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1. India's Energy Security and LPG Supply Management

A. Core Idea

India has ensured continuous supply of petroleum fuels and LPG by securing crude oil imports and improving LPG distribution management.

B. Why in News

The Petroleum Minister informed Parliament about **stable fuel supply and a new LPG allocation rule to prevent black-marketing**.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- LPG connections in India: **33+ crore households**

- **20% allocation rule**: OMCs will allocate **20% of monthly commercial LPG demand with State coordination**
- Major fuels covered: **Petrol, Diesel, Kerosene, ATF**
- India imports about **85% of its crude oil requirement**

D. Important Terms

- **Energy Security** – Continuous availability of energy at affordable prices.
- **Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs)** – PSUs that refine and sell petroleum products (e.g., IOCL, BPCL, HPCL).
- **Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR)** – Government stockpile of crude oil to manage supply disruptions.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas** – Policy making and regulation.
- **Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)** – Largest public sector oil company.
- **Bharat Petroleum (BPCL)** – Petroleum refining and marketing company.
- **Hindustan Petroleum (HPCL)** – Major PSU oil marketing company.

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- **Essential Commodities Act, 1955** – Controls supply and prevents hoarding of essential goods.
- **LPG (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000** – Regulates LPG sale and prevents diversion of domestic cylinders.
- **Strategic Petroleum Reserve Programme (India)** – Maintains emergency oil reserves.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- LPG distribution in India is handled mainly by **IOCL, BPCL and HPCL**.
- India maintains **Strategic Petroleum Reserves** for emergency supply.
- **Essential Commodities Act, 1955** can regulate petroleum products.
- Domestic LPG cylinders are **subsidized for households**.
- Government introduced **20% allocation rule for commercial LPG supply**.
- Petroleum and mineral oil regulation falls under the **Union List (Entry 53)**.
- Domestic cylinders **cannot be used for commercial purposes**.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- **Match the following**: OMCs and their functions.
- **Statement-based question** on Essential Commodities Act.

- **Fact-based MCQ** on Strategic Petroleum Reserves.
- **Question on Union List entry related to petroleum resources.**

2. Strait of Hormuz Crisis and Iran's Strategic Posture

A. Core Idea

The **Strait of Hormuz** is the world's most important oil transit route, and tensions involving Iran could disrupt global oil supply.

B. Why in News

Iran threatened to **block the Strait of Hormuz**, raising concerns about global oil supply and energy prices.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Around **20% of global oil consumption** passes through this strait daily.
- Connects **Persian Gulf → Gulf of Oman → Arabian Sea**.
- Major bordering countries: **Iran and Oman**.
- Important for oil exports from **Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Iraq, and Iran**.

D. Important Terms

- **Strait of Hormuz** – Narrow waterway connecting Persian Gulf with Gulf of Oman.
- **Chokepoint** – Strategic narrow passage where shipping traffic is concentrated.
- **Reparations** – Compensation paid for losses caused during conflict.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- **United Nations (UN)** – Oversees international peace and security.
- **UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea)** – Governs maritime navigation rules.

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- **UNCLOS, 1982** – Allows transit passage through international straits.
- **UN Charter Article 51** – Recognizes right to self-defense.
- **India's Maritime Zones Act, 1976** – Defines India's territorial waters and maritime rights.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Strait of Hormuz lies **between Iran and Oman**.

- It connects **Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman**.
- Considered the **world's most important oil chokepoint**.
- Around **one-fifth of global oil trade passes through it**.
- Closure of the strait may cause **global oil price rise**.
- Important for India as it imports large oil volumes from **West Asia**.
- International navigation in straits governed by **UNCLOS**.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- **Map-based question**: Location of Strait of Hormuz.
- **Match the following**: Global oil chokepoints.
- **Statement-based MCQ** on UNCLOS rules for navigation.
- **Geography question** linking Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea.

3. First Checklist of Indian Fireflies

A. Core Idea

Scientists have prepared the **first comprehensive checklist of fireflies in India**, documenting their diversity and distribution.

