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Dr. GINDI'S IAS ACADEMY

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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Dr. GINDI'S I.A.S. ACADEMY
Civils & Competitive Careers
TRANSFORMING ASPIRANTS INTO ACHIEVERS

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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

1. Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant Data Breach and Cybersecurity in Critical Infrastructure

Key Highlights & Summary

- The Union Ministry of State for Atomic Energy confirmed that a recent data breach involving electronic files linked to the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP) in Tamil Nadu is entirely unrelated to its nuclear activities or core nuclear security.
- Government authorities stated that no safety-critical data or core operational networks have been compromised, eliminating the need for an immediate safety review.
- The breached information pertained to "Balance of Plant" (BoP) data, which is non-sensitive operational data frequently shared with external contractors.
- The Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) clarified that the breach affected data held by a private contractor, Reliance Infrastructure Limited, rather than NPCIL's primary secure network.
- NPCIL is currently not pursuing a formal police investigation or filing a First Information Report (FIR) as the compromised data belongs to the private contractor's database.

Essential Definitions

- **Balance of Plant (BoP):** Refers to the auxiliary systems and supporting components of a power plant needed to deliver the energy, excluding the main power-generating unit (like the nuclear reactor core).
- **Critical Information Infrastructure (CII):** Defined under Section 70(1) of the IT Act, 2000, as computer resources whose destruction would impact national security, economy, or public health.
- **Data Breach:** The unauthorized access, acquisition, or disclosure of sensitive, protected, or confidential data by an external or malicious actor.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Atomic Energy Act, 1962:** Governs the development, control, and use of atomic energy in India, ensuring the safety and security of radioactive materials and nuclear installations.
- **Information Technology Act, 2000:** The primary law dealing with cybercrime; Section 70 empowers the government to declare any computer resource as protected "Critical Information Infrastructure."
- **National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC):** Created under Section 70A of the IT Act, it is the national nodal agency for protecting the nation's critical information infrastructure.



Conclusion

While the Kudankulam incident did not impact core reactor safety, it highlights the vulnerability of secondary contractor networks in critical national sectors. Robust cyber-hygiene, stringent third-party vendor audits, and a unified cybersecurity architecture are imperative to safeguard India's strategic assets against sophisticated cyber threats.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.
- **GS Paper III:** Challenges to internal security through communication networks, the role of media and social networking sites, and the basics of cyber security.

2. Legislative Agenda for Monsoon Session: Amending FCRA, National Honour, and Constitutional Provisions

Key Highlights & Summary

- The government has listed five new Bills for the upcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament scheduled to begin on July 20.
- The Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026, aims to make the intentional insult of, or disruption during, the singing of the National Song *Vande Mataram* a punishable offence.
- The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, introduced during the Budget Session, is set to be taken up alongside the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhithan Bill, 2025, which is under Joint Parliamentary Committee review.
- Other key legislative items include the Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2026, the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2026, and the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026.
- The 131st Constitutional Amendment Bill, proposing Lok Sabha seat delimitation to facilitate women's reservation, is under consideration after being defeated in the previous session.

- The legislative agenda currently excludes the 130th Constitutional Amendment Bill, which sought the automatic removal from public office of any person jailed for 30 days.

Essential Definitions

- **National Song:** *Vande Mataram*, composed in Sanskrit by Bankimchandra Chatterji, holds an equal status with the National Anthem (*Jana Gana Mana*) in Indian heritage.
- **Delimitation:** The act or process of fixing limits or boundaries of territorial constituencies in a country to reflect population changes.
- **Foreign Contribution:** Any donation, delivery, or transfer made by a foreign source of any currency, article, or security.



Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971:** The principal legislation that penalizes desecration of or insults to the country's national symbols, including the National Flag and the Constitution.
- **Article 51A(a):** Part of the Fundamental Duties in the Constitution of India, which mandates every citizen to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag, and the National Anthem.
- **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010:** Enacted to regulate the acceptance and utilization of foreign hospitality or funds by individuals or associations to safeguard national security interests.
- **Article 124(1):** Empowers Parliament to prescribe the strength of the Supreme Court of India through legislative amendments.

