognition to BAMS and allied degrees.
- **1990s (Judicial Interventions):** The Supreme Court provided crucial clarity in *Poonam Verma (1996)* and *Mukhtiar Chand (1998)*, establishing that cross-practice without explicit legal sanction constitutes negligence and unauthorized medical practice.
- **2020 (NCISM Act Enactment):** The National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Act replaced the outdated CCIM, setting up a modern regulatory architecture to ensure quality education, clinical standards, and ethical conduct.
- **Present Context:** The focus has shifted toward institutionalizing pluralistic healthcare, preserving the professional standing of traditional doctors, and resolving jurisdictional overlaps with modern medicine.

- **Way Forward**

- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** State governments and medical councils should publish accessible registries of verified ISM and Allopathic practitioners to help citizens differentiate legitimate doctors from unverified quacks.
- **Structured Bridge Courses for Cross-Practice:** Where state laws allow cross-practice in underserved areas, standardized, rigorous training modules in modern pharmacology must be mandated to ensure patient safety.
- **Crackdown on Fraudulent Practice:** States must establish dedicated task forces comprising law enforcement and medical officers to target unregistered individuals impersonating medical professionals.
- **Inter-Disciplinary Collaboration:** Encourage institutional dialogue between the NMC and NCISM to establish clear referral pathways, enabling traditional and modern systems to complement each other without violating legal boundaries.

COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS: INDIAN SYSTEMS OF MEDICINE & LEGAL CLARITY - DOCTOR vs. QUACK

KEY TERMS & CONCEPTS

-  **NCISM:** National Commission for Indian System of Medicine, statutory regulator
-  **ISM:** Indian System of Medicine (Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa)
-  **Quackery:** Fraudulent medical practice by unqualified individuals
-  **Cross-Practice:** Prescribing allopathic medicine by an ISM doctor (legal constraints exist)

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

(TIMELINE)

-  **Pre-Independence:** Coexistence of indigenous and British medicine
-  **1970 CCIM Act:** Statutory recognition of ISM
-  **1990s SC Rulings:** Poonam Verma (1996) & Dr. Mukhtiar Chand (1998) defined cross-practice limits
-  **2020 NCISM Act:** Replaced CCIM for modernization

MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS

(Social, Legal, Political, Ethical, International, Economic)

-  **Social**
Bridge to rural healthcare, public trust vs. fraudulent practice
-  **Legal**
NCISM Act power, professional negligence provisions, State List jurisdiction
-  **Political**
Federal dynamics, Central push for integration and pluralism
-  **Ethical**
Principle of non-maleficence, respect for training, professional dignity
-  **International**
WHO strategy alignment, global AYUSH hubs, medical value travel standard
-  **Economic**
Cost-effective delivery, prevention of economic exploitation by genuine quacks

MAIN ARGUMENTS & LEGAL PRINCIPLES

(Focurate legal distinction)

-  **Registered ISM practitioners** (e.g., BAMS) are **not 'quacks'**
-  **NCISM circular** ensures dignity
- Legal boundaries** between systems are preserved
- Landmark Cases:**
 -  **Poonam Verma v. Ashwin Patel** (1996) on unauthorized practice negligence
 - Dr. Mukhtiar Chand Case** (1998) cross-practice limits without state law

SYLLABUS LINKAGES & PYQs

(UPSC/APSC)

-  **UPSC GS Papers**
 - GS-2:** Health Services Regulation
 - GS-3:** Economy
 - GS-4:** Medical Ethics
 - Essay and Optionals**
-  **APSC**
- Illustrative PYQ topics:**
 - Integration of Traditional Systems in Rural India
 - Ethical dimensions of Medical Practice
 - Regulatory bodies for health sector

THE WAY FORWARD & REFORMS

(Roadmap)

-  **State-level Public Registries of Registered Practitioners** (make them visible)
-  **Structured, Rigorous Bridge Courses** where State Laws allow limited cross-practice
-  **Joint Enforcement Units** (Medical Officers + Police) against genuine quacks
-  Encouraging **Collaborative integrative** medicine pathways

What does the new Bill to prevent exam fraud say?

