

AXIA IAS ACADEMY



**DAILY NEWS
ANALYSIS**



AUGUST 21



**CONSISTENT
COMPREHENSIVE
AND CREDIBLE**



**UNIQUE AND BEST IN
QUALITY**





AXIA
IAS ACADEMY
RISE ABOVE THE REST



UPSC CSE CLASSES - PRELIMS + MAINS + INTERVIEW GUIDANCE

- **EXPERT FACULTY & MENTORSHIP**
- **COMPREHENSIVE STUDY MATERIAL**
- **REGULAR TEST SERIES & EVALUATION**
- **CURRENT AFFAIRS & ANSWER WRITING FOCUS**
- **SMALL BATCH SIZES FOR PERSONAL ATTENTION**

axiaiasacademy.com +91 6002-417488

New code voids 1978 definition of 'industry': SC

Under Industrial Relations Code, the interpretation will be on its 'own text and context', says the top court; 1978 verdict, authored by Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer, enabled workers to have legal recourse against unfair labour practices by employers; Justice B.V. Nagarathna writes separate opinion, calls reference against the previous verdict 'unwarranted'

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

In a verdict in which judges varyingly differed on issues, a nine-member Bench of the Supreme Court on Thursday held that a nearly half-century-old expansive interpretation of 'industry', which previously granted workers stronger labour rights and protection, will not apply under the new Industrial Relations Code, 2020.

The reference before the Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant was centred around a broad definition given to 'industry' in a 1978 seven-judge Constitution Bench judgment, authored by Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer, in the *Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board v. R. Rajappa* case.

The 48-year-old verdict had enabled workers em-

ployed in a wide range of jobs to have a legal recourse, including collective bargaining, against unfair labour practices by employers. It had exempted only core sovereign activities such as the judiciary, law and order, defence, etc. from the purview of 'industry', as defined under Section 2(j) of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, in order to protect the state's functional autonomy.

The 1978 judgment had further introduced a 'triple test' which laid down conditions that any activity which was systematic or organised, operated on the basis of employer-employee cooperation and dealt in the production of goods and services to satisfy human wants came within the ambit of 'industry'. The judgment had brought even hospitals, educational institutions and municipalities within



the fold of 'industry'.

On Thursday, the majority on the Bench held that 'industry' under Section 2(p) of the IRC would not be "burdened" by the interpretation in the 1978 judgment of Section 2(j) of the 1947 Act. This means the interpretation of the term 'industry' under IRC would be done on a clean slate.

Chief Justice Kant said the 1978 judgment and its conclusion would not act as the "sheet anchor" or

the foundation for any future interpretation of Section 2(p) of the Industrial Relations Code (IRC), which came into force in November 2025.

"The future of 'industry' in Section 2(p) of IRC is not burdened by the interpretation of 2(j) in the Industrial Disputes Act," the CJI summed up at the end of an hour-long judgment pronouncement session on Thursday.

The 48-year-old judgment had further intro-

duced a 'triple test' which laid down conditions that any activity which was systematic or organised, operated on the basis of employer-employee cooperation and dealt in the production of goods and services to satisfy human wants came within the ambit of 'industry'. The judgment had brought even hospitals, educational institutions and municipalities within the fold of 'industry'.

'Not be burdened'

On Thursday, the majority on the Bench held that 'industry' under Section 2(p) of the IRC would not be "burdened" by the interpretation in the 1978 judgment of Section 2(j) of the 1947 Act. This means the interpretation of the term 'industry' under IRC would be done on a clean slate.

The majority opinion on this particular point was

authored by Chief Justice Surya Kant, and supported by Justices Satish Chandra Sharma, Alok Aradhe, Vipul M. Pancholi, with Justices P.S. Narasimha and Joymalya Bagchi expressing agreement in their separate opinions.

In fact, the CJI's opinion even suggested a "refinement" of the 1978 triple test. While acknowledging that the core principles of the test had stood the test of time in deciding industrial disputes, the CJI said its elements could have been "articulated differently so that the scope and contours of 2(j) could have been better reflected". However, the CJI clarified that this was only a "considered opinion", and should not be used to displace the governing legal position on pending proceedings or dig up decided cases.

"Consequently, any pending proceedings before courts, Tribunals, la-

bour authorities or any fora under the 1947 Act should be decided as per the interpretation of Section 2(j) in the *Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) judgment*," the CJI said.

Justice Narasimha agreed, saying an authoritative interpretation of 2(j) had lost its immediacy with the coming into force of the IRC.

In her separate opinion, Justice B.V. Nagarathna, seconded by Justices Dipankar Datta, who wrote an independent opinion shared with Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, found the reference against the 1978 verdict "unwarranted" and not maintainable. She said it was important, now more than ever, to retain the inclusive definition of industry to safeguard workers' rights.

JUDGE DIFFERS IN VIEW
» PAGE 4

- **Key Terms and Explanations**

- **'Industry' under Section 2(j) of the Industrial Disputes Act (IDA), 1947**

- Historically defined in broad statutory terms to cover any business, trade, undertaking, manufacture, or calling of employers, including any calling, service, employment, handicraft, or industrial occupation or avocation of workmen. Its expansive scope ensured that even quasi-commercial, welfare, and educational establishments fell under labor court jurisdictions.

- **'Industry' under Section 2(p) of the Industrial Relations Code (IRC), 2020**

- The contemporary statutory definition codified under India's new labor framework. It defines an industry as any systematic activity carried on between an employer and workers for the production, supply, or distribution of goods or services with a view to satisfying human wants or wishes (not being spiritual or religious), irrespective of capital investment or profit motive, while explicitly carving out specific exemptions such as strictly sovereign functions, charitable institutions, and domestic services.

- **The 'Triple Test' Formulation (1978 Landmark Doctrine)**

- A judicial benchmark established in the *Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board v. A. Rajappa* case. An enterprise constitutes an industry if it satisfies three cumulative conditions:
 - It is a systematic and organized activity.
 - It functions through organized cooperation between employer and employees.
 - It is directed toward the production and distribution of goods and services calculated to satisfy human wants and wishes.

- **Sovereign Functions vs. Welfare/Commercial Functions**

- Sovereign functions refer to inalienable state functions—such as legislative governance, administration of justice, national defense, and law and order—which cannot be delegated to private entities. Welfare and commercial activities (e.g., healthcare, education, irrigation, public transport), even when managed by the government, do not qualify as sovereign functions and thus fall within the regulatory net of industrial law.

- **Doctrine of Prospective Overruling and Interpretation**

- A legal principle where a new judicial interpretation or statutory application governs only future transactions and ongoing legal proceedings prospectively, without disturbing past settled disputes or closed cases.

- **Collective Bargaining and Unfair Labour Practices**

- A fundamental dispute-resolution and wage-negotiation mechanism between organized labor unions and management. Unfair labor practices represent statutory prohibitions against coercive actions by either employers (e.g., victimizing union leaders, unjustified lockouts) or trade unions (e.g., coercive strikes).

- **Main Arguments and Substantive Parts**

- **De-linking the New Industrial Relations Code from 1978 Precedents**

- The primary legal thesis rests on statutory autonomy: Section 2(p) of the Industrial Relations Code, 2020 must be interpreted independently on its own text, context, and legislative intent. The five-decade-old judicial expansive interpretation in *Bangalore Water Supply* cannot serve as an unyielding "sheet anchor" to bind modern statutory schemes enacted by Parliament.

- **Prospective Application and Protection of Pending Matters**

- To avoid administrative and judicial chaos, the transition preserves existing rights under old disputes. Any industrial conflict pending before labor courts, tribunals, or high courts initiated under the 1947 Act continues to be governed by the 1978 *Bangalore Water Supply* "Triple Test" doctrine.

- **Preserving State Functional Autonomy and Modern Economic Realities**

- An overly broad definition conceived in a state-dominated socialist economy risks placing administrative paralysis on welfare departments, sovereign research organizations, and public services. A calibrated, text-based statutory definition allows balanced labor regulation without subjecting every governmental department to industrial tribunal litigation.

- **The Counter-Perspective: Risk of Regulatory Dilution and Vulnerability**

- The dissenting viewpoint highlights that the expansive 1978 ruling was transformative jurisprudence that protected millions of non-factory employees (hospital workers, municipal staff, university non-teaching personnel) against arbitrary retrenchment and unfair management practices. Divesting from broad interpretations risks diluting labor safety nets in an increasingly contractualized economy.



- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**
 - **Phase I: The Genesis and Early Divergence (1947–1960s)**
 - The Industrial Disputes Act was enacted in 1947 to maintain industrial peace in a newly independent nation. Early judicial interpretations alternated between expansive views (*D.N. Banerji v. P.R. Mukherjee*, bringing municipalities under the Act) and liberal interpretations covering hospital staff (*State of Bombay v. Hospital Mazdoor Sabha*, 1960).
 - **Phase II: Judicial Contraction and Semantic Ambiguity (Late 1960s–1970s)**
 - The Supreme Court adopted narrower interpretations in cases such as *Management of Safdarjung Hospital* (1970) and *University of Delhi* (1963), holding that educational institutions, charitable hospitals, and professional firms lacked commercial character and could not be classified as industries. This left large groups of workers without dispute-redressal forums.
 - **Phase III: The 1978 Watershed – Bangalore Water Supply Case**
 - A 7-judge Constitution Bench led by Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer resolved prevailing ambiguities by establishing the "Triple Test". This ruling brought universities, hospitals, research institutes, chartered accountancy firms, and municipal bodies within the ambit of Section 2(j), exempting only strict sovereign state departments.
 - **Phase IV: Legislative Paralysis and Judicial Reconsideration (1982–2005)**
 - Parliament enacted the Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Act in 1982 to exclude hospitals, educational institutions, and domestic services, but the executive branch never notified the amendment due to trade union resistance. In 2005, a 5-judge bench in *State of Uttar Pradesh v. Jai Bir Singh* flagged the overreach of the 1978 verdict, referring the issue to a 9-judge Constitution Bench to balance worker protection with enterprise efficiency.
 - **Phase V: Codification and the Clean Slate Era (2020–Present)**
 - Parliament subsumed 29 central labor laws into four consolidated codes, including the Industrial Relations Code, 2020. The 9-judge bench ruled that the new statutory framework under Section 2(p) will be evaluated on its own legislative design rather than remaining constrained by 1978 precedents.





UPSC CSE: LANDMARK JUDGMENT ANALYSIS - SUPREME COURT VOIDS 1978 'INDUSTRY' DEFINITION | NEW IRC 2020 INTERPRETATION

1978 BANGLORE WATER SUPPLY (BWSSB) DOCTRINE



Wide scope
(includes hospitals, universities, municipalities)



Triple Test
Systematic | Co-operation



Systematic | Co-operation | Goods/Services



Worker's legal recourse
• collective bargaining



Broad protection
• proactive protection

SHIFT TO
NEW REGIME



2020 INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CODE (IRC)



Interpret on own text & context



Clean Slate
(new beginning)



Prospective application



Calibrated exemptions
(strictly sovereign functions)

1947

IDA

Divergent
Rulings

1978

BWSSB
Judgement

2005

9-Judge
Reference

2020 +

Labour
Codes

Multidimensional Analysis (Key Vectors)



SOCIAL
• welfare risk



ECONOMIC
• efficiency vs security



LEGAL
• prospective rule



POLITICAL
• labour code implementation



ETHICAL
• dignity of labor



INTERNATIONAL
• ILO links

UPSC CSE RELEVANCE

- NCERT
 - Pol Science
 - Economics
- UPSC GS II
 - Judiciary
 - Constitution
- GS III
 - Labour Reforms
 - Indian Econ
- Essay
- Ethics

WAY FORWARD



Clear rules



Social safety



Tripartite dialogue

India, Japan sign maritime security pact to deepen defence cooperation

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

As Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Japanese counterpart Shinjiro Koizumi held bilateral talks, India and Japan on Thursday signed a Memorandum of Arrangement (MoA) on Maritime Security Cooperation and agreed to deepen operational cooperation – including information sharing, naval exercises, ship repair and logistics support.

According to the Defence Ministry, the two Ministers, in their talks in New Delhi, reaffirmed their commitment to further deepen defence cooperation under the “Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership” and work towards a free and open Indo-Pacific amid heightened global tensions.

The newly signed maritime security arrangement provides a framework for closer cooperation between the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Indian Navy, including Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), search and rescue, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.



Strong ties: Rajnath Singh and Shinjiro Koizumi during a bilateral meeting in New Delhi on Thursday. *SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA*

The Ministers also agreed to strengthen coordination for the protection of Sea Lines of Communications through reciprocal naval visits, joint exercises, personnel and subject matter expert exchanges, and logistical support, including access to ports and maintenance and repair facilities.

India and Japan will also move towards greater cooperation in mine countermeasures and explore the possibility of joint development in naval shipbuilding and design by leveraging Japan's technological expertise and India's production capabilities. The two sides will also discuss

greater use of India's shipbuilding capabilities under the “Make in India” framework and work towards reciprocal provision of ship repair facilities.

The Ministers welcomed the expansion of bilateral military exercises, including Dharma Guardian and JAIMEX, and the planned Veer Guardian 26 air exercise. Japanese fighter aircraft will participate in the exercise in India for the first time.

The two sides also agreed to enhance the complexity of bilateral exercises, integrate unmanned systems and explore short-notice joint exercises.

The two countries will promote exchanges between their Special Operations Forces and pursue cooperation with India's integrated theatre commands after their establishment.

DRDO and ATLA

The two sides identified the shipborne UNICORN integrated communications antenna system as a symbol of their growing defence equipment partnership and committed to its early realisation.

India's DRDO and Japan's ATLA will deepen cooperation in advanced defence technologies, while a Defence Industry Forum will also be convened.

The Ministers further agreed to establish a Working Group, headed at the Director-General/Joint Secretary level, to coordinate cooperation across operational, intelligence, equipment, technology and industrial domains.

They also agreed to accelerate discussions for the fourth India-Japan “2+2” Foreign and Defence Ministerial Dialogue, to be held in Tokyo this year.

- **Key Terms and Strategic Concepts**
 - **Memorandum of Arrangement (MoA) on Maritime Security Cooperation:** A formal bilateral administrative instrument that establishes structured protocols for operational coordination, reciprocal logistics support, intelligence sharing, and joint capacity building between naval forces.
 - **Special Strategic and Global Partnership:** The elevated diplomatic classification governing India-Japan relations, signifying deep convergence on strategic, economic, and regional security architectures across the Indo-Pacific.
 - **Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA):** The comprehensive and real-time understanding of all activities, threats, vessels, and environmental factors across the maritime domain that impact national security, safety, economy, or the marine environment.
 - **Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs):** Primary maritime shipping routes traversing oceans and narrow chokepoints (such as the Malacca, Sunda, and Lombok Straits), essential for uninterrupted global energy transit and commercial trade.
 - **UNICORN (Unified Complex Radio Antenna):** A stealth-oriented, mast-integrated naval communication antenna system designed to consolidate multiple radio frequencies, significantly lowering a warship's radar cross-section and enhancing electronic survivability.
 - **2+2 Ministerial Dialogue:** An institutionalized high-level consultative mechanism involving the Foreign and Defence Ministers of two nations to harmonize diplomatic strategy with military-operational cooperation.
 - **ATLA (Acquisition, Technology & Logistics Agency):** The specialized agency under Japan's Ministry of Defense responsible for defense equipment procurement, R&D management, and international technological transfers.
 - **Integrated Theatre Commands:** A structural defense reform aimed at unifying the operational assets of the Army, Navy, and Air Force under geographically designated joint commanders to execute integrated multi-domain warfare.
- **Core Strategic Dimensions and Key Debates**
- **Central Strategic Thesis**
 - The deepening of Indo-Japanese defense cooperation represents a calculated structural response to shifts in the Indo-Pacific balance of power. By institutionalizing operational logistics, intelligence exchange, and advanced technological co-development, both nations aim to uphold a rules-based maritime order and secure critical sea lanes without forming a rigid, formal military alliance.
- **Key Structural Pillars**
 - **Operational Synergy and Interoperability:** Enhancing complex, multi-service exercises across all domains (such as *Dharma Guardian* for land forces, *JIMEX* for naval forces, and *Veer Guardian* for combat aviation) to build seamless joint-action capabilities.
 - **Reciprocal Maintenance and Logistics Framework:** Establishing shared access to dry docks, port facilities, and maintenance depots to extend operational reach across both the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and the Western Pacific.
 - **Defense Industrial and Technological Convergence:** Moving beyond conventional buyer-seller ties toward co-development and co-production, pairing Japan's precision engineering and sensor technology (via ATLA) with India's manufacturing capacity and defense R&D ecosystem (via DRDO).
 - **Integrated Command Interfacing:** Preparing future operational command structures, including India's unified theater commands and Special Operations Forces, for high-end coordinated responses and short-notice drills.
- **Counterarguments and Implementation Challenges**
 - **Strategic Autonomy versus Entanglement:** A core debate within Indian strategic policy focuses on balancing deep plurilateral security cooperation against maintaining sovereign flexibility and avoiding confrontation with regional powers.
 - **Constitutional and Institutional Caveats:** Japan's self-defense posture and domestic legal frameworks historically complicate unrestricted defense technology transfers and offensive military joint-deployments.
 - **Industrial and Bureaucratic Friction:** Disparities in procurement procedures, intellectual property protections, and technical integration between Indian and Japanese defense establishments have historically slowed down joint production timelines.