Conclusion

The upcoming parliamentary session reflects a robust legislative drive targeting national identity, regulatory compliance of foreign funding, and structural judicial reforms. Balancing national security, cultural reverence, and democratic representation remains crucial as these Bills undergo parliamentary scrutiny and debate.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Indian Constitution—historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions, and basic structure; Parliament and State legislatures—structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges, and issues arising out of these.

3. India's First Hydrogen-Powered Train and Green Infrastructure Initiatives

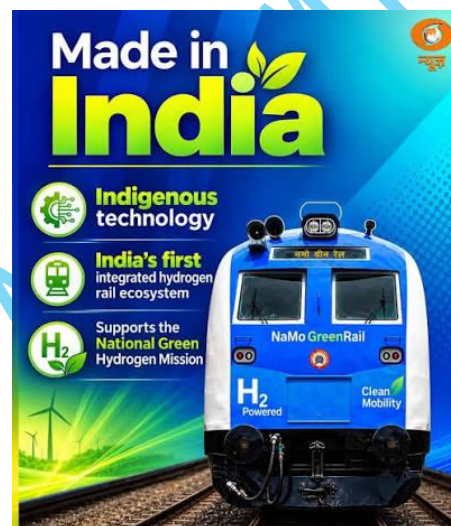
Key Highlights & Summary

- The Prime Minister is set to flag off the "NaMo Green Rail" from Jind, Haryana, marking India's first-ever indigenously designed hydrogen-powered fuel cell passenger train.

- This 10-coach train ranks among the world's longest and most powerful hydrogen-fuelled trainsets, driven by a 3,200 horsepower propulsion system.
- Operating on the Jind-Sonipat route, the train generates electricity onboard via a chemical reaction between hydrogen and atmospheric oxygen, emitting only water vapour.
- The launch is part of a larger multi-State developmental visit unveiling infrastructure and healthcare initiatives worth over ₹25,000 crore across Haryana, Chandigarh, and Punjab.
- Major transit projects include dedicating national highway projects worth ₹12,470 crore, featuring the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway and the Jind-Gohana Greenfield Highway.
- Healthcare advancements feature the inauguration of an advanced neurosciences centre, the PGIMER Chandigarh Mother and Child Centre, and the foundation laying for a PM-ABHIM Critical Care Block.

Essential Definitions

- **Hydrogen Fuel Cell Technology:** An electrochemical process that combines hydrogen fuel with oxygen from the air to produce electricity, with water and heat as the only byproducts.
- **Greenfield Project:** A project built from scratch on completely undeveloped land, requiring no modification or demolition of existing structures.
- **Access-Controlled Expressway:** A high-speed highway designed exclusively for motorized traffic, where entry and exit are regulated via specialized ramps to ensure uninterrupted traffic flow.



Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 39(b) and (c):** Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP) directing the State to ensure the ownership, control, and distribution of material resources best subserve the common good through sustainable development.
- **Article 48A:** Mandates the State to protect and improve the environment and safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country, providing the constitutional basis for green transit.
- **National Green Hydrogen Mission:** A statutory policy framework aimed at making India a global hub for the production, utilization, and export of Green Hydrogen, aligning with global climate commitments.

Conclusion

The debut of the NaMo Green Rail marks a transformative milestone in India's transition toward sustainable mass transportation. By integrating indigenous clean-energy engineering with massive expansion in regional road networks and tertiary healthcare infrastructure, these initiatives reinforce India's dual commitments to rapid economic growth and net-zero climate targets.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III:** Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.; Science and Technology- developments and their applications and effects in everyday life; Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation.