What is the purpose and what are the provisions of the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026? How is it different from the 2024 Act? How does it deal with procedural delays? What are the common bottlenecks faced by trial courts?

Maitri Potesha

The story so far:

The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 was passed by both Houses of Parliament following widespread protests over the leak of the undergraduate (UG) paper of the National Eligibility-cum Entrance Test (NEET) and the subsequent resignation of Union Education Minister, Dharmendra Pradhan. The Bill seeks to curb examination malpractices through time-bound investigations and speedy trials.

While a copy of the proposed Bill was circulated among parliamentarians on July 25, the Bill was introduced on July 27. It was passed in the Lok Sabha by a voice vote on July 29 and passed a day later in the Rajya Sabha. The legislation has now been sent for the President's assent to officially become law.

What were the incidents over the years leading up to the passage of the Bill?

The crisis surrounding India's competitive exams began with the NEET-UG 2024 exam, where question papers were allegedly leaked in regions including Patna in Bihar and Hazaribagh in Jharkhand. There was panic after 67 students scored full marks, with controversial grace marks, triggering massive student protests and intense judicial intervention. The Supreme Court and the Central Bureau of Investigation

The 2024 Act did not secure a single conviction over its two years of operation.

subsequently uncovered deep-rooted syndicates allegedly involved in the paper leak. The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act was enacted in 2024 to tackle cheating.

Despite the law, concerns over institutional accountability persisted, and the Ministry of Education cancelled the NEET-UG 2026 exam after discovering that the question paper had been leaked and the integrity of the exam had been compromised. This affected about 22 lakh students and led to nationwide protests, backed by the newly formed Cuckooch Janta Party. Consequently, the government pushed stricter legislative amendments, notably the 2026 Bill.

What is the primary purpose of the Bill? How have penalties been revised as compared to the 2024 Act?

The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 is a revised version of the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024. Its primary purpose is to curb exam malpractices, ensure time-bound investigations and speedy trials, and create stronger deterrence against organised crime groups and institutions involved in such offences to safeguard transparent and merit-based selections.

As per the Bill, investigations must be concluded within 60 days – whether conducted by local police, Central investigating agencies, or a Special Task Force – and trials must be wrapped up within three months of the chargesheet being filed in designated special fast-track courts. Also, High Court appeals must be heard by a two-judge Division Bench and resolved within three months.

The penalty for general offences under Section 30C has been increased from 3-5 years of imprisonment and a fine of up to ₹10 lakh under the 2024 anti-cheating law to 5-10 years of imprisonment and a fine of up to ₹50 lakh. Fines for service providers have also been raised from a maximum of ₹1 crore to ₹5 crore, alongside a debarment extension from 4 years to 8 years. For directors and senior management held responsible, the fine has been increased from at least ₹1 crore to ₹5 crore and the jail term has been increased from 3-10 years to 5-10 years. For organised crime networks under Section 31, the Bill proposes a minimum imprisonment of 7 years, up from 5 years, along with a fine of up to ₹10 crore, compared with the earlier limit of ₹1 crore.

How does the Bill address procedural delays

and court adjournments?

Courts are restricted from granting adjournments beyond the following day without explicit, exceptional reasons. All ongoing cases under the 2024 Act will instantly be transferred to newly designated special fast-track courts. States and Union Territories are mandated to appoint special public prosecutors exclusively for these trials.

What major limitation has been pointed out regarding the investigation timeline?

According to an analysis by PRS Legislative Research, unlike other robust legislation such as the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2003 or the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, the Bill contains no provisions or accountability mechanisms explaining what happens if the two-month investigation timeline is missed. Nor does it require officers to record reasons for delays in writing.

Also, the timeline could conflict with Supreme Court rulings. In 2002, the Supreme Court held that it is neither advisable, feasible, nor judicially permissible to prescribe a rigid outer limit for the conclusion of criminal proceedings, and criminal courts are not obliged to terminate trials merely due to the lapse of time.

How does the Bill propose to handle speedy adjudication and what structural challenges do these courts face?