- **Historical Evolution of the Strategic Nexus**
 - **1946–1952: Foundational Good Will:** Post-war ties were anchored in shared civilizational heritage and Justice Radhabinod Pal's dissenting opinion at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East. India established independent diplomatic relations via the 1952 bilateral Peace Treaty, choosing not to sign the multilateral San Francisco Treaty.
 - **1950s–1980s: Cold War Estrangement:** Bilateral engagements remained limited due to differing geopolitical alignments. Japan was integrated into the US security umbrella, while India followed a policy of Non-Alignment, keeping interactions largely confined to Official Development Assistance (ODA).
 - **1998–2000: Nuclear Rupture to Strategic Reset:** Relations chilled following India's 1998 Pokhran-II tests, but recovered swiftly during Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori's landmark 2000 visit, which instituted the *Global Partnership in the 21st Century*.
 - **2006–2007: Confluence of the Two Seas:** Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe delivered his historic address to the Indian Parliament in 2007, articulating the unity of the Indian and Pacific Oceans. This conceptual breakthrough laid the groundwork for the modern *Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)* vision and the Quad.
 - **2014–2015: Elevation to Special Strategic Partnership:** The bilateral relationship was formally upgraded to a *Special Strategic and Global Partnership* in 2014. In 2015, Japan became a permanent participant in the annual *Malabar* naval exercises alongside India and the United States.
 - **2020: Reciprocal Logistics Milestone:** The signing of the Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services (RPSS) agreement created an institutional base for mutual logistical support, naval bunkering, and supplies during joint operations.
 - **Present: High-Tech Co-Development and Air-Sea Domain Expansion:** Cooperation now extends into advanced defense hardware integration (such as the UNICORN system), air force combat drills (*Veer Guardian*), and institutional interfacing between specialized military commands.
- **Practical Policy Way Forward**
 - **Institutionalize Real-Time Intelligence Integration:** Connect the Indian Navy's Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) directly with Japan's maritime command nodes to build an integrated common operating picture across the Indo-Pacific.
 - **Fast-Track Joint Defense Manufacturing:** Remove regulatory hurdles between DRDO and ATLA to speed up co-development projects, using the UNICORN mast program as a blueprint for joint work on unmanned aerial, surface, and underwater vehicles.
 - **Expand Shipyard and Dry-Dock Partnerships:** Modernize Indian ship repair facilities on the eastern seaboard and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to service Japanese, Indian, and partner naval vessels efficiently.
 - **Scale Up Complex Multi-Domain Exercises:** Expand air, naval, and ground exercises to include combined anti-submarine warfare (ASW), electronic warfare, and short-notice dispersed operations.
 - **Coordinate Regional Capacity-Building:** Work together to provide patrol vessels, hydrographic survey support, and maritime surveillance radar networks to coastal nations across Southeast Asia, South Asia, and the Pacific Island Forum.

INDIA-JAPAN DEFENSE COOPERATION: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP IN THE INDO-PACIFIC

CORE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

CENTRAL THESIS

- Calculated structural response
- No rigid formal military alliance
- Uphold rules-based order

KEY DEFINITIONS

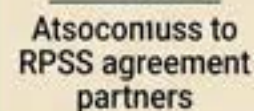
Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)



Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs)



FOUR KEY STRUCTURAL PILLARS



Special
operations
forces
special
operations
operations
forces

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION & FOUNDATIONS

TIMELINE OF BILATERAL TIES



LOGICAL & PHILOSOPHICAL BASES



UPSC CSE LINKAGES

- GS II: Bilateral Relations
- GS III: Security & Technology
- Essays/PSIR/ Geography

PRACTICAL POLICY WAY FORWARD

Real-time Intel | Joint Mfg | Modern Shipyards | Multi-domain exercises | Regional Capacity Building

Core industrial sector growth slows to 5.4% in July as fertilizer, steel, iron ore, oil output falls

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

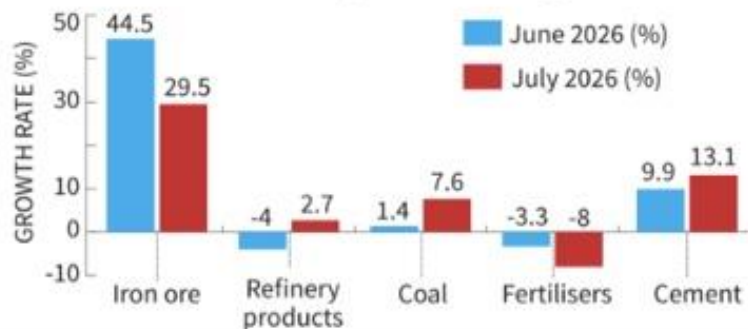
Economic activity in India's core industrial sectors saw growth slow to 5.4% in July 2026 from 6% in June, according to official data released on Thursday.

This was driven by a significant slowdown in the fertilizers, iron ore, and steel sectors, accompanied by a continued contraction in the natural gas and crude oil sectors.

The data on the Index of Core Industries (ICE) released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, however, showed that July's growth was still the second-fastest in seven months. The Ministry re-

Sliding down

Core sector growth slowed to 5.4% in July 2026 compared with 6% in June. Iron ore, refinery products see biggest shifts



leased a new series of the ICE in July, which means that a historical comparison is possible only up to June 2025.

Within the index, the fertilizers sector contracted 8% in July, as compared to a contraction of 3.3% in

June. The sector had grown 1.9% in July of last year. This performance is likely due to the deficient and patchy monsoon, and the resultant lower levels of sowing taking place.

The iron ore sector saw growth slowing to 29.5% in

July, from 44.5% in June. However, it is important to point out that these relatively high growth levels are on a low base, since the sector contracted 16.4% and 7.1% in June and July of last year, respectively. This low base effect was also apparent in the coal sector's 11-month high growth rate of 7.6% in July 2026. The sector had contracted 12.3% in July last year.

Growth in the steel sector slowed to 2.9% in July, the lowest in the 14 months for which there is data, down from 5.6% in June.

The natural gas and crude oil sectors continued their long streak of contractions. The natural gas sector contracted 3.7% in

July 2026, while the crude oil sector contracted 5.3%. Both sectors have contracted continuously for the last 14 months for which there is data.

The refinery products sector, however, snapped a three-month streak of contractions by growing 2.7% in July, the sector's best performance in nine months.

The two relative bright spots among the core sectors were the cement and electricity sectors. The electricity sector grew 9% in July, albeit slower than the 11.4% seen in June. The cement sector saw growth hit 13.1% in July, a seven-month high, from 11.1% growth in July last year.

- **Key Terms and Conceptual Framework**

- **Index of Core Industries (ICI):** A monthly production index compiled and released by the **Office of the Economic Adviser (OEA)**, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (**DPIIT**), Ministry of Commerce and Industry. It measures the collective and individual output performance of eight basic infrastructure sectors.
- **The Eight Core Industries & Weightages:** These sectors collectively constitute **40.27%** of the total weight in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP). Their decreasing order of weightage is:
 - **Petroleum Refinery Products (28.04%):** Crucial downstream processing hub providing feedstock for petrochemicals, transport fuels, and lubricants.
 - **Electricity Generation (19.85%):** Encompasses thermal, nuclear, hydro, and commercial renewable power.
 - **Steel Production (17.92%):** Measures finished and alloy steel, reflecting capital goods and infrastructure construction appetite.
 - **Coal Production (10.33%):** Primary domestic source of baseload energy, excluding coking coal imports.
 - **Crude Oil (8.98%):** Upstream exploration and extraction output, dominated by domestic basins like offshore Mumbai High and onshore Barmer.
 - **Natural Gas (6.88%):** Feedstock for fertilizers, power generation, and piped city gas distribution (CGD).
 - **Cement (5.37%):** Direct barometer of real estate, rural housing, and state-led public works execution.
 - **Fertilizers (2.63%):** Nitrogenous, phosphatic, and complex soil nutrients directly linked to agricultural demand.
- **Base Effect:** A statistical phenomenon where a high or low growth rate in the corresponding base period of the previous year artificially depresses or inflates the current year's growth figure, independent of actual operational momentum.
- **Lead-Lag Economic Indicator:** Core industries serve as a *leading indicator* for aggregate industrial expansion; a contraction here reliably projects a subsequent slowdown in the broader manufacturing component of Gross Value Added (GVA).

- **Main Arguments and Empirical Analysis**

- Recent performance indices highlight uneven industrial momentum across core sectors, where short-term climatic disruptions, structural bottlenecks in hydrocarbons, and sustained public capital expenditure converge.
 - **Moderation in Broad-Based Industrial Growth:** Overall core growth slowed to **5.4%** compared to preceding month figures (**6.0%**), primarily dragged down by steep contractions in agrarian inputs and persistent extraction deficits in the hydrocarbon basket.
 - **Agrarian-Climatic Spillover on Input Demand:** The fertilizer sector witnessed a sharp contraction (**-8.0%**), reflecting delayed or erratic spatial distribution of monsoon rains, which directly reduced initial kharif crop sowing acreages and dampened retail chemical nutrient off-take.
 - **The Hydrocarbon Structural Deficit:** Upstream energy production remains structurally constrained. Both domestic crude oil (**-5.3%**) and natural gas (**-3.7%**) registered persistent output contractions, pointing to depleting legacy wells, regulatory logjams, and limited private risk-capital in deep-water exploration.
 - **Public Infrastructure-Led Resilience:** Cement (**13.1%**) and Electricity (**9.0%**) sustained robust operational rates, driven by front-loaded state infrastructure spending, national highway expansion, and peak urban summer power demands.
 - **Base-Effect Distortions:** The coal sector's recorded growth (**7.6%**) was largely flattered by an unfavorable low base from the prior year's deep contraction (**-12.3%**), rather than a major shift in aggregate extraction efficiency.

- **Historical Evolution of Industrial Output**

- **Pre-Independence to the Mahalanobis Era (1947–1969):** Under the Second Five-Year Plan (1956–61), India adopted the Feldman-Mahalanobis strategy, designating steel, heavy machinery, coal, and power as "commanding heights" reserved almost exclusively for Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) to build domestic capital goods self-reliance.
- **The Stagnation & Regulated Decades (1970–1990):** The industrial licensing regime, high customs tariffs, and strict market allocation under the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (MRTP) Act caused structural inefficiencies, technological obsolescence, and chronic shortages across cement, steel, and power.
- **Economic Liberalization and Delicensing (1991–2014):** The 1991 structural reforms abolished industrial licensing for most basic sectors, allowed 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) under automatic routes in several infrastructure arms, and decontrolled cement and steel prices, leading to major private capacity additions.
- **Base Year Modernization and Decarbonization (2015–Present):** Shift to the **2011-12 base year** for IIP/ICI improved methodological accuracy. Contemporary industrial policy focuses on commercial coal mining auctions, private upstream oil bidding (HELP/OALP), and balancing baseload fossil output with the clean energy transition.

- **Way Forward and Policy Road Map**

- **Revamping Upstream Hydrocarbon Exploration:** Accelerate the Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) by moving toward a stable, revenue-sharing model that provides complete marketing and pricing freedom for difficult deepwater and ultra-deepwater gas reserves.
- **Fertilizer Sector Modernization:** Rationalize the Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) regime across nitrogen, phosphate, and potash to prevent skewed urea usage. Support this with domestic natural gas allocation and scalable investments in green ammonia and bio-fertilizers.
- **Resolving Financial Bottlenecks in Power & Steel:** Strengthen the financial health of state distribution companies (Discoms) through strict adherence to the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS). Encourage Indian steelmakers to adopt scrap-based electric arc furnaces and green hydrogen to mitigate EU-CBAM export risks.
- **Modernizing High-Frequency Statistical Frameworks:** Update the base year of the Index of Core Industries and IIP from 2011-12 to a more recent post-pandemic benchmark (such as 2022-23) to incorporate new sectors, like solar PV manufacturing and electric vehicles, for a more accurate reflection of industrial output.

COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS: CORE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR GROWTH FOR UPSC CSE (JULY 2026 FOCUS)

THE FOUNDATION: CORE INDUSTRIES INDEX (ICI)



THE DATA IN CONTEXT: JULY 2026 CASE STUDY



HISTORICAL EVOLUTION & TIMELINE



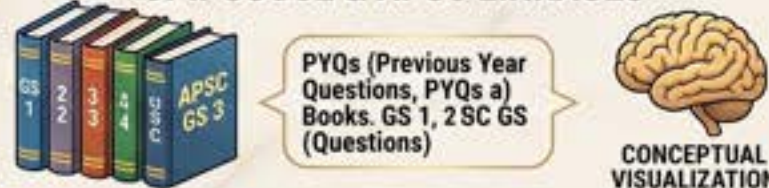
COMPREHENSIVE MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS



CONCEPTUAL & LOGICAL BASES



UPIPSOCCE & APSC LINKAGES



WAY FORWARD: STRATEGIC REFORMS



Ease three-language rule for Class 6, SC tells CBSE

Three-language scheme will eventually have to be implemented, but CBSE has to streamline its implementation better, says top court: questions categorisation of English as a foreign language

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Central Board of School Education (CBSE) to grant current Class 6 students a one-time reprieve from a mandatory third-language Board exam.

The court urged the Board to return to the drawing board to consider easing the policy into the curriculum, starting from earlier classes, giving students, families, and schools "some elbow space".

"Why don't you give the Class 6 students reprieve from writing the third language exam in Class 10 exam," Justice Joymalya Bagchi asked Additional Solicitor-General Aishwarya Bhati.

Under CBSE guidelines, students in Classes 7 to 9 were exempted, while the present Class 6 batch was slated to face full implementation, including a mandatory Class 10 Board exam in the third language by 2031.

The court said the three-

Why don't you give the Class 6 students reprieve from writing the third language exam in Class 10 exam?

JUSTICE JOYMALYA BAGCHI
Supreme Court judge



language scheme would eventually have to be implemented, but the CBSE has to streamline its implementation better.

'Give time to adapt'

"You would have to give some time for not only students but also for infrastructure to come on par, across the various education Boards. It is a good policy to start with the mother tongue, then an indigenous language, and then another indigenous or foreign language. But all this should be started when the children are a little younger, in a lower class, giving them time to adapt," Justice Bagchi said.

The court asked Ms. Bhati, appearing for the CBSE, to get instructions on three issues - whether a one-time reprieve could be given to the current batch

of Class 6 students, how to build human resources to meet the demands of the three-language scheme, and whether the scheme should ideally be started in earlier classes.

Foreign language

Lawyers for petitioners opposing the three-language policy said it explicitly categorised English as a foreign language along with popular foreign language options among students like French, Japanese, and Spanish.

"Because the policy mandates that students must study at least two native Indian languages, students are restricted to only one foreign language slot. Since nearly all students choose English for that single slot, other foreign languages like French or Japanese are effectively pushed

out of the main curriculum. A large number of students already studying French and Japanese have to choose a native language now... Another foreign language increases employment opportunities... These are children from middle- and lower-class homes we are talking about," senior advocate Anand Grover explained.

Mr. Grover submitted that textbooks found online under the three-language scheme start with compound sentences. "If I have to learn Sanskrit, for example, I have to learn from the first letter. The textbooks on the website have compounded sentences. How will I learn?" he asked.

Chief Justice Surya Kant said English could hardly be considered a foreign language.

On the issue of treating English as a foreign language, Ms. Bhati said, "English is an official language under the Constitution, and though it is not treated like a foreign language, it is also not a native language. Language is the vehicle of a culture".