B. Why in News

A study published in **Zootaxa (2025)** compiled the first checklist of Indian fireflies.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- **92 firefly species** identified in India.
- Belong to **27 genera**.
- Records studied from **1881–2025**.
- **More than 60% species are endemic to India**.

D. Important Terms

- **Bioluminescence** – Production of light by living organisms through chemical reactions.
- **Endemic Species** – Species found only in a specific geographical area.
- **Taxonomy** – Scientific classification of organisms.
- **Genus (plural: Genera)** – Taxonomic category above species.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- **National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)** – Regulates use and conservation of biological resources.
- **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** – Global treaty for biodiversity protection.

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- **Biological Diversity Act, 2002** – Conservation and sustainable use of biological resources.
- **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972** – Protection of wildlife and habitats.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Fireflies belong to **family Lampyridae**.
- They are insects under order **Coleoptera (beetles)**.
- Light produced through **luciferin–luciferase chemical reaction**.
- Many Indian firefly species are **endemic**.
- Fireflies are considered **bio-indicators of ecosystem health**.
- National Biodiversity Authority established under **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**.
- Insects showing natural light emission are called **bioluminescent organisms**.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- **Scientific classification question** (Coleoptera / Lampyridae).
- **Definition-based MCQ** on endemic species.
- **Statement-based question** on Biological Diversity Act.
- **Environment question** on bioluminescence.

4. Easing of Press Note 3 (FDI Policy)

A. Core Idea

India has partially relaxed **FDI restrictions under Press Note 3 (2020)** to attract foreign investment while maintaining security checks.

B. Why in News

Government eased some conditions under **Press Note 3** to facilitate investments with limited ownership from neighbouring countries.

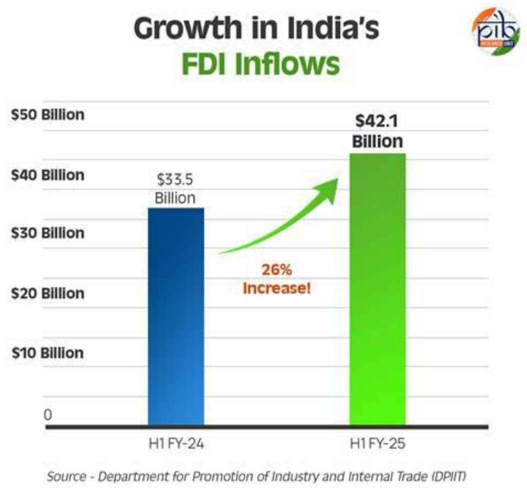
C. Key Facts & Figures

- Press Note 3 introduced in **April 2020**.
- Applies to countries sharing **land border with India**.
- New rule allows **up to 10% investment through automatic route** if ownership from such countries is below 10%.

- Approval timeline for sensitive sectors: **60 days**.

D. Important Terms

- **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** – Investment made by a foreign company or individual in another country's business.
- **Automatic Route** – FDI allowed **without prior government approval**.
- **Government Route** – Investment requires **approval from the government**.
- **Beneficial Ownership** – The real person who ultimately controls the investment.



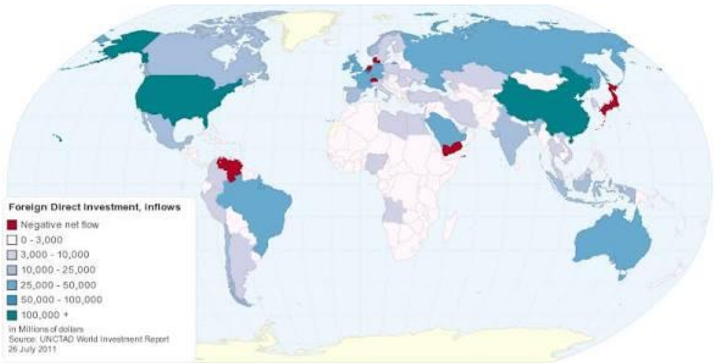
E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- **DPIIT (Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade)** – Frames India's FDI policy.
- **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** – Regulates foreign exchange transactions.