The Bill provides for designating a court of session by each State and Union Territory as a special fast-track court. However, data show severe system-wide pendency. Existing fast-track special courts have battled massive backlogs, with pending cases swelling from over 2.02 lakh in 2021 to 2.45 lakh by 2025. Furthermore, average trial times vary drastically across regions – for example, from 257 days in Andhra Pradesh to 1,717 days in Delhi for Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act fast-track special courts cases.

What common ground-level bottlenecks routinely delay trial courts, as noted by the Law Commission of India?

Key bottlenecks include the absence of accused individuals or the non-production of undertrial prisoners, lack of proactive police efforts to apprehend absconding suspects, frequent and unjustified adjournments sought by advocates or caused by the non-attendance of official witnesses, and deficiencies in judicial case management and court and staff strength.

What was the conviction track record of the preceding anti-cheating law passed in 2024?
The 2024 Act did not secure a single conviction over its two years of operation.



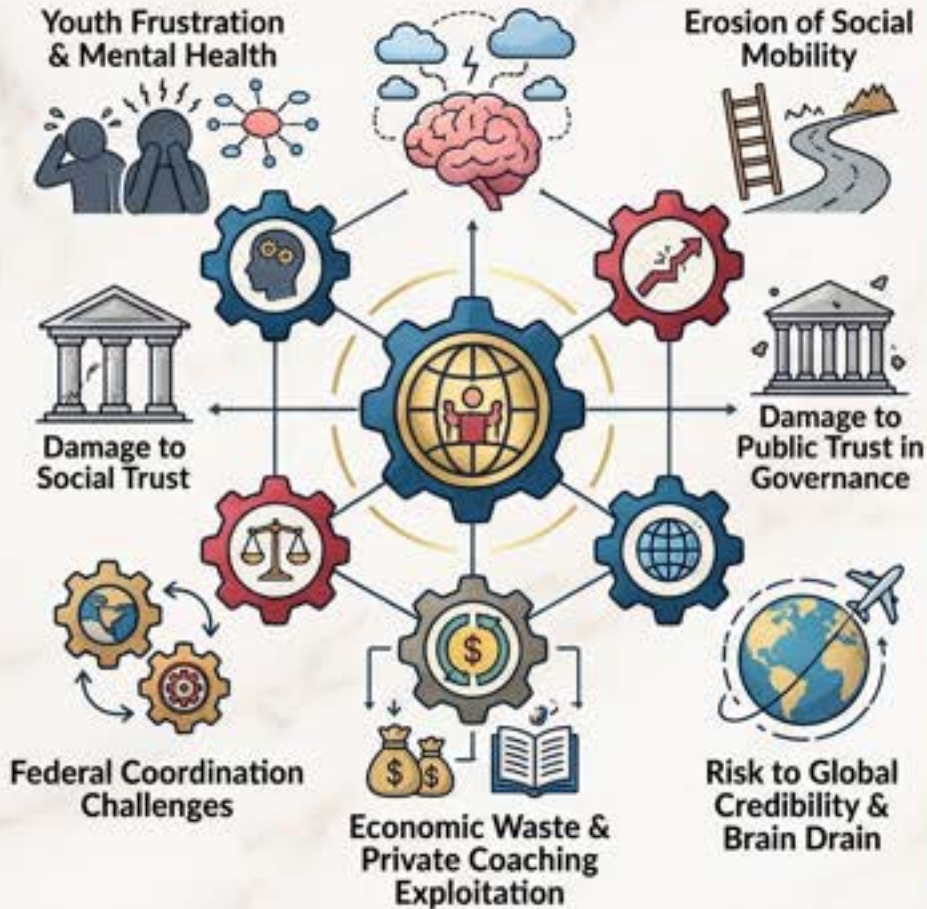
Protesters celebrate the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in Mumbai. AP