4. Illegal Coal Mining and Organized Nexus along the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh Border

Key Highlights & Summary

- A local unit of the International Human Rights Council (IHRC) has flagged large-scale illegal coal extraction and collection from abandoned Coal India Limited (CIL) mines near the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border.
- The investigative report by the IHRC's Tinsukia District Committee revealed years of unregulated illegal mining operations in the Itakhola area of Ledo, falling under the Margherita Subdivision in Assam.
- The illicitly extracted coal is being transported daily via a massive fleet of vans, pickups, trucks, and dumpers through an organized, illegitimate accounting method known as the "entry system".
- The report highlights that a coal mafioso, allegedly assisted by a former Coal India Limited official, operates this network to supply fuel to five brick kilns and several coke kilns.
- Financial collections for the "entry system" are reportedly managed informally from a roadside dhaba that collects illegal entry fees from the transport vehicles.
- The rights body has openly questioned the accountability of district authorities, the police, the Forest Department, Railway officials, and North Eastern Coalfields, announcing plans to submit a comprehensive report to the President and Prime Minister of India.

Essential Definitions

- **Illegal Mining:** The extraction of mineral resources without the requisite statutory licenses, environmental clearances, or land rights from the competent government authorities.
- **Entry System:** An informal, illicit accounting and extortion mechanism controlled by organized syndicates to collect unauthorized fees from vehicles transporting illegal goods through a specific jurisdiction.
- **Coke Kiln:** An industrial oven or facility used to heat coal in the absence of air to distill volatile components, transforming raw coal into coke, which is a high-carbon fuel used in smelting iron ore.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957:** Section 21 of the MMDR Act explicitly penalizes illegal mining, transportation, and storage of minerals with imprisonment and heavy financial penalties.



- **Article 48A:** A Directive Principle of State Policy that mandates the State to protect and improve the environment and safeguard the country's forests and wildlife, which are severely degraded by illegal extraction.
- **Article 21:** The Right to Life and a Clean Environment, as interpreted by the Supreme Court, is violated when unscientific, unregulated mining destroys local ecology and endangers community health.
- **Sixth Schedule of the Constitution:** Provides autonomy to tribal areas in the Northeast regarding land and mineral regulation, making inter-state border mining activities highly sensitive legally.

Conclusion

The exposure of the illegal coal trade along the Assam-Arunachal border underscores a profound breakdown in environmental governance and local law enforcement. Addressing this multi-departmental nexus requires stringent implementation of the MMDR Act, regular aerial or satellite surveillance of abandoned mines, and enhanced inter-state border security cooperation to protect the fragile ecology of the Northeast.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper III:** Infrastructure (Energy and Mining sectors); Environmental degradation and conservation; Challenges to internal security through organized crime and its nexus with illegal syndicates.

5. The Chhattisgarh Ease of Doing Business Act, 2026: Pioneering Risk-Based Regulatory Governance

Key Highlights & Summary

- The Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly passed the landmark Chhattisgarh Ease of Doing Business Bill, 2026, aimed at eliminating bureaucratic red tape, cutting compliance costs, and accelerating regional investments.
- The legislation establishes Chhattisgarh as the first state in India to implement a comprehensive, statutory risk- and trust-based business permission framework.
- Under this Act, commercial establishments and industries are categorized based on their size, investment scale, and risk profile, departing from the traditional one-size-fits-all regulatory mechanism.
- Low-risk enterprises can initiate operations through self-certification, self-declaration, or third-party professional certification, completely replacing routine departmental physical inspections and mandatory annual license renewals.
- The framework introduces a time-bound "deemed approval" mechanism where applications pending beyond specified timelines are automatically approved, alongside streamlined water supply and building approvals.
- The reform integrates 43 essential services across eight state departments under a three-tier monitoring architecture overseen by a Chief Minister-led Executive Council, directly benefiting over 15 lakh MSMEs.