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- **Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999** – Governs foreign exchange and cross-border investments.
- **Press Note 3 (2020)** – Required government approval for FDI from countries sharing land border with India.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways



- Press Note 3 was introduced in **2020 after the COVID period**.
- It applies to **China, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Afghanistan**.
- It shifted investments from these countries to the **Government Route**.
- FDI policy is issued by **DPIIT**.
- Foreign exchange transactions are regulated by **RBI under FEMA, 1999**.
- Automatic Route allows investment **without government approval**.
- Government Route requires **prior clearance**.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- **Direct MCQ**: What is Press Note 3?
- **Match the following**: Automatic Route vs Government Route.

- **Institution-based question** on DPIIT.
- **Statement-based MCQ** on FEMA, 1999.

5. India’s Retail Inflation Dynamics (February 2026)

A. Core Idea

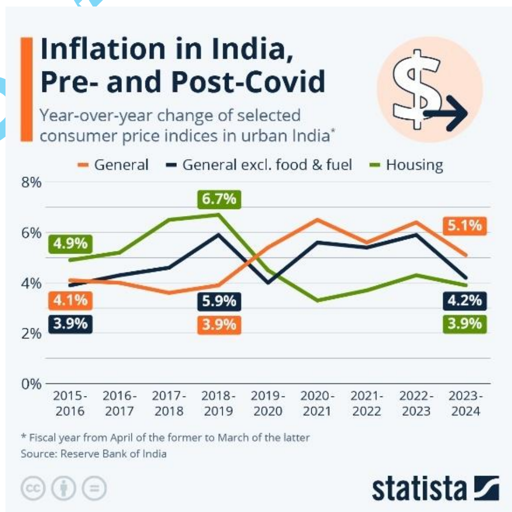
Retail inflation in India increased to **3.21% in February 2026**, mainly due to rising prices of food, clothing, and housing.

B. Why in News

Latest data released by **MoSPI** showed CPI inflation rising after a period of very low inflation in 2025.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- **Retail Inflation (CPI)**: **3.21% in Feb 2026**
- **RBI inflation target**: **4% ± 2% (range 2%–6%)**
- Record low inflation: **0.25% (Oct 2025)**
- New **CPI base year: 2024**
- Food inflation earlier fell to **–5.02% in 2025**



D. Important Terms

- **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** – Measures retail price changes faced by consumers.
- **Base Year** – Benchmark year used to compare price changes (India: **2024**).
- **Headline Inflation** – Overall inflation including food and fuel.
- **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** – RBI body that decides policy interest rates.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** – Controls inflation using monetary policy.
- **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** – Decides Repo Rate and inflation control.
- **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** – Releases CPI data.

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- **RBI Act, 1934** – Legal basis for monetary policy and MPC.
- **Inflation Targeting Framework (2015)** – RBI mandated to keep inflation near **4%**.
- **Collection of Statistics Act, 2008** – Allows collection of economic data like CPI.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- CPI measures **retail inflation**, while **WPI measures wholesale inflation**.
- CPI data in India is released by **MoSPI**.
- **RBI uses CPI inflation for monetary policy decisions**.
- **MPC was created under the RBI Act**.
- RBI inflation target band: **2%–6%**.
- Base year of CPI revised to **2024**.
- Food prices heavily influence CPI inflation.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- Difference between **CPI and WPI**.
- **Institution-based question**: Which body releases CPI data?
- **Statement-based MCQ** on RBI inflation target.
- Question on **Monetary Policy Committee composition and role**.

6. India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) – $11 Billion Fund

A. Core Idea

India plans to launch a **₹1 trillion ($11 billion) fund** to develop a domestic semiconductor manufacturing and chip design ecosystem.

B. Why in News

Government preparing **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0** to expand chip manufacturing and design in India.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Proposed fund: **₹1 trillion (~$10.8 billion)**
- Earlier incentive scheme: **₹76,000 crore (2021)**
- Target chip technology: **2–3 nanometre nodes**
- Target timeline: **By early 2030s**
- Plan to support **50+ fabless chip design companies**

D. Important Terms

- **Semiconductor** – Material used to manufacture electronic chips.
- **Wafer Fabrication (Fab)** – Manufacturing of integrated circuits on silicon wafers.
- **Fabless Company** – Designs chips but outsources manufacturing.