- **Key Terms and Explanations**
 - **Public Examination Integrity:** This refers to maintaining absolute transparency, fairness, and security in high-stakes competitive assessments conducted by state or central agencies. For example, when an entrance test like NEET or UPSC CSE operates without paper leaks or unauthorized access, its institutional integrity remains intact.
 - **Organized Crime Syndicates in Academics:** These are structured networks that systematically monetize paper leaks, impersonation, and corrupt testing centers for financial gain. Unlike an isolated instance of individual cheating, these syndicates operate cross-state rackets with sophisticated logistics.
 - **Special Fast-Track Courts:** Dedicated judicial bodies created by legislative mandate to try specific categories of offenses rapidly, bypassing regular trial court backlogs. In the context of exam frauds, these courts handle cases within strict, statutory timeframes to prevent procedural delays.
 - **Designated Service Providers:** External private or semi-private agencies contracted by public bodies to manage digital infrastructure, exam centers, or printing duties. If an IT vendor managing an online test environment intentionally creates backdoors for remote access cheating, they incur stringent corporate penalties under the framework.
 - **Statutory Investigation Timelines:** Legally mandated deadlines imposed on investigating authorities—such as state police or central agencies—to complete probes and file chargesheets within fixed windows (e.g., 60 days).
- **Main Arguments and Substantive Parts**
 - The broader debate surrounding anti-cheating legislation highlights several central arguments, statutory revisions, and underlying systemic friction:
 - **Deterrence Through Enhanced Penalties:** The central thesis posits that existing criminal frameworks were inadequate to deter organized paper-leak networks. Consequently, legislative reforms substantially heighten imprisonment terms and financial fines for perpetrators, corporate service providers, and administrative leadership involved in compromised exams.
 - **Time-Bound Judicial Resolution:** A major focus is overcoming the traditional gridlock of Indian trial courts. Mandating strict investigation deadlines (such as two months) and trial durations (such as three months in designated fast-track courts) aims to safeguard student futures by preventing multi-year legal limbo.
 - **Institutional Accountability vs. Procedural Realities:** While statutory reforms seek swift justice, systemic bottlenecks present serious hurdles. Ground-level realities—such as severe judicial backlogs, pending fast-track cases, non-production of undertrials, and frequent court adjournments—often clash with rigid statutory timelines.
 - **Lack of Accountability for Investigative Delays:** Critics point out that imposing rigid investigation targets without statutory consequences for missing deadlines risks rendering such provisions directory rather than mandatory. Furthermore, rigid caps on judicial timelines run counter to judicial precedents holding that criminal trials cannot be automatically truncated purely due to the passage of time.

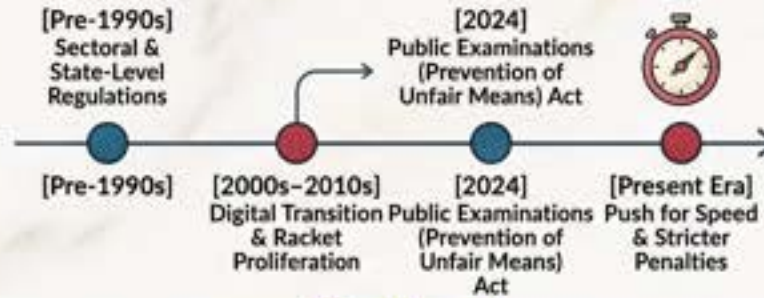
- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**
 - **Pre-1990s Era (Localized Governance):** Public examinations were largely decentralized and managed by individual state boards or universities. Malpractices were generally treated as localized administrative infractions, addressed under Indian Penal Code provisions or specific state school board regulations.
 - **2000s–2010s (Mass Entrance Frameworks and Digital Expansion):** The rapid rise of nationwide competitive entrance examinations created unprecedented high-stakes environments. The entry of private vendors for computer-based testing, combined with huge applicant pools, created lucrative incentives for organized rackets operating across state borders.
 - **The 2024 Central Legislative Milestone:** Recognizing the cross-state nature of exam rackets, the central government enacted the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024. While it formally categorized paper leaks as organized crime, operational implementation faced severe hurdles, resulting in minimal convictions over its early years of operation.
 - **Current Reforms (Focus on Speed and Enforcement):** Recent policy shifts focus heavily on closing enforcement loopholes. Key priorities include introducing strict, time-bound investigation windows, designating special fast-track courts, and raising financial penalties to corporate levels to hold service providers accountable.
- **Way Forward**
 - **Strengthening Judicial and Investigative Infrastructure:** Instead of merely declaring statutory deadlines, state governments must expand court capacity by appointing dedicated judges, setting up permanent special fast-track benches, and assigning specialized prosecutors.
 - **Robust Accountability for Delays:** To make investigation deadlines effective, legal frameworks should mandate that investigating officers record written justifications for missed timelines, subjected to judicial review by supervisory courts.
 - **End-to-End Technological Safeguards:** Transition to highly secure, encrypted digital question distribution systems with real-time audit trails, biometric candidate verification, and strict security protocols for private testing vendors.
 - **Independent Institutional Oversight:** Establish autonomous oversight bodies to conduct regular security audits of public testing agencies and private vendors, ensuring compliance before exams take place.
 - **Comprehensive Witness and Whistleblower Protection:** Build robust statutory protections for whistleblowers and witnesses within testing agencies and private service providers to expose organized syndicates early.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS: REFORMING PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS IN INDIA – PATHWAYS & CHALLENGES

MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES



EVOLUTION OF ANTI-CHEATING FRAMEWORKS



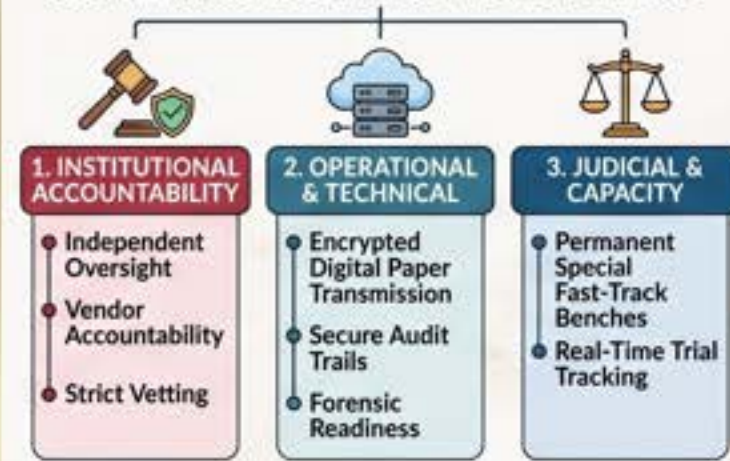
Key Terms



RELEVANCE FOR UPSC CSE & APSC CSE

NCERT Connections	UPSC Syllabus Links
Pol Science Class 11 Chap 3, 4, 6	GS 1-4
Sociology Class 12 Chap 8	Essay
Economics Class 10 Chap 1	Optionals

INTEGRATED WAY FORWARD: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STRATEGY



PREVIOUS YEARS' QUESTIONS (KEY THEMES)



Judicial Pendency (2018 GS-2)



Organized Crime Nexus (2021 GS-3)



Assam Recruitment Reforms (APSC 2022)

ASIP'S ₹2,387 CR OSAT PROJECT TAKES OFF

Modi Launches South India's First Chip Plant

The 30-acre facility will package and test 96 million chips a year in its first phase

Our Bureau



Visakhapatnam | Bengaluru: Construction has begun on South India's first semiconductor packaging facility under the India Semiconductor Mission, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday virtually laying the foundation stone for ASIP Technologies' ₹2,387-crore project in Visakhapatnam.

The outsourced semiconductor assembly and test (OSAT) facility at Tartuvada, being developed with South Korea's APACT as technology partner, will package and test chips for artificial intelligence, high-performance computing, data centres and high-speed communications.

It will initially use wire-bond and flip-chip ball grid array (BGA) packaging technologies before introducing advanced 2.5D and 3D packaging capabilities within two to three years.

The 30-acre facility, being established with an initial investment of ₹400 crore, will have a capacity to package and test 96 million semiconductor chips a year.

ASIP Technologies plans an additional investment of more than ₹2,000 crore. The project is expected to create more than 1,000 direct high-skilled jobs and 1,600 indirect jobs.

Advanced packaging has become a key segment of the semiconductor industry as high-performance AI chips require sophisticated methods to combine multiple chiplets into a single package.

Modi commended Andhra Pradesh's information technology talent pool and said the state is now well positioned to lead in semiconductor manufacturing. Chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu joined the prime minister virtually for the ceremony.