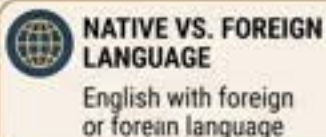
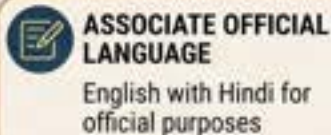
- **Key Terms and Explanations**
 - **Three-Language Formula (TLF):** A pedagogical policy first formulated in 1968 and reiterated in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. It mandates that school students learn three languages: the regional language/mother tongue, Hindi (or another modern Indian language in Hindi-speaking states), and English (or a modern Indian language in non-Hindi speaking states). In the contemporary context, it mandates that at least two of the three languages must be native to India.
 - **Associate Official Language:** A constitutional and statutory classification under the Official Languages Act, 1963. English is retained as an associate official language alongside Hindi for union administrative, legislative, and judicial transactions, despite not being enumerated under the Eighth Schedule.
 - **Pedagogical Scaffolding:** An instructional technique where educators introduce foundational concepts (such as phonetics, alphabet, and basic syntax) before progressing to complex structures (such as compound sentences and classical literature). Its absence in new language curricula creates high learning friction.
 - **Native vs. Foreign Language Categorization:** The policy classification dividing languages into indigenous Indian tongues (e.g., Tamil, Bengali, Sanskrit, Odia) versus external linguistic traditions (e.g., French, German, Japanese, Spanish). Under current mandates, grouping English within the "foreign language" quota restricts students to only one foreign language slot.
 - **One-Time Reprieve:** A targeted administrative or judicial exemption granted to a specific transitional student cohort, preventing immediate exposure to high-stakes board examinations while infrastructure and curricula mature.
- **Main Arguments and Substantive Issues**
 - **Abrupt Implementation vs. Graded Absorption:** A central institutional concern is the sudden enforcement of mandatory third-language board examinations for intermediate classes without adequate lead time. Enforcing high-stakes testing without starting the language in early childhood creates severe cognitive and academic distress.
 - **Curricular Incongruity and Textual Gaps:** Third-language instructional material frequently introduces advanced, compound linguistic structures right from the entry level. Expecting first-generation learners to master complex classical or regional grammar without foundational primers undermines learning outcomes.
 - **The Foreign Language Displacement Squeeze:** By requiring at least two native Indian languages, school curricula leave room for only one non-native language slot. Because English is practically indispensable for higher education and competitive examinations, other foreign languages (such as Japanese, French, or German) are effectively pushed out of mainstream, affordable schooling.
 - **Socio-Economic Equity in Linguistic Capital:** Middle- and lower-income students reliant on standard board-affiliated schools risk losing early access to foreign language training. This concentrates high-value global linguistic skills within elite international institutions.
 - **Administrative Preparedness and Resource Deficits:** Introducing an additional mandatory language demands a vast cadre of qualified language teachers, bilingual pedagogical aids, and standardized evaluation mechanisms across diverse educational boards, which remain unevenly developed.

- **Historical Evolution of Language Policy in Indian Education**
 - **Colonial Foundation (1835–1947):** Macaulay's Minute (1835) established English-medium higher education to create an administrative class, relegating vernacular languages to primary tiers and institutionalizing a persistent socio-economic linguistic hierarchy.
 - **Constituent Assembly Debates (1946–1950):** The debate over an official language led to the Munshi-Ayyangar compromise. Hindi in Devanagari script was declared the official language of the Union (Article 343), with English permitted for 15 years, later extended indefinitely via the Official Languages Act, 1963.
 - **Kothari Commission (1964–1966) & NPE 1968:** The Commission formalized the Three-Language Formula to foster national integration and bridge the North-South linguistic divide. It sought to balance mother tongues, national cohesion, and international scientific access.
 - **NPE 1986 and Program of Action 1992:** Reaffirmed the formula, emphasizing secondary-stage language learning and the development of modern Indian languages alongside classical tongues like Sanskrit.
 - **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020:** Emphasized multilingualism, stipulating that mother tongues be the primary medium of instruction up to Grade 5 (preferably Grade 8), while reinforcing the requirement that at least two of the three taught languages be indigenous Indian languages.
 - **Judicial and Administrative Adjustments:** Ongoing friction over board examination mandates has led the higher judiciary to step in, emphasizing student welfare, infrastructural readiness, and balanced curriculum transitions.
- **Way Forward**
 - **Phased and Scaffolded Curricular Integration:** Early childhood education must prioritize the mother tongue and foundational language skills. Third languages should be introduced gradually from primary levels using conversational, immersive techniques before formalizing into board-level testing.
 - **Structural Review of Language Buckets:** Educational frameworks could explore a "2+1+1" or modular language matrix. This would allow students to master two native Indian languages and functional English while retaining foreign languages as elective or vocational credits.
 - **Comprehensive Upgrading of Textbooks and Pedagogy:** Curricular bodies must redesign entry-level textbooks for secondary-school language learners. Textbooks should begin with phonetics, basic syntax, and visual learning modules rather than advancing straight to complex classical literature and compound grammar.
 - **Dedicated Teacher Training and Digital Ecosystems:** State governments and central boards should invest in shared regional language teacher pools. Platforms like DIKSHA and the Bhasha Sangam initiative can be expanded to deliver interactive, standardized digital language modules to rural and underserved classrooms.
 - **Collaborative Dialogue via Inter-State Platforms:** Language policy implementation should be refined through platforms like the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) and the Inter-State Council. This ensures that pedagogical rollouts respect local needs, state priorities, and infrastructural realities.

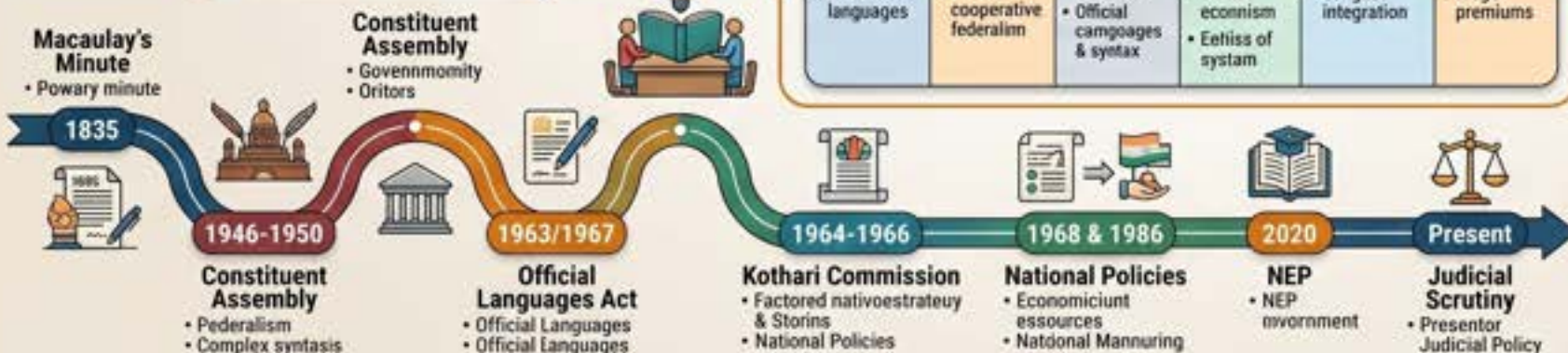
ANALYSIS OF INDIA'S LANGUAGE POLICY IN EDUCATION

A STRATEGIC GUIDE FOR UPSC ASPIRANTS

KEY TERMS & CONCEPTS



HISTORICAL EVOLUTION



PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS



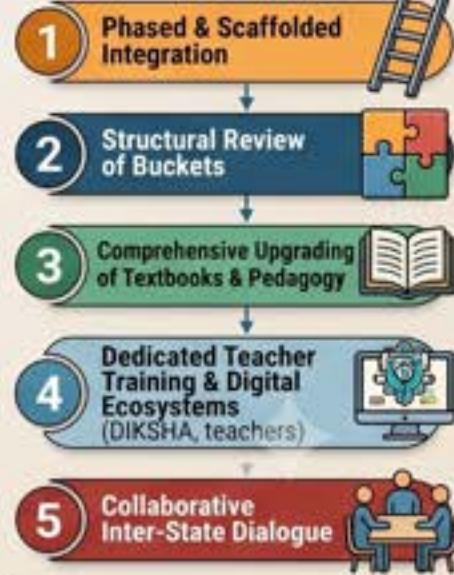
MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS

SOCIAL	POLITICAL	LEGAL	ETHICAL	INTERNATIONAL	ECONOMIC
Linguistic Identity • At least two identity • Native languages • Interactive languages	Cooperative federalism • Cooperative federalism • Constitutive identity • Putture cooperative federalism	Constitutional Articles (29, 350A, 351, 21A) • Constitutions languages conness • Official campages & syntax	Ethics of Care • Ethics, child-centric Education • Education • Criminal economism • Eeliss of system	Global Integration • Global integration • Global integrations • Longest integration	Wage premiums • Wage or conperence • Wage premium • Wage premiums

UPSC CSE SYLLABUS LINKAGES



WAY FORWARD



PREVIOUS YEARS QUESTIONS (PYQs)

- Classical Languages Languages
- Constitutional Amendments
- official language
- Linguistic reorganization

Collectors empowered to grant citizenship under CAA

Union Ministry of Home Affairs authorises District Collectors in Gujarat, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Punjab, Assam, Tripura (except tribal areas), J&K and Ladakh to grant naturalised citizenship

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has transferred the processing of pending citizenship applications under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019, from Empowered Committees – comprising Central government officials, including those from the Census, Intelligence Bureau (IB) and postal departments – to District Collectors in eight States and Union Territories (UTs).

District Collectors in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, West Bengal, Assam (except tribal areas), Tripura (except tribal areas), Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh have been authorised to process CAA applications, as per the August 19 order, making the earlier arrangement of multi-agency committee redundant.

CAA after Bengal win

The order is significant as the amendments to the CAA Rules, which first



The Home Ministry had given the first set of citizenship certificates to 14 applicants in May 2024. [see](#)

came into effect on March 11, 2024, have been notified after the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in West Bengal. The amendments brought in days before the 2024 General Election had centralised the power to process the citizenship applications of members of six non-Muslim communities from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, who entered India before December 31, 2014 without any documents or illegally.

The CAA was strongly opposed by the then Trinamool Congress (TMC) government in West Bengal.

To bypass the role of the State government in processing the applications, MHA constituted at least four Empowered Committees – two at the district level, headed by Central government officials – to clear the citizenship applications. The committees were created days before the Assembly polls in West Bengal in April this year.

August 19 order

Citizenship is a subject under the Union List of the Constitution and State's role could have come in play in providing logistics such as office space and

police verification of applicants.

The order issued by the MHA on August 19 states that all applications pending before the Empowered Committees and District Level Committees in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, West Bengal, Assam (except tribal areas), Tripura (except tribal areas), Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh will be transferred to the concerned Collector.

The order also makes the March 11, 2024 MHA notification implementing the Citizenship Amendment Rules inapplicable to these jurisdictions.

The Citizenship (Third Amendment) Rules, 2026 notified on August 19 empowers Collectors in these jurisdictions to receive, scrutinise and dispose of applications for registration or naturalisation under Section 6B of Citizenship Act. Under the amended rules, the Collector is required to verify the documents submitted by an applicant and determine whether the applicant meets the eligibility requirements.

- **Key Terms and Explanations**
 - **Part II of the Constitution (Articles 5–11):** This constitutional framework settled citizenship primarily at the commencement of the Republic (January 26, 1950). It did not create a permanent, exhaustive code for future acquisition or loss of citizenship, deliberately leaving that power to Parliament under Article 11.
 - **The Citizenship Act, 1955:** The primary parent statute governing the acquisition (by birth, descent, registration, naturalisation, and incorporation of territory) and termination (renunciation, termination, and deprivation) of Indian citizenship.
 - **Section 6B of the Citizenship Act:** A special statutory provision inserted through the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019. It creates a fast-track pathway to citizenship by registration or naturalisation for persecuted minority communities (Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, and Christians) from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan who entered India on or before December 31, 2014.
 - **Naturalisation vs. Registration:** Registration (Section 5) applies to persons of Indian origin, spouses of citizens, and minor children through formal application. Naturalisation (Section 6) applies to foreigners who fulfill residency criteria; the amendment reduced the aggregate residency requirement for eligible persecuted groups from eleven years to five years.
 - **Empowered Committees vs. District Collectors:** Empowered Committees were multi-agency central bodies comprising officials from the Census Directorate, Intelligence Bureau (IB), and postal services, created to centralise application scrutiny. In contrast, District Collectors (District Magistrates) represent the traditional, grassroots administrative heads of district governance, vested with vast local revenue, magisterial, and field-verification apparatus.
 - **Sixth Schedule and Inner Line Permit (ILP) Exemptions:** Constitutional and statutory safeguards designed to protect indigenous tribal demography. The Sixth Schedule (Articles 244(2) and 275(1)) establishes Autonomous District Councils in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram, while the ILP (under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873) regulates entry into designated north-eastern states; both frameworks are completely exempt from the amended citizenship provisions.
- **Main Arguments and Substantive Parts**
 - The administrative transition of citizenship processing from central multi-agency committees back to District Collectors addresses several core governance dynamics:
 - **Decentralisation and Administrative Pragmatism:** Delegating citizenship scrutiny back to District Collectors leverages established district-level administrative machinery. Multi-agency central committees lacked the ground-level reach necessary to conduct local inquiries, verify historical land or utility documents, and manage large volumes of local applications efficiently.
 - **Balancing Union Jurisdiction and Field Administration:** Citizenship falls exclusively under the Union List (Entry 17, List I, Seventh Schedule). While policy formulation remains strictly federal, physical execution requires field-level verification (civil records, residential continuity, identity checks). Utilizing the office of the Collector bridges the gap between central statutory power and grassroots administrative capability.
 - **Overcoming Procedural Bottlenecks:** Centralized Empowered Committees created bureaucratic delays due to inter-departmental coordination hurdles involving postal and intelligence officers. Restoring the statutory authority of Collectors under Section 6B simplifies the workflow into a single, unified district authority capable of receiving, scrutinising, and disposing of applications.
 - **Preserving Constitutional Carve-Outs for Tribal Areas:** The regulatory framework explicitly maintains the exclusion of tribal areas in Assam and Tripura. This respects regional socio-political sensitivities, ensuring that demographic protections guaranteed under the Sixth Schedule remain intact while implementing naturalisation in non-exempt jurisdictions.

- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**

- **Partition and the Nehru-Liaquat Pact (1947–1950):** The massive communal displacement of 1947 forced the Constituent Assembly to formulate transitional provisions (Articles 5–9) dealing with migrants between India and Pakistan. The 1950 Nehru-Liaquat Pact sought to ensure minority protection in both dominions, but persistent cross-border migrations continued to alter regional demographics.
- **The 1955 Parent Act and Subsequent Tightening:** The Citizenship Act of 1955 originally favoured a territorial model (*jus soli*). However, cross-border influxes during the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War led to political mobilisations, culminating in the six-year Assam Movement and the 1985 Assam Accord, which introduced Section 6A with a strict cut-off date of March 24, 1971.
- **Shift toward Descent and the 2003 Amendment:** The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2003 moved the framework closer to *jus sanguinis* (citizenship by blood) and explicitly defined an "illegal migrant," disqualifying any undocumented immigrant from acquiring citizenship through naturalisation or registration.
- **The 2019 Amendment and Operationalization:** The 2019 statutory amendment created a specific humanitarian exception to the "illegal migrant" disqualification for six non-Muslim minority groups fleeing religious persecution from three neighbouring countries prior to December 31, 2014. Rules notified in 2024 initially set up central Empowered Committees, which were later realigned to empower District Collectors for ground implementation.

Way Forward

- **Codification of a National Asylum and Refugee Policy:** India should formulate a clear statutory framework distinguishing between illegal economic migrants and bonafide asylum seekers fleeing persecution. A dedicated Asylum Act would reduce ad-hoc executive discretion and establish standard operating procedures for all communities.
- **Standardised Digitisation and Transparent Field Verification:** To prevent arbitrariness at the district level, the Ministry of Home Affairs should institute standardised, end-to-end digital verification portals. Time-bound clearances, clear evidentiary benchmarks, and oversight mechanisms will maintain administrative fairness.
- **Strengthening Institutional Inter-Governmental Dialogue:** Union-state administrative friction can be mitigated using constitutional platforms like the Inter-State Council (Article 263) and Zonal Councils. Establishing consensus ensures state field machinery cooperates seamlessly with district revenue officers.
- **Safeguarding Indigenous Rights in the North East:** Full implementation of constitutional safeguards—such as Clause 6 of the Assam Accord to protect the cultural, social, and linguistic identity of the Assamese people—must proceed in tandem with naturalisation laws to prevent regional alienation.
- **Comprehensive Border Management Infrastructure:** Technological modernisation of border policing via the Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS), smart fencing, and biometric profiling will secure frontiers while formalising legal ports of entry.

COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS: THE SHIFT IN CAA IMPLEMENTATION TO DISTRICT COLLECTORS (2019) | AN EDUCATIONAL OVERVIEW

WORKFLOW TRANSFORMATION (AUG 19 ORDER)

BEFORE (CENTRAL COMMITTEES)



AFTER (DISTRICT COLLECTORS/DMs)



ELIGIBLE STATES & UTS:

RAJASTHAN
PUNJAB
W. BENGAL
J&K, LADAKH

RAJASTHAN
W. BENGAL (except tribal)
TRIPURA (except tribal)

UNDERSTANDING CAA PROVISIONS (SECTION 6B)

TARGET COMMUNITIES (6):



3 COUNTRIES:

PAKISTAN, BANGLADESH

CUT-OFF DATE: DEC 31, 2014

FAST-TRACK PATHWAY: Reduced Naturalisation
Residency (from 11 to 5 years)

CUT-OFF DATE:
AFGHANISTAN

MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS



FEDERALISM
(DM Role & Subsidiarity)



LEGALITY
(Art 11 Plenary Power & Art 14 Reasonable Classification)



ETHICAL
(Humanitarian Compassion & Asylum Duty)



SOCIAL
(Demographic concerns, Social Integration, Civic Inclusion)

UPSC SYLLABUS LINKAGES & KEY TAKEAWAYS

NCERT Chapter Linkages

Pol: Citizenship,
Sci: Federalism,
Regional Aspirations

Soc: Social Movements

UPSC GS Papers Mapping

GS2: Part II, CAA, Federalism, Governance

GS1: Indian Society, Demography

GS3: Internal Security, Border Mgmt

GS4: Public Service Ethics

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION:

1947 → 1955 → 1985 → 2019 → 2024
(Partition) (Parent Act) (Assam Accord) (Section 6B) (Rules)

SC forms panel to inquire into NEET protest violence

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has constituted a high-powered enquiry committee (HPEC), headed by former top court judge Justice R. Subhash Reddy, to probe issues and allegations, including those of police excesses against students, surrounding the nationwide protests against NEET-UG paper leaks.