- **Design Linked Incentive (DLI)** – Financial support for chip design startups.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- **Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY)** – Oversees semiconductor policy.
- **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)** – Program to develop chip ecosystem.
- **Global partners** – Companies like **Micron, Tata-PSMC**.

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- **National Policy on Electronics, 2019** – Promote electronics manufacturing.
- **Semiconductor Integrated Circuits Layout-Design Act, 2000** – Protects chip design intellectual property.
- **Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme** – Encourages semiconductor design startups.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- India Semiconductor Mission launched in **2021**.
- Semiconductor sector allows **100% FDI through Automatic Route**.
- **SICLDA Act, 2000** protects chip layout designs.
- Semiconductor fabrication plants are called **fabs**.
- Chips are made on **silicon wafers**.
- Fabless companies design chips but do not manufacture them.
- Semiconductor industry crucial for **AI, smartphones, automobiles**.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- **Direct MCQ**: What is a Fabless company?
- **Match the following**: Semiconductor policies and ministries.
- **Act-based question** on SICLDA, 2000.
- **Technology question** on nanometre chip technology.

7. India's Fertilizer Diplomacy and Urea Supply

A. Core Idea

India is trying to secure **urea fertilizer imports** due to disruptions in global supply caused by the West Asia crisis.

B. Why in News

India approached **China for urea supply** after disruptions in fertilizer production linked to natural gas shortages.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- **Natural gas contributes 70–80% of urea production cost**
- Urea is the **most used nitrogen fertilizer in India**
- Major fertilizer production inputs: **Ammonia + Carbon dioxide**
- Key domestic fertilizer plants revival: **Talcher and Ramagundam**

D. Important Terms

- **Urea** – Nitrogen-rich fertilizer used to improve crop growth.
- **Feedstock** – Raw material used for industrial production (e.g., natural gas).
- **Commodity Diplomacy** – Using trade in essential goods for strategic relations.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- **Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers** – Oversees fertilizer policy.
- **Department of Fertilizers** – Manages fertilizer supply and subsidies.
- **Public sector fertilizer companies** – e.g., NFL, RCF.

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- **Essential Commodities Act, 1955** – Regulates supply of essential goods including fertilizers.
- **Fertilizer Control Order, 1985** – Ensures availability and quality of fertilizers.
- **Urea Subsidy Scheme** – Government subsidizes urea to support farmers.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Urea is a **nitrogen-based fertilizer**.
- Natural gas is the **main feedstock for urea production**.
- Fertilizers are listed as **essential commodities**.
- Fertilizer supply regulated under **Fertilizer Control Order, 1985**.
- Major fertilizer plants include **Talcher and Ramagundam**.
- Fertilizer sector overseen by **Department of Fertilizers**.
- Urea heavily subsidized in India to support agriculture.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- **Agriculture MCQ** on types of fertilizers.
- **Act-based question** on Fertilizer Control Order.

- **Statement-based question** on Essential Commodities Act.
- Question linking **fertilizer production with natural gas**.

8. India's New Labour Codes

A. Core Idea

India has introduced **four new Labour Codes** to simplify labour laws and improve employment regulation.

B. Why in News

Draft rules released for implementing **four Labour Codes**, expected to increase formal employment and simplify labour regulations.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- **29 labour laws merged into 4 labour codes**
- Formal employment projected to increase from **60.4% to 75.5%**
- Expected job creation: **77 lakh jobs**
- Gig companies must contribute **1–2% of turnover** to social security fund

D. Important Terms

- **Fixed-Term Employment (FTE)** – Workers hired for a specific contract period.
- **Formalisation** – Bringing workers under legal employment with social security.
- **National Floor Wage** – Minimum wage level set by the central government.
- **Gig Worker** – Person working through digital platforms like delivery apps.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- **Ministry of Labour and Employment** – Implements labour policies.
- **EPFO (Employees' Provident Fund Organisation)** – Provides retirement savings.
- **ESIC (Employees' State Insurance Corporation)** – Provides medical insurance.