Venkata Simhadri, MD and chief executive of ASIP Technologies, said the project would establish "Advanced assembly, packaging and testing capabilities in India, while driving skill development, supply-chain localisation and contributing to the growth of Andhra Pradesh's semiconductor ecosystem."

• Key Terms and Concepts

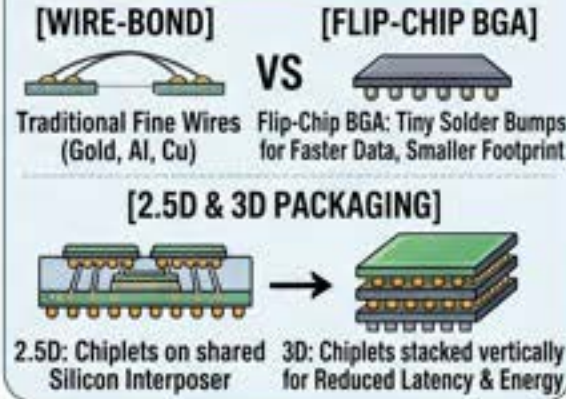
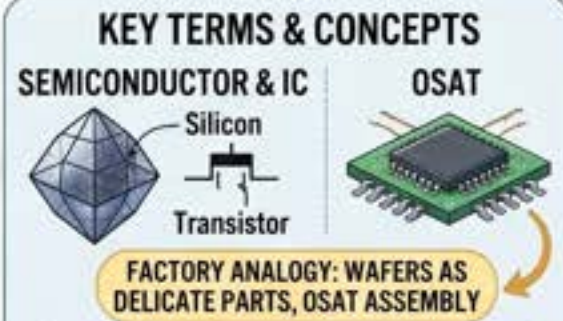
- **Semiconductor & Integrated Circuit (IC):** A semiconductor is a material (typically silicon) whose electrical conductivity lies between that of a conductor and an insulator. Integrated Circuits (microchips) are etched onto silicon wafers and act as the brain or memory of virtually all modern electronic devices, from smartphones to supercomputers.
- **OSAT (Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test):** OSAT facilities form the crucial downstream segment of the semiconductor value chain. They take raw silicon wafers fabricated in a foundry, cut them into individual chips, package them in protective enclosures with electrical connections, and rigorously test them before integration into final products. *Analogy:* If a wafer foundry creates raw, delicate engine components, an OSAT plant assembles, encases, and stress-tests the complete engine so it can be installed in a vehicle.
- **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM):** Launched under the Digital India Corporation, ISM is a specialized business division designed to build a vibrant, self-sustaining semiconductor and display ecosystem in India. It offers financial incentives, infrastructure support, and strategic policy backing to domestic and global tech firms.
- **Flip-Chip Ball Grid Array (BGA) & Wire-Bond Packaging:** These represent different methods of connecting microchips to circuit boards:
 - *Wire-Bonding:* A traditional method using fine wires (gold, aluminum, or copper) to connect the chip to its substrate.
 - *Flip-Chip BGA:* A more modern method where the chip is flipped face-down and connected directly to the substrate using tiny solder bumps, delivering faster data transfer speeds, smaller footprints, and superior thermal management.
- **2.5D and 3D Packaging:** Advanced packaging techniques used for ultra-high-performance applications like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data centers. Instead of placing chips side-by-side on a board, 2.5D places multiple chiplets on a shared horizontal silicon interposer, while 3D stacks chiplets vertically on top of one another. This drastically reduces signal latency and energy consumption.
- **Supply Chain Localization:** The strategy of establishing raw material processing, manufacturing, assembly, and testing within a single geographic region or nation. It insulates industries from international trade disruptions, geopolitical conflicts, and shipping delays.