Besides Justice Reddy, the panel will include Justice Ravi Shankar Jha, former Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court; Justice Shalinder Kaur, former judge of Delhi High Court; Rishi Kumar Shukla, former Director of Central Bureau of Investigation; and L.R. Bishnoi, retired Director General of Police, Meghalaya.

The order said the inquiry undertaken by the panel should not be a "one-time exercise". "Rather, the committee shall undertake a continuous and periodic assessment of the issues enumerated in the order and shall submit its interim findings periodically so as to enable this court to take appropriate measures and issue such

directions as may be warranted," it directed.

The three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant, in the order dated August 19 but released on Thursday, suggested the panel take up, on a priority basis, allegations of targeted violence, harassment, and molestation of female protesters. It was urged to assess the grievous harm and injury allegedly caused to protesters by police authorities and security personnel.

The court clarified that the constitution of the HPEC "shall in no way deter or debar the police authorities or other security forces from taking administrative or disciplinary action against such of their officers as may be found to be in contravention of the rules governing their conduct". The court has also listed issues raised by respondents including the alleged use of force and violence by protesters against police officials and other security personnel, the damage caused to public property on account of the actions of the protesters, and the destruction of vehicles belonging to the State and private citizens alike.

- **Key Terms and Explanations**
 - **High-Powered Enquiry Committee (HPEC):** A specialized, court-appointed or executive-constituted panel comprising judicial and administrative experts tasked with investigating complex, high-stakes matters of public importance. It acts as an independent fact-finding body to establish evidentiary clarity where systemic trust has broken down.
 - **Doctrine of Proportionality in Policing:** A constitutional and human rights principle mandating that any state coercion or use of physical force by law enforcement must be strictly necessary, minimum, and proportionate to the gravity of the threat faced.
 - **Public Trust Deficit in Testing Regimes:** An institutional failure occurring when widespread irregularities, security breaches, or administrative opacity in high-stakes competitive examinations erode the faith of candidates and the public in the neutrality of state merit systems.
 - **Continuous and Periodic Judicial Oversight:** A supervisory mechanism where the judiciary does not treat an inquiry as a one-time closure report, but instead mandates rolling interim assessments to facilitate continuous corrective directions and preventive safeguards.
 - **Strict Liability for Public Property Damage:** A legal principle under which individuals or organized groups involved in violent demonstrations can be held financially and legally accountable for the destruction of state and private infrastructure, balanced against the state's duty to prove culpable involvement.
 - **Gender-Sensitive Crowd Control Protocol:** Standard operating procedures mandating the deployment of trained female police personnel, gender-dignified handling, and strict zero-tolerance policies against physical harassment or molestation during the dispersal of mixed-gender assemblies.
- **Main Arguments and Substantive Parts**
 - The intersection of high-stakes centralized examinations, administrative failure, and street-level public mobilization highlights deep friction between civil liberties and state authority:
 - **Judicial Intervention as a Democratic Safety Valve:** When premier competitive testing frameworks face structural compromises, the breakdown of institutional trust drives youth into public spaces. Judicial intervention through a multi-member, high-powered panel serves as a neutral arbiter to de-escalate social unrest and reconstruct an objective factual timeline.
 - **The Dual Mandate of Independent Inquiries:** An effective inquiry must simultaneously scrutinize alleged state excesses—such as disproportionate baton charges and targeted harassment of female youth—while examining instances where demonstrations turn violent, cause property destruction, or target security personnel. Accountability cannot be unilateral.
 - **Non-Obstruction of Administrative Discipline:** Independent judicial fact-finding does not freeze internal executive accountability. Departmental disciplinary actions against errant police personnel must proceed concurrently with broader judicial investigations to preserve administrative command structures.
 - **Vulnerability of Demographic Capital:** The physical and psychological brutalization of student aspirants during public assemblies reflects a breakdown of grievance-redressal channels. When administrative systems fail to address legitimate educational concerns proactively, the resultant friction leads to systemic instability.

- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**
- The tension between centralized educational benchmarking, student mobilization, and crowd policing has evolved across distinct historical phases:
 - **Colonial Framework (Pre-1947):** The police apparatus, codified under the Police Act of 1861, was designed primarily for population containment rather than citizen facilitation. Higher education was localized, exclusionary, and regulated through regional university senates without centralized national entrance tests.
 - **Post-Independence Decentralization (1947–1980s):** Education remained predominantly under state control. Admissions to professional courses were governed by state-run entrance tests or university quotas. Protests were largely managed through traditional criminal procedure codes with limited specialized crowd-control doctrines.
 - **Emergence of National Entrance Frameworks (1980s–2010s):** The Supreme Court's push in the late 1980s for national standardization led to centralized tests like the All India Pre-Medical Test (AIPMT). The expansion of private coaching ecosystems created high-stakes pressure points for millions of aspirants.
 - **Hyper-Centralization and Institutional Friction (2018–Present):** The establishment of centralized testing bodies created uniform national testing systems. However, logistical concentration increased vulnerability to systemic leaks. When widespread failures occur, the resulting mass youth protests intersect with modern public-order management, requiring direct intervention by the constitutional courts.
- **Way Forward**
 - **Modernizing Crowd Control Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):** Replace outdated crowd dispersal methods with graduated, non-lethal, and technology-assisted techniques. Mandate body-worn cameras for all field personnel during public protests and ensure the compulsory deployment of female police officers for interactions involving women.
 - **Institutionalizing Police Accountability:** Implement the Supreme Court's directives in the *Prakash Singh (2006)* case in letter and spirit, notably establishing functional Police Complaints Authorities at state and district levels to independently investigate allegations of excessive force.
 - **Securing Centralized Testing Infrastructure:** Transition high-stakes examinations toward robust, tamper-proof technological systems featuring end-to-end question paper encryption, multi-layered institutional audits, decentralized multi-shift testing models, and strict enforcement of public examination anti-cheating legislation.
 - **Structured Grievance-Redressal Mechanisms:** Build rapid, transparent, and legally binding grievance-redressal cells within examination agencies to address candidate concerns early, preventing issues from escalating into street-level protests.
 - **Balanced Legal Accountability:** Differentiate between peaceful, constitutional dissent and intentional violent disruption during protests. Ensure that measures to recover damages to public property follow strict judicial due process rather than arbitrary executive action.

COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL ANALYSIS: EXAM LEAKS & PUBLIC ORDER (NEET-UG CONTEXT)

EXTRACTED FOR UPSC & APSC STUDENTS



KEY CONCEPTS & DEFINITIONS



HPEC (High-Powered Enquiry Committee):
Neutral, expert-led fact-finding body for high-stakes issues.



Doctrine of Proportionality
Restained with restrained force



Public Trust Deficit
Broken seal, and unhappy crowd outline



Continuous Oversight
Rolling + and progress



MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACTS (The Problem)



HISTORICAL EVOLUTION TIMELINE



LOGICAL & PHILOSOPHICAL BASE

RAWLS

Fair Opportunity

WEBER

Restrained Violence

PROCEDURAL DUE PROCESS

Just, Fair, Reasonable
- Maneka Gandhi

KANT

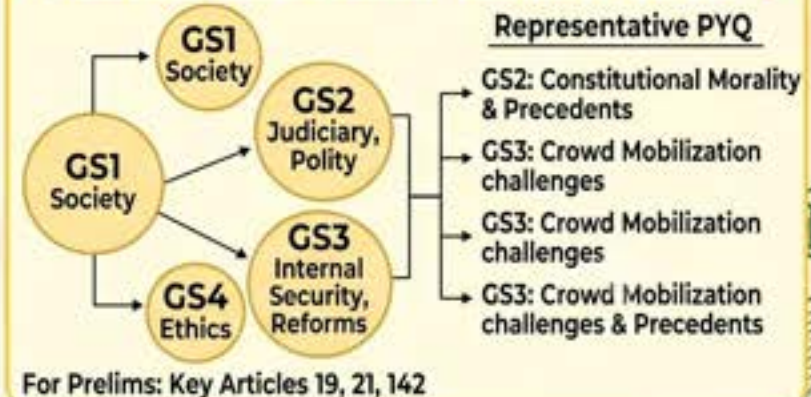
Human Dignity
Paramount

THE WAY FORWARD: COMPREHENSIVE REFORMS

- 1 MODERN CROWD CONTROL**
(SOPs, Graduated methods, Body Cameras)
- 2 INDEPENDENT POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY**
(Complaint Authorities)
- 3 SECURE TESTING INFRASTRUCTURE**
(Encryption, Multi-level Audits, Decoupling)
- 4 RAPID GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL**



UPSC / APSC CSE LINKAGES & PYQs



The 'Vimal Elaichi' promotion question

What has the Maharashtra FDA alleged against the three actors? Why does the FDA see Vimal Elaichi as surrogate promotion? Which laws does it say the advertisement violates? What penalties can be imposed for misleading endorsements? What happens if the actors fail to respond to the notice?

EXPLAINER

Vinaya Deshpande Pandit

The story so far:

The Maharashtra Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) has issued notices to actors Shah Rukh Khan, Ajay Devgn and Tiger Shroff over their endorsement of 'Vimal Elaichi', alleging that the advertisements could amount to surrogate or indirect promotion of Vimal Pan Masala, a prohibited tobacco-related product in the State. The notices invoke provisions of food safety, consumer protection and tobacco-control laws and ask the actors to respond within 15 days. The FDA, under Commissioner Tukaram Mundhe, has also directed the removal of all content associated with the advertisement.

Why does the FDA see the ad as surrogate promotion?

"Considering the nature of the advertisement, the identity of the brand, its presentation, visual elements, dialogue, product name, the market identity of the brand and the context in which the advertisement is presented, a serious question arises as to whether the said advertisement amounts to indirect, surrogate or other forms of promotion of a prohibited/restricted tobacco-related product. In particular, if the use of the 'VIMAL' brand under the name of Elaichi or a similar product is intended to maintain, reinforce or enhance the brand identity and consumer attraction associated with pan masala/tobacco related products, such communication may not merely constitute an advertisement for an independent product, but may amount to indirect or



Brand built: The Maharashtra Food and Drugs Administration notices invoke provisions of food safety, consumer protection, and tobacco-control laws. *B. JITHIN MENON/REDAI*

surrogate promotion of a prohibited/restricted product," the notice issued by FDA stated.

Which legislation do such advertisements violate?

The FDA has said that such advertisements are in contravention of various sections of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and the rules and regulations framed thereafter. These include Section 24, which restricts advertisements and prohibits unfair trade practices relating to food, including misleading advertisements.

Under the Food Safety and Standards (Advertising and Claims) Regulations, 2008, Food Business Operators and marketers are required to ensure that their advertisements are truthful, unambiguous and not misleading. They

are also prohibited from making claims that encourage excessive consumption of a particular food. The FDA has said that the advertisement also contravenes the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations, 2008, which pertain to substances that may be injurious to health. "Pan Masala is a regulated food product under the FSSAI regulatory framework, and compliance with all applicable legal provisions relating to its manufacture, marketing, sale and advertisement is mandatory," the FDA said in its notice.

The agency has also said that the advertisement violates the Central Consumer Protection Authority's 2022 guidelines on the prevention of misleading advertisements and endorsements, as well as the provisions prohibiting advertisements under the

Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003 (COTPA).

What is the penalty for violating these rules?

Under Section 21 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, the Central Consumer Protection Authority can direct the discontinuation or modification of a false or misleading advertisement and impose a penalty of up to ₹10 lakh on the endorser. For subsequent contraventions, the penalty may extend to ₹50 lakh. The authority can also prohibit the endorser from endorsing any product for up to one year. For subsequent contraventions, the ban may extend to three years.

Do the actors have to appear in person?

No. They can submit a written explanation either in person or through a duly authorised representative. They will have to send the explanation along with the documentary evidence. "Should you desire to be heard in person, you may indicate the same in your written explanation, whereupon an opportunity of personal hearing, either in person or through a duly authorised representative, shall be afforded to you, in accordance with the principles of natural justice," the notice has stated.

If they fail to respond within the stipulated period, or if their response is found unsatisfactory, they may face action under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, "without any further reference or notice to you (the actors)." The FDA has said that in the absence of a satisfactory explanation, "it shall be presumed that you have nothing to state in the matter."

THE GIST

▼ Maharashtra FDA has issued notices to Shah Rukh Khan, Ajay Devgn and Tiger Shroff over their Vimal Elaichi endorsements, alleging the ads could amount to surrogate promotion of prohibited Vimal Pan Masala.

▼ The FDA says the brand name, visuals, dialogue and market identity could reinforce Vimal's association with pan masala, potentially violating food safety, consumer protection and tobacco-control laws.

▼ The actors have 15 days to respond to the notices; failure to give a satisfactory explanation could lead to action under the Food Safety and Standards Act.

- **Key Terms and Conceptual Foundations**

- **Surrogate Advertising:** A promotional strategy where a corporation advertises a regulated, restricted, or banned product (such as tobacco, gutkha, or alcohol) under the guise of an innocuous, legally permissible product sharing the identical brand name, logo, packaging, or trade dress (e.g., marketing cardamom/elaichi or club soda to sustain pan masala or liquor brand recall).
- **Brand Baiting and Umbrella Branding:** A marketing maneuver where an established brand equity built on a hazardous substance is leveraged to launch ancillary consumer goods. The primary intent remains anchoring consumer attention and preserving brand salience across mass media channels where the core product is legally prohibited.
- **Celebrity Endorsement Liability:** The statutory and ethical accountability imposed on public influencers and brand ambassadors. Under contemporary consumer protection norms, endorsers are legally bound to exercise due diligence regarding the veracity and societal implications of their claims, moving away from immunity behind commercial contracts.
- **Food Safety and Standards Act (FSSA), 2006:** India's primary food regulatory framework that consolidated multiple food laws. Section 24 of the Act strictly prohibits deceptive, untruthful, or misleading advertisements, while empowering the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to penalize unfair marketing practices.
- **Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003:** Comprehensive legislation enacted to discourage tobacco consumption. Section 5 imposes a blanket prohibition on both direct and indirect advertisements, sponsorships, and commercial promotions of tobacco products across all media formats.
- **Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA):** A statutory body established under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, empowered to regulate matters relating to violation of consumer rights, unfair trade practices, and false or misleading advertisements that harm public interest.
- **Principle of Caveat Venditor (Seller Beware):** The contemporary legal transition from traditional *caveat emptor* (buyer beware). It places the legal onus on manufacturers, distributors, and endorsers to guarantee that marketing communications do not deceive, manipulate, or endanger the end consumer.

- **Main Arguments and Substantive Dimensions**

- **Subconscious Priming and Brand Recall:** The fundamental premise against surrogate campaigns is that identical brand names, sonic branding, color palettes, and high-profile celebrity presence function as psychological proxies. Even when promoting an innocent product like cardamom seeds, the visual and auditory cues reinforce public memory of the banned parent product (pan masala and chewing tobacco).
- **Evasion of Public Health Regulations:** Such marketing practices bypass the statutory mandates of the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations, 2011, and Section 5 of COTPA, 2003. By engineering technical loopholes through non-tobacco variants, corporations sustain broad-daylight visibility for substances clinically proven to cause severe non-communicable diseases.
- **Fiduciary Duty of Public Figures:** High-profile cultural icons exert immense psychological influence over impressionable demographics, particularly youth and economically vulnerable populations. Commercial agreements do not absolve endorsers of their societal responsibility; negligence in due diligence amounts to active complicity in promoting public health hazards.
- **Counter-Arguments from Commercial Entities:**
 - *Freedom of Trade and Commercial Speech:* Corporations argue that Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution guarantees the right to diversify into legitimate, FSSAI-approved food segments (mouth fresheners, confectioneries).
 - *Strict Product Separation:* Proponents contend that as long as the advertised commodity is non-injurious, FSSAI-compliant, and carries distinct ingredient disclosures, penalizing it amounts to regulatory overreach and arbitrary administrative action.

- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**

- **Pre-1975 Era (Unregulated Expansion):** Tobacco and bidi marketing functioned in an entirely unregulated free-market landscape. Advertisements celebrated chewing tobacco and smoking as symbols of vitality, masculinity, and elite social standing without any mandatory health disclosures.
- **The Cigarettes Act, 1975:** Introduced mandatory statutory health warnings on cigarette packets ("Cigarette smoking is injurious to health"). However, the law was narrow in scope, leaving non-cigarette chewable tobacco, pan masala, and advertising mediums entirely unrestrained.
- **1995 Broadcast Regulations:** The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 (specifically Rule 7(2)(vi)) prohibited direct advertisements for tobacco, liquor, and intoxicants on television networks. This statutory restriction directly triggered the modern phenomenon of surrogate advertising via sodas, playing cards, music cassettes, and mouth fresheners.
- **The Landmark COTPA, 2003:** India enacted the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act to meet obligations under global health compacts. Section 5 established an explicit ban on both direct and indirect advertising, driving surrogate practices into more sophisticated "brand extension" strategies.
- **2011 FSSAI Regulations & Judicial Bans:** Under the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations, 2011, the use of tobacco and nicotine in any food product was outlawed. Subsequent Supreme Court directives banned the manufacture and sale of gutkha, causing manufacturers to bifurcate products into twin-pouch packages (pure pan masala sold alongside pure tobacco) and promote the brand umbrella through elaichi variants.
- **2019–2022 Consumer Protection Overhaul:** The enactment of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, followed by the CCPA Guidelines for Prevention of Misleading Advertisements (2022), established strict definitions for surrogate advertising, introduced multi-crore corporate fines, and instituted personal financial liabilities and endorsement bans for celebrities.

- **Strategic Way Forward**

- **Objective Criteria for Brand Extensions:** Formulate clear, quantitative thresholds to distinguish genuine brand diversification from surrogate fronts. Regulatory authorities must mandate that an ancillary product (e.g., elaichi) must have a verified, independent manufacturing turnover and market existence (e.g., minimum 10–15% of enterprise turnover) before being permitted to advertise under an umbrella trademark.
 - **Mandatory Distinct Trade Dress and Plain Packaging:** Legally require non-tobacco extensions of established gutkha/tobacco brands to adopt entirely distinct names, fonts, color schemes, and packaging designs. Eliminating visual overlap breaks the subconscious cognitive link between the permissible product and the hazardous substance.
 - **Strict Influencer Due Diligence and Escalating Liability:** Standardize the verification protocol required by celebrity endorsers under CCPA guidelines. Impose stringent personal liability, escalating financial penalties, and mandatory community service in cancer hospitals for repeated violations to deter negligent endorsements.
-

COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS: SURROGATE ADVERTISING & CELEBRITY LIABILITY (The 'Vimal Elaichi' Case & Broad Framework)

KEY CONCEPTS & DEFINITIONS

SURROGATE ADVERTISING



An innocent Elaichi sachet on a bridge than proxy to surrogats to a larger Pan Masala sachet

BRAND EXTENSION / UMBRELLA BRANDING



One large brand tree are tormed from benign harmful brand trees, benign fruit branches

CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT LIABILITY



A celebrity hand signing us with a contract

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION TIMELINE



MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT ANALYSIS



LINKAGES FOR UPSC CSE PREPARATION

NCERTs

Class 10 Economics
Consumer
Consumer Rights

Class 11
Business Studies
Ethics

Class 12 Biology
Substance abuse

UPSC SYLLABUS

GS 1 Indian Society

GS 2 Governance/Health

GS 4 Ethics

WAY FORWARD: BALANCED SOLUTIONS

Criteria for Brand Extensions

- Criteria of business plans
- Principles of business plans

Distinct Trade Dress / Plain Packaging

- Plain white plain packaging

Stricter Celebrity Liability

- Legal expert in liability

Harmonize Regulation

- CCPA, FSSAI, MIB

Grassroots Enforcement

- Local area map, with enforcement stamp ofenties

Fund Public Health Ads

How will Gaganyaan's thermal shield protect the crew?

Why does Gaganyaan need a thermal protection system? How does its ablative heat shield work?

Unnikrishnan Nair S.

The atmospheric phase of all space missions is challenging for both ascending rockets and descending space capsules.

As the rocket lifts off from the earth and heads towards its orbit, it accelerates slowly through the atmosphere to keep the mechanical loads on the vehicle to a minimum. When a space capsule, like the Gaganyaan crew module, re-enters from its orbit around the earth, it will hit the atmosphere at a blistering speed of 7,500-8,000 m/s. More than 99% of this kinetic energy will be dissipated into the atmosphere as heat energy. However, a small portion directed back towards the module will still be intense enough to melt it if it is not protected by a robust thermal protection system (TPS).

Why is re-entry challenging?

Compared to rockets, re-entering modules have a unique set of challenges. Foremost among them is that once the descent begins, there is no provision to abort the mission. Another constraint is the limited role for the crew to intervene and correct any system non-conformance. This is because atmospheric descent is incredibly fast and the deceleration forces change constantly.

Human response times are simply too high to manually correct any sudden system abnormality. Hence, all the systems should be made robust enough to withstand the scorching conditions of re-entry. During re-entry, the exterior of the Gaganyaan crew module will encounter temperatures as high as 1,800° C in some regions. To withstand this heat, the module will rely on its protective external heatshield. Despite being just 30-35 mm thick, this TPS will perform the critical task of maintaining the module's structural integrity by keeping its temperature safely below 150° C.

How does TPS protect the crew module?

A TPS is predominantly classified into three types depending on how it removes heat: ablative, radiative, and heat sink. An ablative TPS is a single-use TPS that removes heat energy by sacrificing its layers through chemical and physical processes. Specifically, the TPS will absorb extreme quantities of thermal energy and itself chemically decompose into a protective layer of solid char and outgassing vapours. This process physically carries heat away from the module as the material burns off. In addition, the escaping gases create a cooler boundary layer that acts as a

buffer, blocking intense heat from being transferred into the module. For a simple metaphor, it is like a block of wax that absorbs heat by melting and shedding its outer layers. Carbon phenolic and silica phenolic are good examples of an ablative TPS. India's maiden re-entry mission, the 'Space Capsule Recovery Experiment' (SRE), used a carbon phenolic ablative to protect the module's nose cap, where heat flux was the highest. The Crew Dragon capsule of SpaceX uses an ablative named phenolic-impregnated carbon ablator, or PICA, a lightweight carbon fibre matrix filled with a phenolic resin.

The LVM-3/CARE mission that the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) conducted in 2014 successfully demonstrated crew module reentry using an ablative TPS, establishing the foundational technology that is now being used in the Gaganyaan programme.

A radiative TPS setup works by absorbing the extreme heat of re-entry, then releasing it back into space as electromagnetic radiation, primarily in the infrared spectrum but also as visible light when it is extremely hot. This is like a traditional clay tandoor oven, where the clay walls absorb heat from the burning charcoal and radiate it back as infrared energy to bake the food.

A radiative TPS will remain intact and

withstand the heat without melting or degrading, making it ideal for reusable re-entry vehicles.

Third, a heat sink TPS protects itself by absorbing the heat energy like a giant sponge and raising its own temperature, but without melting or changing its phase in any other way. This is what happens when you pour hot tea into a copper cup. The cup will absorb the heat from the tea and become hot – but it also stays solid. In fact, copper and aluminium are good examples of heat-sink TPS setups.

Why does the crew module use an ablative TPS?

The Gaganyaan crew module uses an ablative TPS because it is a proven, highly robust solution tailored to the module's single-use design philosophy. An ablative TPS can withstand an extreme thermal load without requiring complex or delicate surface maintenance.

Ablative heat shields can easily handle fluctuating heat loads to protect the structure underneath. Radiative systems are less forgiving, as any design errors can quickly cause dangerous overheating. So by avoiding expensive manufacturing, specialised inspection and complex installation processes associated with a reusable radiative TPS, ISRO is opting for a safer, more cost-effective choice.

Built on ISRO's rich heritage in ablative technology and lessons learned from the SRE and CARE missions, the Gaganyaan crew module is engineered to safely bring India's astronauts home through the inferno of reentry – with its first uncrewed test flight launching shortly. (Unnikrishnan Nair S. is an expert in launch vehicle systems, orbital re-entry, and human spaceflight technologies. He is currently the Dr Sarabhai Professor at VSSC)

THE GIST

Gaganyaan's crew module will face temperatures of up to 1,800°C during re-entry, with its thermal protection system keeping the structure safely below 150°C despite the extreme heat.

ISRO has chosen an ablative heat shield that absorbs intense thermal energy, decomposes into char and vapours to carry heat away, and builds on technology demonstrated by the SRE and CARE missions.

- **Key Terms and Explanations**

- **Thermal Protection System (TPS):** An external barrier engineered to shield spacecraft structures and human occupants from severe aerodynamic thermal loads encountered during high-speed atmospheric flight.
- **Atmospheric Re-entry:** The phase where an orbital spacecraft plunges back into planetary atmosphere at hypersonic velocities (typically 7.5 to 8.0 km/s or roughly Mach 25). At these speeds, the vehicle compresses atmospheric gases into a glowing, superheated shock layer.
- **Ablative Heat Shield:** A sacrificial thermal barrier that absorbs extreme heat through controlled chemical decomposition (pyrolysis), phase changes, and physical erosion. It forms a protective boundary layer of outgassed vapours that carries thermal energy away from the capsule.
 - *Analogy:* Consider how melting wax or sweating human skin carries away excess thermal energy through mass loss and evaporation.
- **Radiative TPS:** A reusable thermal shield that absorbs high heat flux and radiates it directly back into space across the infrared and visible spectrum without degrading the underlying material.
 - *Analogy:* Similar to the refractory clay walls of a traditional tandoor or furnace, which glow red-hot, store thermal energy, and radiate it outward without melting.
- **Heat Sink TPS:** A passive system made of high-thermal-conductivity materials (such as heavy copper or beryllium alloys) that absorbs thermal energy purely through bulk heat capacity without undergoing phase changes.
- **Carbon Phenolic and PICA:** High-performance composite ablators composed of woven carbon fibres impregnated with phenolic resins. Under high temperatures, the resin decomposes into a porous, insulating carbonaceous "char" layer that blocks inward heat conduction.
- **Re-entry Blackout (Plasma Sheath):** Ionisation of ambient atmospheric gases around the re-entering hull caused by shock heating, creating a plasma envelope that temporarily disrupts all radio-frequency communications with ground tracking stations.

- **Main Arguments and Substantive Parts**

- The return of a crewed spacecraft from low Earth orbit requires precise management of aerothermodynamics and human physiological constraints.
- **The Physics of Extreme Energy Dissipation:**
 - An orbital crew module carries immense kinetic and potential energy. During descent, more than 99% of this kinetic energy must be dissipated within minutes through atmospheric friction and compression.
 - The blunt nose of the module drives a high-pressure bow shock wave, generating localized envelope temperatures approaching 1,800°C. The thermal shield must constrain internal cabin temperatures below 150°C across structural bulkheads, maintaining life-support conditions near 25°C.
- **The Zero-Margin Nature of Re-entry:**
 - Unlike the ascent phase—where solid rocket abort motors (Crew Escape System) can jettison the capsule away from an exploding rocket—descent allows no abort modes once the atmospheric interface is crossed.
 - Hypersonic deceleration generates heavy, dynamic g -loads. Rapidly shifting aerodynamic pressure profiles exceed human cognitive and neuromuscular reaction thresholds, making complete flight automation and deterministic passive safety mandatory.
- **Architectural Justification for Ablative Systems:**
 - *Radiative Systems (e.g., Space Shuttle silica tiles):* Reusable but mechanically brittle, vulnerable to micrometeorite impacts, sensitive to minor installation misalignments, and costly to maintain.
 - *Heat Sink Systems:* Add prohibitive dead weight to the spacecraft, lowering payload capacity.
 - *Ablative Systems (Gaganyaan's choice):* Offer superior thermal resilience, maintain low mass-to-protection ratios (30–35 mm thickness), accommodate fluctuating aerodynamic heat fluxes without structural failure, and build directly upon India's prior space-recovery flight heritage.

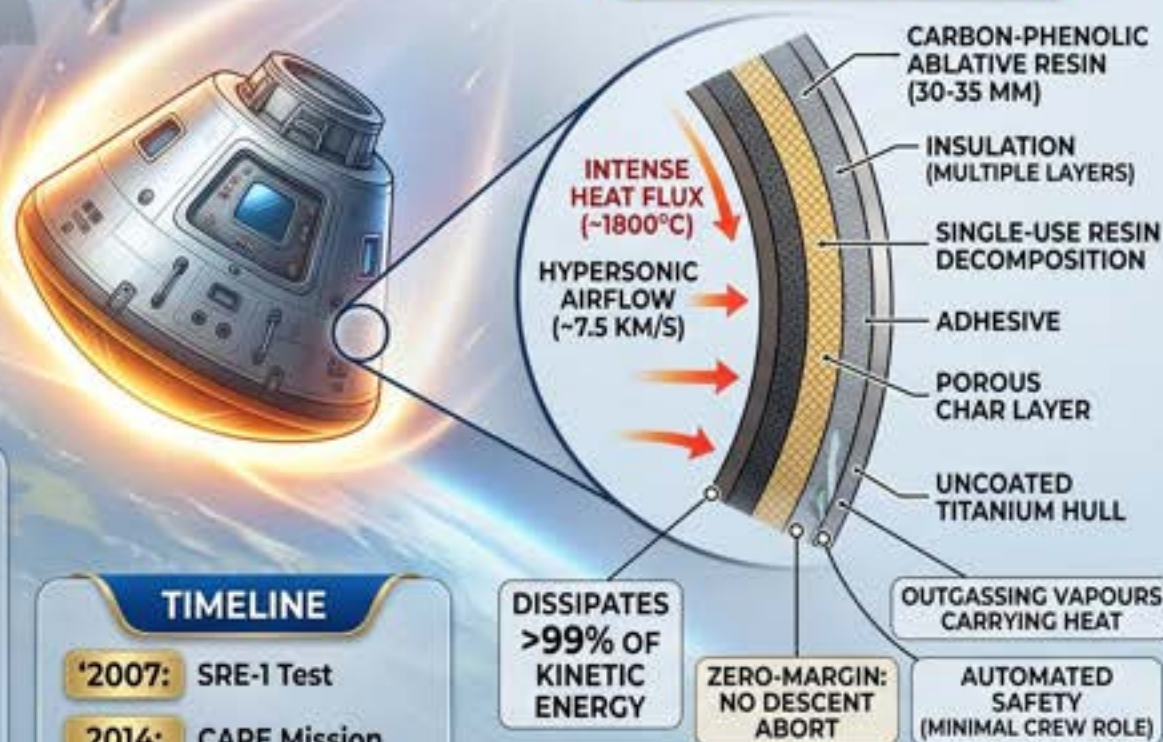
- **Historical Evolution of Atmospheric Re-entry Technology**
- **The Pre-Space Age and Early Theoretical Foundations (1950s):**
 - Early rocketry assumed that needle-sharp, streamlined bodies were optimal to penetrate the atmosphere.
 - In 1952, H. Julian Allen and Alfred Eggers discovered the *Blunt Body Concept*. They proved that a blunt-faced re-entry vehicle forces the high-temperature bow shock wave away from the vehicle's surface, transferring most of the shock-layer heat into the surrounding air rather than the hull.
- **The Manned Space Race Era (1961–1975):**
 - Early human spaceflights (Vostok, Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo) universally adopted single-use ablative shields made of phenolic resins and fiberglass composites to withstand orbital and lunar return trajectories.
- **The Reusable Space Shuttle Era (1981–2011):**
 - NASA shifted toward reusable ceramic tiles (Reaction Bonded Silica) and Reinforced Carbon-Carbon (RCC) leading edges. The 2003 *Columbia* disaster revealed the acute vulnerability of brittle radiative tiles to foam impact damage during ascent, leading modern human spaceflight capsules (SpaceX Dragon, NASA Orion, Gaganyaan) back to durable ablative composite materials.
- **India's Stepping Stones to Re-entry Mastery (2007–Present):**
 - **2007 (SRE-1):** The *Space Capsule Recovery Experiment* validated indigenous silica tiles and carbon-phenolic ablative nose caps, staying in orbit for 12 days before executing a controlled de-orbit and Bay of Bengal splashdown.
 - **2014 (CARE Mission):** The *Crew Module Atmospheric Re-entry Experiment*, launched atop the maiden sub-orbital LVM3-X flight, tested full-scale module aerothermodynamic behavior, ablative TPS endurance, and apex cover separation sequences.
 - **2023–Present (Test Vehicle Missions):** Flight validation through the TV-D1 mission proved the high-altitude crew escape sequences, completing the qualification pipeline for the human-rated orbital vehicle.
- **Way Forward**
- **Incremental Flight Qualification and Automated Testing:**
 - Execute uncrewed orbital missions (G1 and G2) carrying humanoid robots (such as *Vyommitra*) to validate thermal, cabin pressure, life support, and structural integrity across every flight phase before launching human crew.
- **R&D in Next-Generation Ultra-High-Temperature Ceramics (UHTCs):**
 - Advance indigenous synthesis of non-ablative materials—such as Zirconium Diboride (ZrB_2) and Hafnium Carbide (HfC)—capable of surviving temperatures exceeding $2,000^\circ\text{C}$ to support future reusable spaceplanes (e.g., the Reusable Launch Vehicle - RLV program).
- **Institutionalising Advanced Plasma Simulation and Wind-Tunnel Testing:**
 - Expand domestic Plasma Arc-Jet test complexes and trisonic wind tunnel facilities across CSIR-NAL, DRDO, and ISRO to accurately simulate the full range of hypersonic re-entry conditions.
- **Strengthening Private Aerospace Supply Chains via IN-SPACe:**
 - Engage domestic tier-1 and tier-2 manufacturers to indigenously synthesize aerospace-grade carbon fibers, specialized resins, and precision-cured tiles, establishing a resilient domestic supply base for long-term space station (*Bharatiya Antariksh Station*) missions.