Essential Definitions

- **Risk-Based Approval System:** A regulatory methodology where the level of administrative scrutiny, inspection, and verification is directly proportional to the potential environmental, safety, or health risks posed by an enterprise.
- **Deemed Approval:** A statutory provision whereby an application submitted to an authority is legally considered approved if the department fails to grant or reject it within a strictly prescribed timeline.
- **Self-Certification:** A compliance mechanism allowing entrepreneurs to legally declare adherence to standards, backed by liability, instead of awaiting prior government verification.



Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Seventh Schedule (List II - State List):** Under Entries 24 (Industries) and 26 (Trade and Commerce within the State), State Legislatures possess the exclusive constitutional competence to enact laws regulating local business operations.
- **Article 19(1)(g):** Guarantees Indian citizens the fundamental right to practice any profession, or to carry on any occupation, trade, or business, which this regulatory simplification directly enhances.
- **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act, 2006:** The federal statutory baseline for MSME classification and promotion, which the state's risk-calibrated approach complements at the regional level.

Conclusion

The Chhattisgarh Ease of Doing Business Act, 2026, marks a paradigm shift from an inspection-heavy regime to a trust-based governance architecture. By legalizing self-certification and automated deemed approvals, the state sets a progressive precedent for internal trade liberalization, striking a vital equilibrium between industrial growth and environmental security.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies; Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.
- **GS Paper III:** Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development, and employment; Changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth.

6. Reforming India's Education System and Realizing the Demographic Dividend

Key Highlights & Summary

- Activist Sonam Wangchuk's indefinite fast serves as a catalyst to shift the national discourse from political reshuffles to deep, institutional educational reforms.
- India's demographic dividend, represented by a massive youth population, is at risk of being squandered unless the country transitions its focus from educational access to absolute excellence.
- The current examination system must be urgently overhauled within three years to reward conceptual understanding, creativity, and analytical reasoning instead of rote memory.
- Structural measures are required to dismantle the commercial coaching culture by introducing competency-based assessments and multiple examination windows.
- Public expenditure on education needs to scale up to at least 6% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), coupled with an increase in research funding to at least 2% of GDP.
- The establishment of an independent, statutory national education reform commission is recommended to enforce accountability, audit performance, and set measurable benchmarks outliving electoral cycles.

Essential Definitions

- **Demographic Dividend:** The economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population's age structure, specifically when the share of the working-age population is larger than the non-working-age share.
- **Competency-Based Assessment:** An evaluation method designed to measure a student's practical application of knowledge, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills rather than mere factual recall.
- **Academic Freedom:** The institutional autonomy granted to educational establishments to design curriculum, innovate pedagogy, and conduct research without external micro-management.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 21A:** Inserted via the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002, making free and compulsory education a Fundamental Right for children aged 6 to 14 years.
- **Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009:** The statutory framework that operationalizes Article 21A, setting minimum infrastructure and teacher-pupil ratio standards for primary schools.
- **Article 45:** A Directive Principle of State Policy (DPSP) that urges the State to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years.
- **Seventh Schedule (List III - Concurrent List):** Entry 25 places Education under the Concurrent List, empowering both the Parliament and State Legislatures to enact laws regarding educational standards and institutions.

Conclusion

True educational renaissance in India demands moving beyond partisan politics to build a resilient, quality-driven public schooling and higher education architecture. Elevating public investment, ensuring academic autonomy, and shifting toward conceptual evaluations are imperative to transform the youth into skilled innovators capable of leading a knowledge economy.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Issues relating to the development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Education, Human Resources; Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors.
- **GS Paper III:** Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development, and employment (demographic dividend); Science and Technology-developments.