• Main Arguments and Core Themes

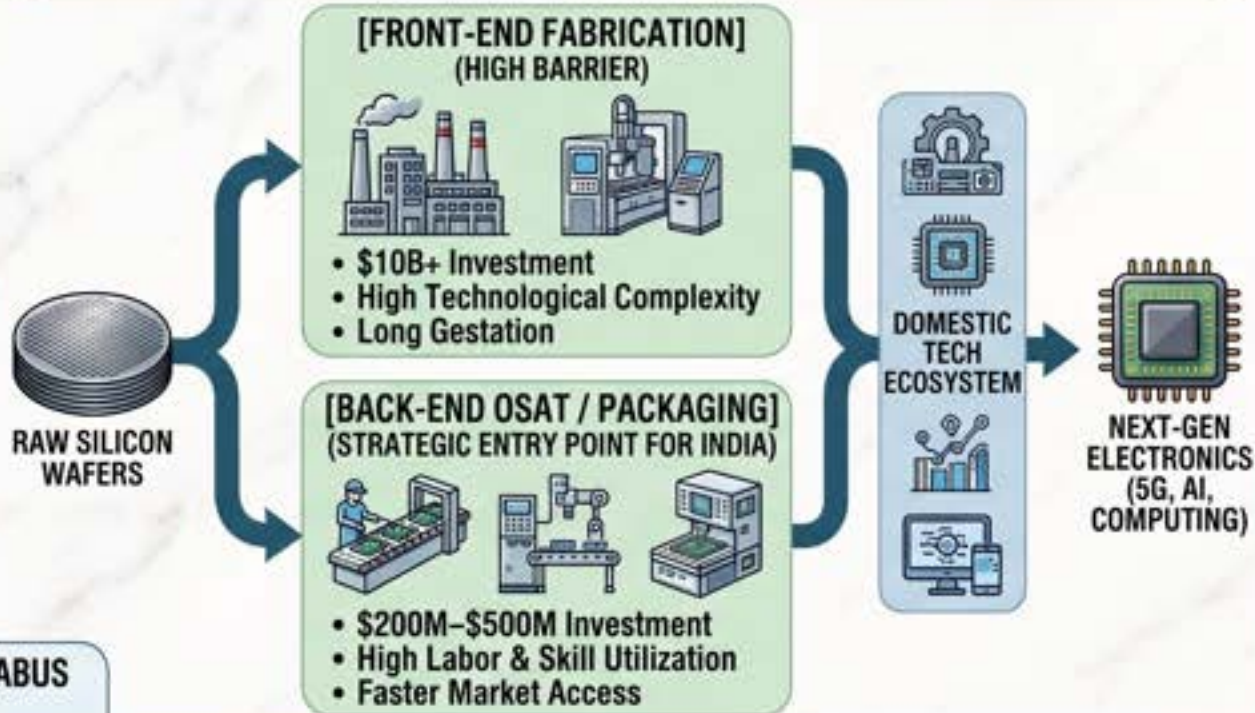
- The core narrative surrounding India's semiconductor policy centers on shifting from a purely design-focused player to an integrated hardware manufacturing powerhouse.
- **Packaging as the Strategic Gateway:** Building full-scale front-end wafer fabrication plants ("fabs") requires astronomical capital investments (exceeding \$10 billion per facility) and ultra-complex chemical infrastructure. In contrast, back-end OSAT and Advanced Packaging facilities require lower capital entry barriers while generating immediate high-skilled technical employment and establishing a localized hardware supply chain.
- **Focus on High-Growth Frontiers:** Modern computing demands have shifted dramatically due to the rise of Artificial Intelligence, high-performance computing, and 5G/6G communications. By targeting advanced packaging formats like Flip-Chip BGA and 2.5D/3D chiplet integration, industrial initiatives align directly with next-generation global technology requirements.
- **Mitigating Geopolitical Supply Chain Risks:** The global semiconductor industry has historically suffered from extreme geographic concentration in East Asia. Building domestic OSAT capacity through international technology partnerships—such as collaborations with South Korean leaders—hedges against global disruptions while insulating domestic consumer electronics and defense supply lines.
- **Catalyzing Regional High-Tech Hubs:** Decentralizing technological infrastructure into emerging industrial corridors (such as Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh) creates vibrant regional tech ecosystems. These hubs attract secondary supplier networks, generate thousands of direct and indirect technical jobs, and prevent brain drain by offering high-value careers locally.
- **Key Industrial Challenges:** While the entry into packaging is a major milestone, structural hurdles remain. India still relies heavily on imported raw silicon wafers, specialized processing chemicals, and high-precision machinery. Ensuring 24/7 uninterrupted power, ultra-pure water supplies, and zero-delay logistics remains vital to sustained operational success.