AXIA
IAS ACADEMY
RISE ABOVE THE REST

GAGANYAAN THERMAL PROTECTION SYSTEM (TPS): A COMPREHENSIVE UPSC PREPARATION GUIDE

ABLATIVE HEAT SHIELD



KEY TERMS



Ablative
TPS



Radiative
TPS



Heat Sink



Plasma
Sheath

TIMELINE

'2007: SRE-1 Test

2014: CARE Mission

'GAGANYAAN'

MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS

(GS SYLLABUS & ESSAY)



SOCIAL

Scientific Temper &
STEM Inspiration



POLITICAL

National Prestige &
Scientific Maturity



LEGAL

Outer Space Treaty
(1967) Compliance



ECONOMIC

Industrial
Advancement &
MSME Engagement



INTERNATIONAL

Global Space
Power Tier &
Self-Reliance



ETHICAL

Prioritizing
Human Safety

UPSC CSE LINKAGES

NCERT LINKAGES:

- Physics: Thermodynamics
- Chemistry: Polymers

PREVIOUS YEARS' QUESTIONS (PYQs):

2008 SRE

2016 Astrosat

2020 Mangalyaan

2018 Re-entry Mains

GS PAPERS 1-4:

GS-1
History

GS-2
Policies

GS-3
Science &
Tech, Security

GS-4
Ethics



axiaiasacademy.com



+91 6002-417488

• HISTORY

Vande Mataram: Religious imagery, political debate

Citing Gandhi, Tagore and a 1937 CWC decision, Congress said it will sing only the first two stanzas of the composition. Why are the other four controversial?



YASHREE & ASAD REHMAN

THE CONGRESS Working Committee (CWC) has decided that only the first two stanzas of Vande Mataram will be sung at party programmes, amid BJP attacks over the National Song's rendition at its Independence Day programme and later at an event in Goa.

The Congress's highest decision-making body cited a 1937 CWC resolution to back its stand, arguing that the leading lights of the freedom movement, including Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore, had backed limiting the public rendition of Vande Mataram to its first two stanzas.

The row comes months after Parliament made intentional attempts to prevent or disrupt the singing or playing of Vande Mataram as an offence.

The composition

Vande Mataram (meaning 'mother, I bow to her') was composed in Sanskritised Bengali by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in 1875. Six years later, it was included in his novel *Anandamath*, which tells the story of the late 18th-century Sanyasi Rebellion, a series of armed uprisings in Bengal against the East India Company rule and the regional Muslim administrators.

Vande Mataram gained popularity during the Swadeshi movement (1905-08), becoming closely associated with the freedom struggle. The Muslim League, however, was against some references in the song, and also believed that "bowing to the mother" amounts to idolatry.

The 1937 CWC resolution

Within the Congress, there was a discussion about the Vande Mataram issue. Several people, including Subhas Chandra Bose (who supported the song wholeheartedly) and Jawaharlal Nehru, wrote to Tagore to seek his opinion.

Tagore wrote to Nehru: "To me the spirit of tenderness and devotion expressed in its first portion, the emphasis it gave to beautiful and beneficent aspects of our mother-

• THE FULL SONG AND STANZAS

• The first two stanzas of Vande Mataram describe the beauty of the motherland — its fertility, its waters, its greenery.

• But later on, it likens the motherland to the divine mother, and speaks of installing the mother's statues in temples.

• The fifth stanza, specially, compares the motherland to the 10 armed Durga, and its goddesses who dwell on lotuses and bestow knowledge and expression, references to Lakshmi and Saraswati.

It goes, in heavily Sanskritised Bangla,

"Jani ki Durga-dasi praharata-dhriti,

Kamali kamala-dala vishriti,

Vasit vidyā-dhriti,

Nandini tūm nandini kamalini

(Roughly translated as: You are Durga, bearing ten weapons; You are Lakshmi, who dwells upon the lotus; You are Saraswati, the giver of knowledge; I bow to you, I bow to you...)

land made a special appeal, so much so that I found no difficulty in dissociating it from the rest of the poems."

He added: "I freely concede that the whole of Bankim's 'Vande Mataram' poem, read together with its content, is liable to be interpreted in ways that might wound Muslim susceptibilities, but a national song, though derived from it, which has spontaneously come to consist only of the first two stanzas of the original poem, need not remind us every time of the whole..." (From Subhaschandra Bhattacharya's book, *Vande Mataram: The Biography of a Song*).

In October 1937, the Congress Working Committee had decided that when Vande Mataram is sung at national gatherings, only the first two stanzas should be sung, as the other "stanzas of the song are little known and hardly ever sung. They contain certain allusions and a religious ideology which may not be in keeping with the ideology of other religious groups in India".

Mahatma Gandhi too, while expressing admiration for the song, said it should not be sung at gatherings where people objected to it. On July 1, 1939, he wrote in *Harizon*: "It was an anti-imperialist cry... It had never occurred to me that it was a Hindu song or meant only for Hindus. Unfortunately, now we have fallen on evil days... I would not risk



Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay composed Vande Mataram in 1875. Six years later, he included it in his book *Anandamath*.

The song and the struggle

Vande Mataram, which gained popularity during the Swadeshi movement (1905-08), became closely linked to the freedom struggle.

• The Muslim League was against some references in the song. It believed "bowing to the mother" amounts to idolatry.

a single quartet over singing Vande Mataram at a public gathering."

The same month, he again wrote in *Harizon* that "if at any mixed gathering any person objected to the singing of Vande Mataram even with the Congress expurgations, the singing should be dropped." (*Mahatma Gandhi and the Harmony of Music*, By Timma Joseph & AM Thomas).

The political debate

When India gained independence, there was a demand for Vande Mataram to be adopted as the national anthem. In the Constituent Assembly, there was some friction on the issue. On August 14, 1947, at the Assumption of Power ceremony, Sacheta Kripalani sang the first verse of Vande Mataram as the opening item. On August 26, PV Keshavaiah rose in the Assembly to say that, on that day: "...Some of us in this House noticed that a number of our Honourable friends entered the Assembly Chamber — I would almost say trooped into this Hall — after the song had been sung. I would request you, Sir, to look into this matter..."

Among those who preferred *Jana Gana Mana* as the anthem were Nehru, and among the reasons he cited was that Vande Mataram would be difficult to set to an orchestra. On November 5, 1948, Seth Govind

Das said in the Constituent Assembly: "...I would say that 'Vande Mataram' can be our National Anthem. The history of our struggle for independence is associated with Vande Mataram. If it be said that it is tune is not fit for orchestration, I would submit that this is a difficulty which can be overcome by experts in orchestral music."

Jana Gana Mana was eventually chosen as the anthem.

On January 24, 1950, President Rajendra Prasad told the Constituent Assembly: "The composition consisting of the words and music known as *Jana Gana Mana* is the National Anthem of India, subject to such alterations in the words as the Government may authorise as occasion arises; and the song Vande Mataram, which has played a historic part in the struggle for Indian freedom, shall be honoured equally with *Jana Gana Mana* and shall have equal status with it. I hope this will satisfy the Members."

The BJP has recently made a major push to sing all six stanzas of the song. The Ministry of Home Affairs on January 28 notified the first set of protocols for singing Vande Mataram, directing that all six stanzas shall be sung during official functions.

The BJP has long accused the Congress of giving in to its "appeasement politics" over Vande Mataram's transgression.

Now, the Congress's stand comes at a time Parliament has passed the Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Act, 2020, which amends Section 3 of the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1925 to extend the same legal protection to the Vande Mataram that the National Anthem, *Jana Gana Mana*, enjoys. The amendment makes it an offence to intentionally prevent the singing of the National Song or to cause a disturbance to an assembly engaged in its singing.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh told *The Indian Express*: "Dr Rajendra Prasad as President of the Constituent Assembly announced on Jan 24 1950 that Vande Mataram (the two stanzas) will be the national song... This was accepted by the Constituent Assembly with cheers. But in December 2025, Parliament only had a discussion and never ever adopted a resolution saying that the full Vande Mataram will be the national song. This was a unilateral decision of the PM and HMV notification, which does not have Parliamentary approval."

- **Key Terms and Concepts**

- **Vande Mataram ("I bow to thee, Mother"):** A Sanskritised Bengali poem composed by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in 1875. It personifies the nation as a nurturing mother figure. The first two stanzas celebrate the physical and agricultural abundance of the land (*Sujalam, Suphalam, Malayaja Shitalam*), whereas the subsequent four stanzas incorporate explicit Hindu religious iconography, identifying the motherland with deities such as Durga, Lakshmi, and Saraswati.
- **Anandamath (1882):** A historical novel by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay set against the backdrop of the Bengal Famine of 1770 and the Sanyasi Rebellion. The song *Vande Mataram* was integrated into this text as a rallying battle hymn for ascetic warriors (*Santans*) fighting against the British East India Company and regional administrative decay.
- **Constitutional Equivalence vs. Technical Hierarchy:** Under the historic declaration made by Constituent Assembly President Dr. Rajendra Prasad on January 24, 1950, *Jana Gana Mana* was designated as the **National Anthem**, while *Vande Mataram* was declared the **National Song**, accorded "equal status" and "equal honour" due to its historic role in the freedom movement.
- **The 1937 CWC Compromise:** A pragmatic policy formulation adopted by the Congress Working Committee in Calcutta (guided by Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, and Jawaharlal Nehru). To preserve national unity and accommodate monotheistic sensibilities (which reject deification and idolatry), it truncated the official public rendition of the song to only its first two, non-denominational stanzas.
- **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971:** A statutory framework penalizing the intentional prevention of, or disturbance to, the singing of the National Anthem (Section 3). Debates surrounding legislative amendments aim to extend identical penal safeguards and mandates to the National Song.
- **Constitutional Morality vs. Cultural Nationalism:** The philosophical divergence between an inclusive, rights-based civic identity rooted in the Constitution versus an organic, civilizational identity anchored in historical and religious metaphors.

- **Main Arguments and Substantive Issues**

- **The Dual Literary Character of the Composition:** The core debate stems from the distinct structural bifurcation of the song itself. The opening two stanzas present a secular, ecological ode to the physical beauty, rivers, and fertile fields of India. In contrast, the remaining stanzas adopt explicit Puranic imagery, invoking the ten-armed Durga, Lakshmi, and Saraswati, thereby blurring the line between geographic patriotism and religious worship.
- **Anti-Colonial Mobilization vs. Communal Polarization:** During the Swadeshi Movement (1905–1908), *Vande Mataram* functioned as a powerful, non-sectarian slogan against the Partition of Bengal, chanted by leaders and revolutionaries across communities. However, as communal electorates hardened in the 1920s and 1930s, the Muslim League argued that compelling individuals to chant or sing verses deifying the motherland violated the core Islamic tenet of *Tawhid* (monotheism) and bordered on idolatry.
- **The Pragmatic Accommodation of 1937:** Recognizing the potential for communal alienation, Rabindranath Tagore advised that the first portion of the song possessed a universal, tender spirit dissociable from sectarian overtones, while the later portions could infringe upon minority religious sentiments. The resulting CWC compromise established the convention of rendering only the first two stanzas to balance historical reverence with pluralistic accommodation.
- **State Authority and Civic Freedom:** A key tension exists between viewing the full composition as an irreducible symbol of civilizational heritage, versus treating compulsory public recitation as an infringement upon individual conscience, religious freedom, and democratic pluralism.

- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**
- **1875–1882: Composition and Literary Context:** Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay composed the hymn in Chinsurah, Bengal, in 1875. In 1882, it was incorporated into his novel *Anandamath*, set during the anti-colonial and anti-tax uprising of the Sanyasis against the East India Company.
- **1896: Political Debut at the Indian National Congress:** Rabindranath Tagore set the poem to music and performed it publicly at the 12th Annual Session of the Indian National Congress in Calcutta, embedding the song within mainstream nationalist discourse.
- **1905–1908: The Swadeshi Movement and Mass Mobilization:** Following Curzon's Partition of Bengal, *Vande Mataram* became the primary anti-imperialist battle cry. The colonial state banned the chanting and singing of the slogan in public spaces, transforming it into an act of seditious defiance and martyrdom.
- **1937: The CWC Resolution:** Amid rising communal friction and objections raised by the Muslim League, the Congress Working Committee adopted a formal resolution in Calcutta, selecting exclusively the first two stanzas for public functions while setting aside the stanzas containing sectarian deities.
- **1947–1950: The Constituent Assembly Deliberations:**
 - *August 14, 1947:* Sucheta Kripalani sang the first verse at the historic midnight Assumption of Power session.
 - *Debates:* While figures like Seth Govind Das advocated for its adoption as the official National Anthem, Jawaharlal Nehru and others noted its complex musical structure and orchestral challenges compared to Rabindranath Tagore's *Jana Gana Mana*.
 - *January 24, 1950:* President Dr. Rajendra Prasad delivered a presidential statement declaring *Jana Gana Mana* as the National Anthem, while according *Vande Mataram* an equal status as the National Song.
- **Post-Independence to Present Day:** The song has witnessed periodic judicial scrutiny regarding mandatory singing in educational institutions, political debates over its full rendition, and legislative initiatives seeking to equalize penal safeguards under national honour legislation.
- **Way Forward**
- **Anchoring Policy in Constitutional Morality:** State policies and legal frameworks must prioritize constitutional morality over majoritarian impulses. The foundational consensus of the 1950 Constituent Assembly—honoring the song's historic contribution while preserving the civic primacy of *Jana Gana Mana*—remains the baseline for national unity.
- **Adhering to Non-Coercive Participation:** Emulating the Supreme Court's jurisprudence in *Bijoe Emmanuel (1986)*, standing respectfully during the rendition of national symbols must be recognized as sufficient demonstration of civic reverence. Forcing vocal participation infringes upon individual conscience and undermines genuine patriotic sentiment.
- **Preserving the 1937 Historical Compromise in Formal State Functions:** In mixed and official state gatherings, adhering to the first two stanzas respects the pragmatic wisdom of Tagore, Gandhi, and the Constituent Assembly. This approach celebrates the neutral, ecological ode to the motherland without compelling recitation of specific mythological allegories.
- **Educational Contextualization:** School curricula and national institutions should impart the multi-layered literary, cultural, and political history of *Vande Mataram*. Educating citizens on its role in the Swadeshi struggle and the nuances of its composition fosters informed patriotism rather than dogmatic confrontation.
- **Depoliticization of National Symbols:** Political formations should exercise institutional restraint by preventing national symbols from becoming instruments of electoral polarization, safeguarding their sanctity as shared, non-partisan treasures of the republic.