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

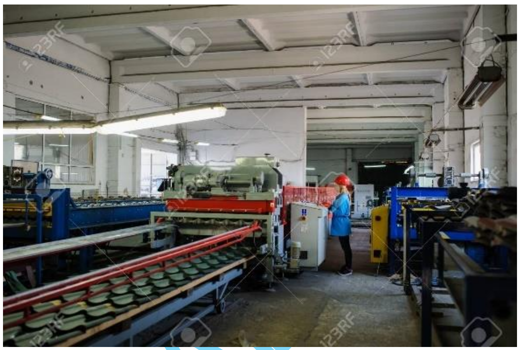
Four Labour Codes (2020):

1. **Code on Wages**
2. **Industrial Relations Code**
3. **Social Security Code**

4. **Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code**

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- India earlier had **29 central labour laws**.
- These were merged into **4 Labour Codes in 2020**.
- **National Floor Wage introduced under Code on Wages**.
- Gig workers covered under **Social Security Code**.
- Labour is in the **Concurrent List of the Constitution**.
- Fixed-term employees receive similar benefits as permanent workers.
- Labour inspectors now called **Inspector-cum-Facilitators**.



H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- **Direct MCQ**: Number of labour codes introduced in India.
- **Match the following**: Labour code and its purpose.
- **Statement-based question** on gig worker provisions.
- **Constitution question**: Labour belongs to the **Concurrent List**.

9. India's Innovation and R&D Ecosystem

A. Core Idea

India is increasing funding for research and innovation, but **private sector participation and R&D investment remain low**.

B. Why in News

Government initiatives such as the **₹1,00,000 crore RDI Fund and SHANTI Act 2025** aim to strengthen India's innovation ecosystem.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- India's **R&D expenditure: 0.65% of GDP**
- Patent filings in India: **1,10,000+ (2024–25)**
- Global patent applications (PCT): **India – 4,547**
- RDI Fund corpus: **₹1 lakh crore**
- Atal Tinkering Labs funding increased to **₹3,200 crore**

D. Important Terms

- **R&D Intensity** – Percentage of GDP spent on research and development.

- **Deep Tech** – Technologies based on advanced science (AI, Quantum Computing, Biotechnology).
- **Patent** – Legal protection given to an invention.

- **PCT (Patent Cooperation Treaty)** – International system for filing patents in multiple countries.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** – Promotes scientific research.
- **NITI Aayog** – Supports innovation initiatives.
- **WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization)** – Oversees global patent systems.

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- **Patent Act, 1970** – Governs patents in India.
- **SHANTI Act, 2025** – Allows patenting of peaceful nuclear technologies.
- **Atal Innovation Mission** – Promotes innovation and startups.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- India's R&D expenditure is about **0.65% of GDP**.
- **Patent Act, 1970** regulates intellectual property rights in India.
- **Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT)** facilitates international patent filing.
- **Atal Tinkering Labs** promote innovation among school students.
- **Deep-tech sectors** include AI, robotics, and biotechnology.
- WIPO is a **UN specialized agency** dealing with intellectual property.
- India aims to strengthen **innovation-driven economy**.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- **Definition-based MCQ** on R&D intensity.
- **Match the following**: Innovation schemes and ministries.
- **Act-based question** on Patent Act, 1970.
- Question on **PCT and WIPO roles**.

10. Female Political Participation in India

A. Core Idea

Women's voter participation in India has increased significantly, but **their representation in legislatures remains low**.

B. Why in News

Recent election data shows **women's voter turnout nearly equal to or higher than men**, while representation remains limited.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Women MPs in Lok Sabha **2019: 78 (14.4%)**
- Women MPs in Lok Sabha **2024: 74 (13.6%)**
- Female voter turnout has **nearly matched male turnout since 2019**
- In many state elections, female turnout exceeded male turnout by **1.6% (2020–2025)**

D. Important Terms

- **Gender Turnout Gap** – Difference between male and female voter turnout.
- **Electability** – Likelihood of a candidate winning an election.
- **Descriptive Representation** – Representation of social groups in elected bodies.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- **Election Commission of India (ECI)** – Conducts elections.
- **Parliament of India** – Legislative body where representation is measured.