- **Historical Evolution of the Semiconductor Policy Landscape**
 - **Pre-1990s (Early State-Led Era):** In 1976, India established the Semi-Conductor Laboratory (SCL) in Mohali to create an indigenous microelectronics base. However, a catastrophic fire at the SCL facility in 1989, combined with the lack of sustained capital infusion, caused India to fall behind East Asian nations like Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan during a critical era of technological transformation.
 - **1990s to 2010s (The Chip Design Era):** Capitalizing on its vast pool of engineering talent, India successfully positioned itself as a global hub for chip design and Very Large Scale Integration (VLSI) engineering. Multinational firms established major R&D centers in Bengaluru and Hyderabad. While India designed nearly 20% of the world's microchips, actual hardware manufacturing was entirely outsourced overseas.
 - **2014 to 2020 (Electronics Assembly Boost):** Initiatives like 'Make in India' and schemes such as the Modified Special Incentive Package Scheme (M-SIPS) successfully turned India into the world's second-largest smartphone assembly nation. However, these assembly lines relied almost exclusively on imported, fully packaged printed circuit boards (PCBs) and microchips.
 - **2021 to Present (The ISM Hardware Renaissance):** Recognizing the vulnerability exposed by global chip shortages, the Government of India launched the ₹76,000 crore (\$10 billion) India Semiconductor Mission (ISM). This policy shifted the focus from simple assembly to deep hardware manufacturing, funding front-end fabs, back-end OSAT units, and Design-Linked Incentives (DLI).
- **Strategic Way Forward**
 - **Establish a Specialized Talent Pipeline:** Microelectronics requires niche skills that traditional engineering curricula often lack. Universities and technical institutions should introduce specialized programs in VLSI packaging, material science, and cleanroom maintenance, backed by industry apprenticeships.
 - **Localize the Chemical and Substrate Supply Chain:** Advanced OSAT facilities require specialized inputs like high-purity chemicals, industrial gases, lead frames, and organic substrates. The government should extend targeted incentives to domestic chemical and material suppliers to build a complete upstream ecosystem.
 - **Guarantee World-Class Utility Infrastructure:** Packaging facilities require constant, uninterrupted power and ultra-pure water. State industrial corporations must build dedicated power sub-stations, water recycling facilities, and fast-track logistics corridors connecting plants directly to international sea and air freight terminals.
 - **Pioneer Next-Generation Packaging R&D:** Technology evolves rapidly from traditional wire-bonding to complex 2.5D, 3D, and optical packaging. Joint R&D initiatives between academia, state research labs (like SCL), and foreign partners are essential to ensure domestic facilities remain cutting-edge over the coming decades.
 - **Strengthen Environmental Governance:** Strict adherence to Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) protocols and sustainable e-waste processing must be integrated into facility designs from day one. This ensures that rapid industrial expansion does not come at the cost of regional ecology and community health.

AXIA IAS ACADEMY | INDIA'S SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING STRATEGY: FROM DESIGN TO DELIVER



THE STRATEGIC GATEWAY: BACK-END OSAT & ADVANCED PACKAGING



STRATEGIC WAY FORWARD



INDUSTRIAL CHALLENGES

- Import Dependency (Waters, Chemicals, Machinery)
- 24/7 Power & Ultra-Pure Water
- Zero-Delay Logistics

HISTORICAL TIMELINE OF SEMICONDUCTORS

(Summarized the provided belzees provided eras)



NCERT CURRICULUM LINKAGES

- Class 10 Geo
- 12 India People
- 11 Economics

UPSC/APSC SYLLABUS MAPPING

- GS Papers 1, Geography
- GS Papers 2, Governance
- GS Papers 3, Science&Tech
- GS Papers 4, Ethics
- Essay/Optional



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UPSC CSE CLASSES - PRELIMS + MAINS + INTERVIEW GUIDANCE

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