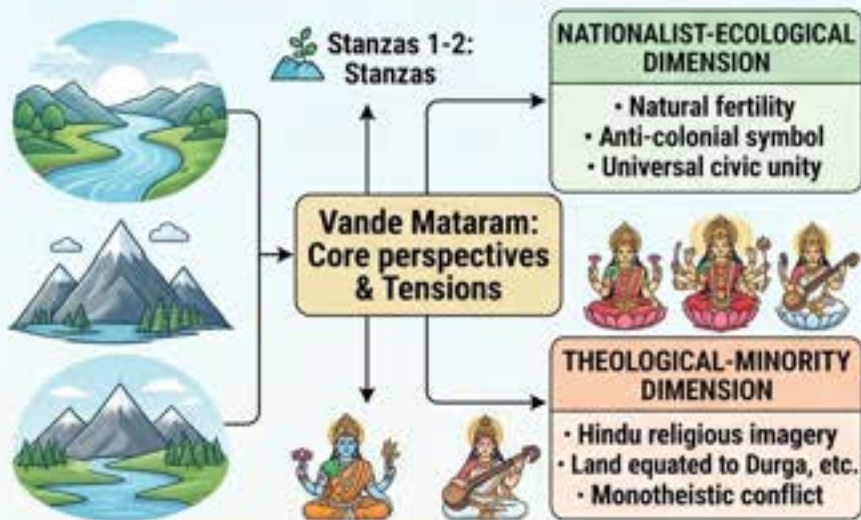


COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS: VANDE MATARAM – NATIONAL SONG OF INDIA



AN EDUCATIONAL STUDY GUIDE FOR UPSC CSE & APSC CCE

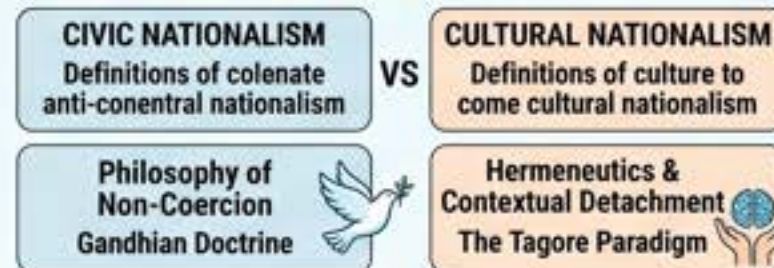
I. Core Perspectives & Tensions



III. Multidimensional Analysis (A Matrix)



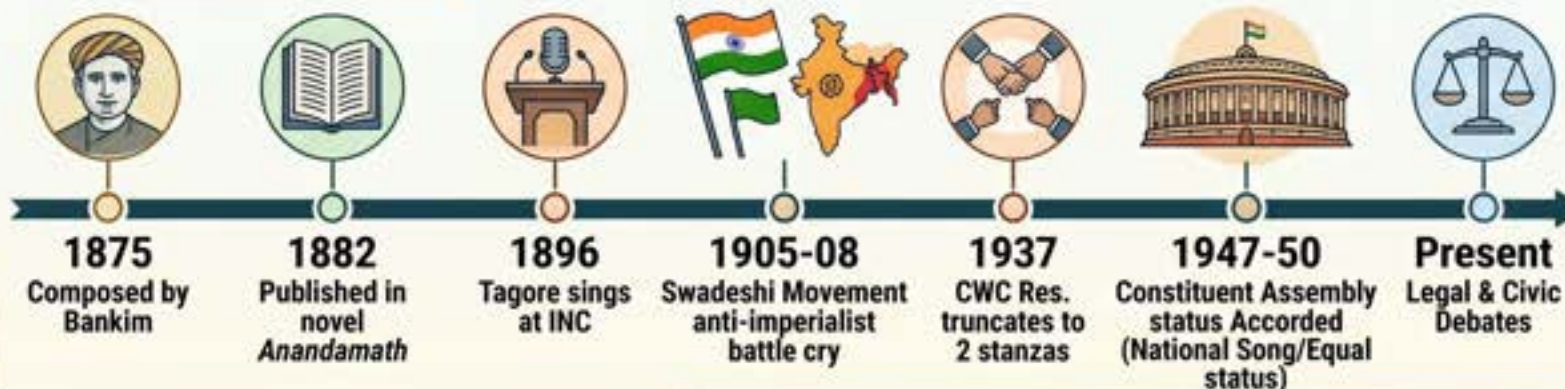
IV. Logical & Philosophical Foundations



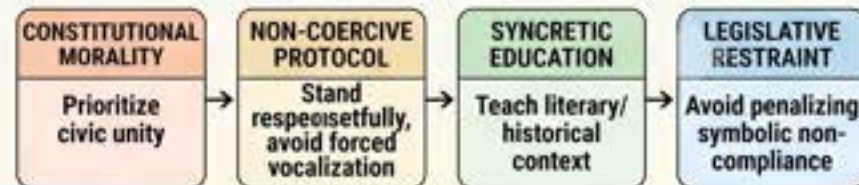
V. Linkages (NCERT & UPSC Syllabus)

NCERT Pedagogical Mapping	UPSC Syllabus Mapping Matrix			
	GS-1	GS-2	GS-4	Optionals
• Class & Textbook • Chapter/Unit • Core Concepts	(Modern Indian History, Social Harmony)	Indian Const., Rights, Duties	Moral Dilemmas, Conscience	• History • PSIR • Sociology
Past UPSC/APSC areas	• Mains topics like Swadeshi culture • Bijoe Emmanuel case, emmanuel case • Ethics of patriotism			

II. Historical Evolution



VI. Way Forward (Policy & Civic Canvas)



KEYWORD

Beyond blasphemy: how laws can curtail the possibility of social reform

Section 295A and similar laws have been used against writers, artists and reformers, with arrest, threats and pre-emptive censorship often causing harm before trial. Their coexistence with laws targeting regressive religious practices exposes the lack of a coherent approach to religious sentiment

Prathmesh Kilar

The history of Section 295A and its cousin Section 295A have meant to prevent communal violence have not been turned against the critique of religion or simply unaccounted religious practices. In 2011, a small collection of Urdu short stories called *Angare*, which attacked discriminatory customs and the sexual hegemony of some religious figures, was banned soon after publication, and its authors faced threats. Lower Indian States banned the film and book *Phir Se* (back in 2000) on the ground that it offended Christian sentiment, a ban that has since been lifted only after High Court intervention.

More recent cases show the pattern continuing under a series of literary and scholarly responsibilities. Wendy Young's *The Doctor: An Alternative History* was withdrawn by Penguin India in 2014 after a brief but involving Section 295A. Tamil novelist Thiruvalluvar faced a criminal complaint and a mock campaign over his novel *Madhuvargam*, he announced his own "silence" as a writer in 2011 rather than face continued harassment. It took a landmark 2010 Madras High Court judgment, which closed with the appeal to "let the subject be restricted to what he is best at, write," to quash the case and restore his right to publish. The painter M.F. Husain was harassed into exile and death threat after decades of provocations and threats over his nude depictions of Hindu deities. Indian State's writing has not similar treatment, and the government's 1988 ban on importing Indian books to the Islamic State made India one of the few countries, a secular one at that, in the world to act against that novel.

The problem here, if anything, found new life in the era of social media and internet debate, where the underlying act being punished has grown almost null. In 2016, weeks after the Supreme Court lifted the traditional ban on women of menstruating age entering the Sabarimala temple, the Kerala activist Rishma Pathrose was arrested under Section 295A over a Facebook photograph of herself dressed as an *Ashtanga* deity. She spent over two weeks in judicial custody, and was suspended by her employer within days of her arrest, all over an image rather than an argument. In 2015, the television anchor Anshu Duggan called the Dalit saint Chiranga Bhattacharya a "bastard" during a live debate, questioned within days for what he said was an inadvertent slip he is different from a saint, and still faced arrest separate 10 days across five States, the Supreme Court declined to quash any of them, merely chiding them together in *Agnes*. These cases rarely end in conviction, more often the prosecution goes nowhere. What pains them is that the damage is done well before any verdict, through arrest, through the book's sale or its aggressive, sometimes violent audience, and through the pre-emptive censure of publishers and the criticism who criticize, necessarily, that no book or film is worth the trouble.

The other direction It would be unfair to the complexity of Indian law, to present this as a single unexamined march towards religious censorship. India also has statutes that go



(ART: NIKHIL)

the other way actively empowering the state to attack religious or superstitious practice, and the constitutional foundation for the other tendency: was laid before the Constitution had even been adopted. Speaking to the Constituent Assembly on December 2, 1946, during the debate on whether provincial law should be deleted from legislative reform, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar rejected the idea that religion could form a core of social legislation merely because a given custom carried religious sentiment. "I personally do not understand why religion should be given this rank, imperative prohibition as to to cover the whole of life and to prevent the legislature from encroaching upon that field. We are having this liberty in order to reform our social system. It is, therefore, quite impossible for anybody to conceive that the personal law shall be excluded from the jurisdiction of the State," Dr. Ambedkar said.

Maharashtra's *Conversion and Prohibition of Religious Practices and Other Matters, Religious Practices and Other Matters Act*, passed in 2011 after the amendment of the religious campaigner *Harshvardhan*, constituted a long list of regressive religious practices, from banning to cut down through faith healing to including self-flagellation. Karnataka passed a similar law in 2012. The last Provincial Act of 1967 goes further still, criminalizing

not only the act of violent intimidation but the glorification of it, treating celebratory speech about a religious practice as both an offence, the entire range of a blasphemy law rather than its opposite.

The coexistence of these two tendencies, laws that punish criticism of religion and laws that mandate criticism of religious practice, suggests that Indian law has no coherent theory of when religious sentiment deserves protection. What actually governs is a case-by-case political calculation about which practices are currently unpopular enough, or which communities are currently powerful enough, to tip the balance one way or the other.

The influence as blasphemy

The nearest illustration of what this body of law puts at risk is not the smaller mocking a faith he does not share, but the smaller attacking his own. In the line of those versus Henry Rodriguez, described by the Madras High Court in 2002, a Catholic editor named Henry Rodriguez was tried under Section 295A over an article in his Hindi-language magazine *Crusader*, titled "Witness to History of Hinduism," which accused Catholic priests of exploiting the credulous to label anything negative to the Hindu faith. The defence argued that since the criticised beliefs and practices were, in his view, superstitious and contrary to the Bible itself, the truth of his charge ought

to shake him. The court, following an earlier Madras High Court ruling, rejected this insight, over a steady state statement. It held, can outrage religious feelings, and Section 295A punishes the intent to outrage rather than the accuracy of what is said. A believer's errors, internally argued complaints against his own clergy was raised exactly as the law treats a stranger's contempt.

The doctrine that truth is no defence is what should give the chapter power to anyone tempted to think of a blasphemy law as merely a shield against injury. Indeed the story to build on religious who succeeded only because they were prepared to be called blasphemers by their own people. Justice Pande spent the 1970s attacking the doctrine of religious authority as the theological justification of caste oppression, treating Hindu myth in his own language to expose it as a device for keeping the lower caste subjugated. A century later, Ramji Chavan looked the Madras High Court, Madras High Court as Pande's model, marched a handful of Hindu women to the Mahatma temple to demand an end to caste discrimination, and was sentenced and fined for it. Neither man nor woman could the year, both set out to quantify their own something (believed to be the reform of India's caste system, it is hard to imagine how a modern Section 295A complaint, or a Pande with his charge, could be made against anyone who would not be a blasphemy law, would not be against anyone who would not be a blasphemy law.

A law that criminalizes the "deliberate and malicious" intention to outrage religious feeling, read correctly rather than superficially, does not obviously distinguish a faith or a culture from a legal ruling to that faith for good, both are, in the phrase used, trying to make themselves feel about what they believe. What should separate them, in any society that values efforts as much as it values sentiment, is whether the crime is trying to improve the community or merely to offend it, a distinction that a police station taking down a complaint is poorly placed to draw.

Limits of protection

Supporters of laws like Pande's have an argument, and it is wrong to be engaged with rather than neutral off. India is a country where religious sentiment has regularly proved itself, it is a religion, applied with judicial restraint and the safeguard of personal intent, could in principle be a proportionate response to that risk rather than an assault on free thought.

The historical record of Section 295A, and that of Pande's own earlier law, gives little confidence that restraint is what actually happens in practice. A similar constitution that permits the state to inspect people for life over an insult to a book, however sacred, has extended more ground to religious authority than its own founding principle allows. If India wishes to remain true to the secularism its Constitution declares unwaveringly, the better path is to narrow these government-to-book original, defensible purpose: preventing incitement to actual violence, and leave the criticism, satire and reform of religious practice, however one-on-one, to public argument rather than to the criminal courts. (This concludes the three-part series.)

- **Key Terms and Explanations**

- **Section 295A IPC (Section 299, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023):** A penal provision that criminalizes deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage the religious feelings of any class of citizens by insulting its religion or religious beliefs.
 - *Example:* Filing criminal charges against an author whose historical critique of a religious custom is construed by followers as a malicious insult.
- **Heckler's Veto:** A situation where the state suppresses or curtails constitutionally protected speech simply because an intolerant audience or mob threatens violence or public disorder in response.
 - *Example:* Banning a book or canceling a lecture because a radical group threatens street agitation, thereby rewarding the intimidator rather than defending the speaker.
- **Pre-emptive / Private Censorship:** The phenomenon where publishers, broadcasters, or cultural institutions voluntarily withdraw, alter, or refuse to publish challenging content out of fear of legal harassment or vigilante attacks before any judicial verdict is delivered.
 - *Example:* A publishing house pulping an academic text after receiving legal notices from religious outfits to avoid prolonged litigation costs.
- **The "Truth Is No Defence" Doctrine:** Under the traditional interpretation of religious insult laws, the factual or theological accuracy of a statement does not absolve the speaker; liability is determined by whether the statement was calculated to wound religious sensibilities.
 - *Example:* An internal religious reformer accurately quoting scripture to expose superstition being held liable because traditionalists felt insulted.
- **Constitutional Morality:** The adherence to core constitutional values—such as liberty, equality, rational inquiry, and human dignity—over the prevailing, majoritarian, or orthodox sentiments of society.
- **Process as Punishment:** The strategic use of the criminal justice machinery (multiple FIRs, jurisdictional harassment, arrests, and prolonged bail hearings) to silence a speaker, rendering the final acquittal meaningless.

- **Main Arguments and Substantive Issues**

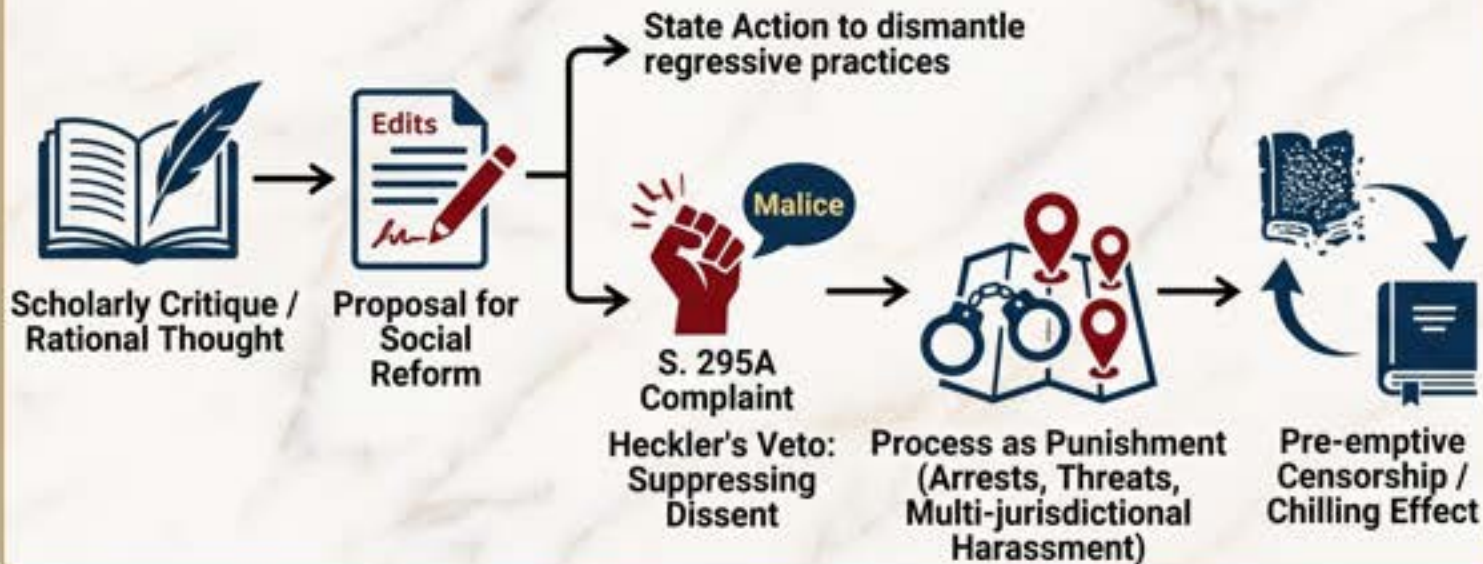
- **The Inherent Legal Duality:** Indian jurisprudence exhibits a fundamental contradiction. On one hand, the state is constitutionally and legislatively mandated to reform regressive religious practices and eliminate superstition. On the other hand, penal provisions actively criminalize speech that outrages religious feelings, creating a legal mechanism that can be weaponized against the very critics driving social reform.
- **The Conflation of Malice with Reform:** Penal statutes targeting religious insult do not effectively differentiate between bad-faith hate speech designed to provoke communal disharmony and sincere internal critique aimed at social progress. Consequently, reformist critique is frequently treated with the same penal severity as sectarian provocation.
- **Weaponization of the Heckler's Veto:** Intolerant groups routinely bypass substantive theological or intellectual debates by filing criminal complaints across multiple jurisdictions. The state often capitulates to threats of street disorder by arresting critics or banning works, thereby allowing mob pressure to dictate the boundaries of public discourse.
- **Procedural Attrition as a Deterrent:** Even when constitutional courts eventually uphold artistic freedom and exonerate the accused, the protracted process of multiple arrests, cross-state litigation, social ostracization, and economic loss acts as an effective deterrent against free expression and academic inquiry.
- **The Threat to Democratic Evolution:** A secular democracy must derive its legitimacy from the protection of rational inquiry and individual dissent. By subordinating critical inquiry to subjective religious sensitivities, the legal framework risks ossifying religious orthodoxy and halting the organic evolution of society.

- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**
 - **Colonial Genesis (1927):** Section 295A was introduced into the Indian Penal Code following the *Rangila Rasul* controversy and the subsequent acquittal of the publisher under Section 153A. The colonial administration sought an expedient mechanism to preserve public tranquility rather than a tool to protect individual liberties or encourage internal social reform.
 - **Early Suppression of Progressive Thought (1930s):** The quick deployment of colonial censorship against reformist literature was demonstrated in 1932 by the banning of *Angarey*, a path-breaking collection of Urdu short stories written by progressive writers challenging feudal customs, patriarchy, and religious obscurantism.
 - **Constituent Assembly Debates (1948):** During the framing of the Constitution, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar strongly resisted allowing religious personal laws and dogmas to claim immunity from state legislation. He asserted that religious jurisdiction must not be permitted to encroach upon the expansive field of social reform and fundamental rights.
 - **Early Judicial Scrutiny (1957):** In *Ramji Lal Modi v. State of U.P.*, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutional validity of Section 295A under the "public order" restriction of Article 19(2), holding that it penalizes only aggravated, deliberate, and malicious forms of insult, rather than unintended or casual slights.
 - **Strict Construction and the "Truth" Dilemma (1960s–1980s):** High Court rulings, such as *State of Mysore v. Henry Rodrigues* (1961), reinforced that establishing the factual truth of a critique is no defense against a charge under Section 295A. This era witnessed growing political capitulation to religious pressure, exemplified by the 1988 import ban on Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*.
 - **Modern Judicial Course Correction vs. Digital Vigilantism (2010s–Present):** While progressive judgments—such as the Madras High Court's 2016 ruling protecting author Perumal Murugan ("*Let the author be resurrected*")—have defended free speech, the rise of digital platforms has accelerated the filing of coordinated FIRs, keeping the chilling effect operational.
- **Way Forward**
 - **Elevating the Threshold to "Direct Incitement":** Judicial interpretation of Section 299 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita must strictly adhere to the *Brandenburg* standard and India's *Shreya Singhal* precedent. Criminal liability should only attach when speech directly incites imminent lawless action, decisively delinking theological offense from public order violations.
 - **Establishing Procedural Safeguards against Multi-Jurisdictional Harassment:** Mandate that multiple complaints against a single published work, speech, or broadcast be consolidated within the accused's home jurisdiction. Implement preliminary judicial screening before registering FIRs to immediately dismiss frivolous or vexatious complaints.
 - **Statutory Recognition of Truth, Scholarly Critique, and Artistic Expression:** Amend criminal law to explicitly provide statutory immunity for fact-based criticism, academic research, artistic expression, and reformist discourse, directly advancing the Fundamental Duty under Article 51A(h) to develop scientific temper and the spirit of inquiry.

BEYOND BLASPHEMY: THE REFORMER'S DILEMMA & INDIA'S STATE MANDATE

A COMPREHENSIVE UPSC CSE & APSC PREPARATION ANALYSIS

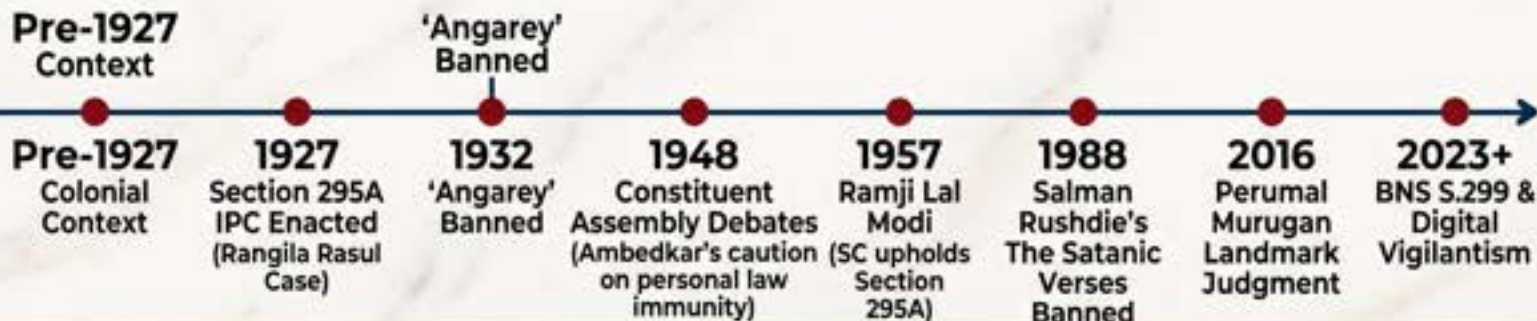
DIAGRAM: THE CONFLICT AT WORK - HECKLER'S VETO



MULTI-DIMENSIONAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

 SOCIAL - Regressive Customs Retained - Internal Reformers Silenced	 POLITICAL - Competitive Appeasement - State Duty vs. Executive Expediency
 LEGAL - Gavel for Heckler - Shield against Refor	 ETHICAL - Sincere Critique vs. Bad-Faith Offense - Constitutional Morality over Popular Morality
 ETHICAL - Process as Punishment 'Truth is No Defense' 'Truth is No Defense'	 ECONOMIC - Chilling Effect on Cultural Industries - Intellectual Brain Drain

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF PENAL RELIGIOUS INSULT LAWS



WAY FORWARD

- ✓ Elevate threshold to 'Direct Incitement'.
- ✓ Procedural Safeguards against Multi-Jurisdictional Harassment.
- ✓ Statutory Protection for Scholar-Critics & Artists.
- ✓ Affirmative State Duty to protect the speaker.
- ✓ Harmonize with Anti-Superstition Statutes.

Trump pledges 'economic warfare' on Iran, prompting Tehran derision

Any country providing 'any type of lifeline to Iran' would face 'tremendous economic consequences,' warns U.S. President; Iran dismisses the move as a continuation of 'failed policies', maintaining economic pressure by keeping Hormuz closed

Agence France-Presse
TEHRAN

U.S. President Donald Trump pledged "economic warfare" against Iran and threatened any country that trades with it, prompting Iran to dismiss the plan on Thursday as a continuation of failed policies.

The war between the two countries, started by the U.S. and Israel in February, appears stalemated, with peace talks stalled, Tehran keeping the key Strait of Hormuz shut and Washington persisting with a naval counter-blockade of Iran.



The U.S. Navy Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln conducts a replenishment-at-sea on August 16. REUTERS

In a post on his Truth Social, the U.S. leader said he was announcing "the MOST CRUSHING ECONOMIC OPERATION EVER

TAKEN AGAINST ANY COUNTRY! This will be Economic Warfare and Isolation on an unprecedented scale".

"ANY country that allows its financial institutions, businesses, airports, or government entities to provide any type of lifeline to Iran will itself face TREMENDOUS Economic Consequences," he said.

The U.S. has maintained punishing sanctions against Iran for decades, with Mr. Trump in his 2017-2021 first term ratcheting them up as part of a "maximum pressure" strategy in which he tore up a nuclear deal negotiated by his predecessor Barack Obama.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Thursday dismissed the plan as a continuation of "failed pol-

icies", which he said would bring Washington "further defeat".

"The so-called 'Economic D-Day' is a diversion from America's own crisis: unprecedented debt & surging interest costs. Doubling down on failed policies will only bring further defeat – and enmity of Iranians," Mr. Araghchi said in a post on X.

"U.S. economic terrorism threatens global economy and sovereignty worldwide."

Tehran, though, continues to exert its own economic pressure campaign by keeping the Strait of Hormuz largely closed.

- **Key Terms and Conceptual Framework**

- **Economic Warfare and Coercive Statecraft:** The deliberate deployment of state-directed trade, monetary, and financial restrictions to inflict structural economic damage on an adversary. Unlike conventional military combat, its weapons are market access denials, asset freezes, and banking blockades designed to force political capitulation without firing a shot.
- **Secondary Sanctions (Extraterritorial Jurisdiction):** Punitive measures imposed by a sanctioning state against foreign third-party individuals, corporations, or sovereign governments that engage in economic transactions with the targeted entity. For instance, if Country A sanctions Country B, secondary sanctions penalize Country C's commercial banks or shipping firms if they transact with Country B, effectively forcing third parties to choose between the target market and the global financial clearing system.
- **Strategic Maritime Chokepoints:** Narrow, natural maritime channels along critical Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) that experience high-density commercial traffic and possess limited bypass alternatives. The **Strait of Hormuz** is the world's preeminent energy chokepoint, connecting the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea, through which approximately one-fifth of global petroleum liquids consume daily transit.
- **Naval Blockade vs. Counter-Blockade Dynamics:** A blockade constitutes the interdiction of maritime ingress or egress to an adversary's coast to sever its foreign commerce. A counter-blockade represents asymmetric maneuvers—such as closing chokepoints, mine deployment, or tanker harassment—aimed at reversing the economic vulnerability onto the blockading power and its allies.
- **Maximum Pressure Strategy:** An all-encompassing, zero-tolerance sanctions regime that targets the full spectrum of an adversary's economy—including central banking operations, petrochemical exports, metal industries, and civil aviation—intended to compel a comprehensive diplomatic renegotiation or regime change.
- **De-Dollarization and Financial Weaponization:** The exploitation of the US Dollar's status as the global reserve currency and dominant intermediary across payment infrastructures (like SWIFT). De-dollarization represents the countervailing structural effort by targeted states and regional blocs to establish alternative, non-Western bilateral settlement mechanisms.

- **Main Arguments and Substantive Dynamics**

- **The Hegemonic Coercion Paradigm:** The driving premise of the sanctioning power relies on total economic and financial quarantine. By enforcing secondary sanctions across global commercial banks, maritime insurers, and transport hubs, the objective is to collapse the targeted state's fiscal revenue, sever its export capacity, and provoke domestic political costs sufficient to enforce compliance.
- **Asymmetric Retaliation and Chokepoint Leverage:** Rather than absorbing economic shockwaves passively, the targeted nation mobilizes its geographic and asymmetric advantages. By restricting or threatening transit through vital waterways like the Strait of Hormuz, it directly impacts global crude supplies, driving oil futures higher and distributing the economic burden globally.
- **Sovereign Defiance and Structural Adaptation:** The target state dismisses unilateral containment as an exhausted, counterproductive instrument. It counters that foreign coercive measures threaten global trade sovereignty and accelerate inflation and debt vulnerabilities within the sanctioning state itself, while simultaneously fostering black-market adaptation, illicit transshipment networks, and regional sanctions evasion.
- **The Escalation Stalemate:** The clash of these two strategies creates a high-stakes tactical equilibrium: unilateral economic sanctions meet maritime blockades. Diplomatic channels freeze, collateral damage expands to third-party neutral economies, and the risk of accidental conventional military confrontation escalates across international waters.

- **Historical Evolution of the Issue**
 - **Pre-1979 Roots of Estrangement:** Following the 1953 CIA-backed coup that overthrew Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh, Washington maintained deep geopolitical ties with the Pahlavi monarchy. The 1979 Islamic Revolution and the subsequent Tehran hostage crisis dismantled this axis overnight, prompting the inaugural executive orders freezing Iranian assets and inaugurating decades of trade embargoes.
 - **The Tanker War and Maritime Precedents (1980s):** During the Iran-Iraq War, both belligerents launched attacks on commercial merchant vessels in the Persian Gulf to disrupt oil exports. This historical episode established the operational precedent of weaponizing the Strait of Hormuz as a retaliatory lever against international commercial shipping.
 - **Institutionalization of Secondary Sanctions (1990s–2000s):** The passage of the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA) in 1996 marked the codification of extraterritorial jurisdiction. The mid-2000s saw the issue multilateralized via UN Security Council resolutions targeting uranium enrichment infrastructure and financial transactions.
 - **The JCPOA Interlude and Its Collapse (2015–2018):** The 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action provided temporary economic relief in exchange for verified nuclear containment. However, the unilateral US withdrawal in 2018 and the re-institution of secondary sanctions dismantled the multilateral framework, steering the region toward unrestrained economic combat and direct maritime friction.
- **Way Forward**
 - **Multilateral Maritime Security Architecture:** Establish institutional, UN-mandated maritime de-escalation protocols across sensitive chokepoints. Deploying multilateral, non-partisan naval observer missions can safeguard the freedom of transit navigation under UNCLOS without relying on unilateral naval blockades.
 - **Revival of Structured Diplomatic Frameworks:** Transition from zero-sum "maximum pressure" tactics to phased, reciprocal diplomatic engagement. This requires re-anchoring negotiations to verifiable nuclear monitoring alongside structured, incremental sanctions relief to build baseline diplomatic trust.
 - **Expanding Non-Dollar Settlement Architectures:** Sovereign states must institutionalize robust bilateral and multilateral currency settlement mechanisms (such as Rupee-Dirham, Rupee-Rial, and broader local-currency trade protocols). Expanding non-SWIFT financial messaging systems helps insulate third-party developing economies from extraterritorial banking disruptions.
 - **Strategic Hedging and Energy Diversification for India:**
 - *Fortifying Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR):* Accelerate the expansion of commercial and strategic crude storage capacities (Padur, Chandikhol, Visakhapatnam) to insulate against sudden West Asian maritime supply shutdowns.
 - *Sourcing Diversification:* Broaden import footprints across West Africa, North America, and South America to lower geographic concentration risk around the Strait of Hormuz.
 - *Securing Connectivity Assets:* Sustain robust diplomatic engagement to protect vital regional connectivity projects—such as the Chabahar Port and the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)—via formal humanitarian and strategic waivers.

THE **US-IRAN** ECONOMIC WARFARE: A COMPREHENSIVE UPSC ANALYSIS

GLOBAL COERCION & ASYMMETRIC RETALIATION



**ECONOMIC
WARFARE**

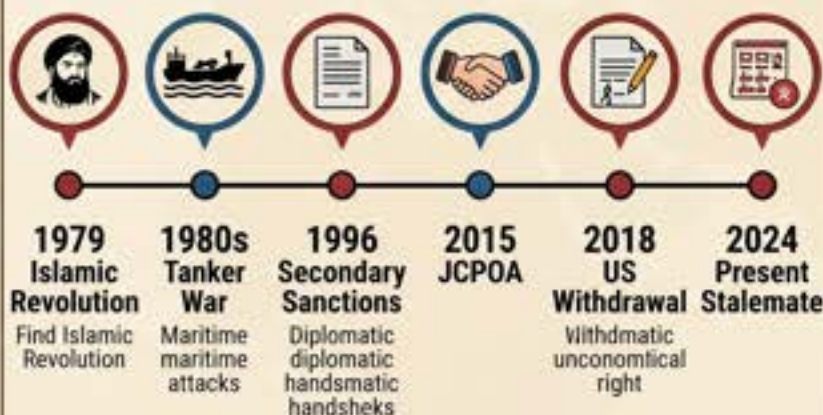


**CHOKEPOINT
LEVERAGE**



**STRATEGIC
STALEMATE**

TIMELINE OF ESTRANGEMENT (1979-Present)



CROSS-DIMENSIONAL IMPACTS



INTERNATIONAL

Global shift to multipolarity, US isolation, alternative alignments (BRICS/SCO)



ECONOMIC

Oil supply shocks, rising fuel prices (especially India's CAD), de-dollarization



LEGAL & ETHICAL

Extraterritorial jurisdiction clash vs. sovereign trade right. Humanitarian harm

SYLLABUS MAPPING & NCERT CONNECTIONS



**GS-I Geo
Chokepoints
map**



**GS-II IR
Bilateral
Relations**



**GS-III Econ
Energy
Security**



**GS-IV
IR Ethics**



**Class 12 Pol Sci:
Contemporary
World Politics**

THE WAY FORWARD

STRATEGIES FOR STABILITY & AUTONOMY



De-dollarization

Alternative currency syms, like Rupees/Rials being exchanged



Strategic Petroleum Reserves

Oil supply shocks reserves; strategic oil tank farm.



Chabahar Port

Connectivity & alternative transit to Central Asian and European markets.



Diplomatic Engagement

Diplomatic channels for verified relief and nuclear monitoring.

UPSC CSE PREVIOUS YEARS' QUESTIONS

2017 Prelims: Chabahar Port relevance and strategic value.

2022 Mains: Energy security & West Asian diplomacy challenges.





AXIA
IAS ACADEMY
RISE ABOVE THE REST



UPSC CSE CLASSES - PRELIMS + MAINS + INTERVIEW GUIDANCE

- **EXPERT FACULTY & MENTORSHIP**
- **COMPREHENSIVE STUDY MATERIAL**
- **REGULAR TEST SERIES & EVALUATION**
- **CURRENT AFFAIRS & ANSWER WRITING FOCUS**
- **SMALL BATCH SIZES FOR PERSONAL ATTENTION**

axiaiasacademy.com +91 6002-417488