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- **73rd Constitutional Amendment (1992)** – Reservation for women in Panchayats.
- **74th Constitutional Amendment (1992)** – Reservation for women in urban local bodies.
- **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (106th Amendment), 2023** – 33% reservation for women in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Women received voting rights in India through **Universal Adult Franchise (Article 326)**.
- **33% reservation for women in Panchayats and Municipalities**.
- Nari Shakti Vandan Act passed in **2023**.
- Women constitute nearly **50% of the electorate**.

- Female voter turnout has **significantly increased since 2010s**.
- Representation of women in Lok Sabha remains **below 15%**.
- Election Commission manages voter participation campaigns.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- **Constitutional amendment question** on women's reservation.
- **Statement-based MCQ** on 73rd and 74th Amendments.
- **Fact-based question** on women MPs percentage.
- **Article-based question** on Universal Adult Suffrage.

11. Rupee Depreciation and Forex Market Volatility

A. Core Idea

The Indian Rupee weakened to a **record low of ₹92.25 per US Dollar** due to rising oil prices, capital outflows, and a stronger US dollar.

B. Why in News

Rupee touched a **new historical low against the US dollar** amid global economic uncertainty.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Rupee closing rate: **₹92.25 per US Dollar**
- Intraday low: **₹92.36**
- **Dollar Index (DXY): about 99**
- India imports **about 85% of crude oil**

D. Important Terms

- **Currency Depreciation** – Fall in value of a currency in a floating exchange rate system.
- **Dollar Index (DXY)** – Measures strength of US dollar against major currencies.
- **Forex Intervention** – Central bank buying/selling foreign currency to stabilize exchange rate.
- **Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI)** – Investment by foreigners in stock and bond markets.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** – Manages currency stability.
- **Interbank Forex Market** – Market where banks trade foreign currencies.

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- **RBI Act, 1934** – Governs currency and monetary policy.

- **Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999** – Regulates foreign exchange transactions.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- India follows a **Managed Float Exchange Rate System**.
- RBI intervenes in forex market to control excessive volatility.
- Depreciation makes **imports costlier and exports cheaper**.
- Strong US dollar increases pressure on emerging market currencies.
- **Dollar Index measures global strength of USD**.
- Large crude imports affect **Current Account Deficit (CAD)**.
- Capital outflows weaken domestic currency.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- **Definition-based MCQ** on depreciation.
- **Match the following**: RBI – Forex management.
- **Conceptual question** on impact of currency depreciation.
- **Act-based question** on FEMA, 1999.

12. India and UNSC Resolution on Iran

A. Core Idea

India supported a **UN Security Council resolution condemning Iranian attacks**, highlighting its focus on regional stability and energy security.

B. Why in News

India **co-sponsored a GCC-backed resolution in the UN Security Council** regarding Iran's actions in West Asia.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Resolution passed with **13 votes in favour**
- **2 abstentions: Russia and China**
- Indian diaspora in Gulf region: ~**10 million people**
- India imports **50% of crude oil and 90% of LPG via Strait of Hormuz**

D. Important Terms

- **GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council)** – Regional organization of six Gulf countries.

- **Co-sponsorship** – When a country actively supports and helps draft a UN resolution.
- **Freedom of Navigation** – Right of ships to travel freely in international waters.
- **Strait of Hormuz** – Major global oil shipping route.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)** – Maintains global peace and security.
- **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** – Regional political and economic alliance.

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- **Article 51 (Directive Principles)** – Promotes international peace and security.
- **Union List Entries 10, 12, 13** – Foreign affairs under Union government control.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- GCC members: **Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman**.
- Strait of Hormuz connects **Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman**.
- India has **large diaspora population in Gulf countries**.
- UNSC has **15 members (5 permanent + 10 non-permanent)**.
- Russia and China often exercise **veto power** in UNSC.
- Freedom of navigation is key principle of **international maritime law**.
- West Asia crucial for India's **energy security**.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- **Match the following**: GCC countries.
- **UNSC structure question**.
- **Map-based question** on Strait of Hormuz.
- **Statement-based MCQ** on India's energy imports from West Asia.