7. India-Pakistan Relations: Historical Circumspection, Fragile Bridges, and Prospects for Cooperation

Key Highlights & Summary

- Despite structural hostility and high-profile terror incidents like the Pahalgam attack, the bilateral relationship has historically featured surprising instances of strategic circumspection and quiet cooperation.
- During the three major conventional wars (1947, 1965, 1971), both militaries largely adhered to a "battlefield concept," consciously avoiding the deliberate "area bombing" of major civilian centers seen in World War II.
- Institutional intelligence sharing has occurred during crises, such as India quietly providing intelligence that helped foil a 2003 assassination attempt on Pakistani General Pervez Musharraf.
- The 2005 nuclear Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) agreement remains functional, as evidenced by its successful review in January 2026 and India's transparency during the accidental 2022 missile firing incident.
- Diplomatic overtures by successive Indian Prime Ministers have repeatedly faced sabotage by Pakistan's military-intelligence establishment through cross-border terror strikes like Pathankot.
- Potential areas for non-strategic, functional cooperation persist in addressing common regional challenges like glacial melt, stubble-burning alternatives, and cross-border narcotics trafficking.



Essential Definitions

- **Area Bombing:** A military strategy involving the indiscriminate dropping of bombs over a large geographical area, typically targeting cities to destroy industrial capacity and civilian morale.
- **Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs):** Structured, institutional actions taken to reduce fear, anxiety, and suspicion between states by enhancing transparency and preventing accidental military escalation.
- **Geo-Economics:** The structural interplay between economic interests and geopolitics, emphasizing trade corridors, economic dependencies, and transit potential over pure military alignment.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 51:** A Directive Principle of State Policy (DPSP) in the Indian Constitution that mandates the State to promote international peace and security, maintain just and honourable relations between nations, and foster respect for international law.
- **Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), 1960:** A robust water-distribution treaty brokered by the World Bank, regulating the utilization of the Indus river system, which survives as a rare institutional link despite continuous bilateral tensions.
- **Simla Agreement (1972) and Lahore Declaration (1999):** The primary bilateral statutory frameworks under international law committing both nations to resolve all mutual disputes peacefully through direct, bilateral dialogue without third-party mediation.

Conclusion

The history of India-Pakistan relations demonstrates that amid persistent security friction, structural mechanisms like nuclear CBMs can endure. While the fundamental prerequisite for sustainable dialogue remains the verifiable termination of state-sponsored cross-border terrorism by Rawalpindi, pursuing technical cooperation on shared ecological and transnational threats offers a practical path toward stabilizing the subcontinental neighborhood.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** India and its neighborhood- relations; Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests; Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests.

8. Scrutiny of Maharashtra's Ladki Bahin Scheme

Key Highlights & Summary

- **Scheme Objective:** Launched ahead of the 2024 elections, the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana provides ₹1,500 monthly via Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) to eligible women aged 21–65 with a family income below ₹2.5 lakh.
- **CAG Audit Objections:** The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) flagged significant deficiencies in budget estimation, expenditure control, and financial management, reporting an unjustified excess expenditure of ₹3,541.16 crore.
- **Budgetary Indiscipline:** Funds were mobilized by reappropriating allocations from other schemes (e.g., Lek Ladki Yojana), which the CAG noted undermined legislative control over public finances.
- **Parking of Funds:** Large sums (₹15,586 crore) were prematurely drawn and parked in the Virtual Personal Deposit Account (VPDA) without immediate utilization needs.
- **Beneficiary Exclusion:** The beneficiary count dropped sharply from 2.43 crore to 1.66 crore due to strict multi-round verifications and incomplete mandatory e-KYC processes.

Essential Definitions

- **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT):** A governance mechanism aimed at transferring subsidies and cash benefits directly into the Aadhaar-linked bank accounts of beneficiaries to eliminate leakages.

- **Reappropriation of Funds:** The technical transfer of savings from one basic unit of grant or appropriation to another within the same grant, requiring strict financial rules to maintain budgetary discipline.
- **Virtual Personal Deposit Account (VPDA):** A mechanism used by government departments to deposit funds intended for specific schemes, which can lead to fiscal opacity if funds are parked without immediate expenditure.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 15(3) of the Constitution:** Enables the State to make special provisions for women and children, providing the constitutional basis for targeted welfare schemes.
- **Article 149 and 151:** Empower the CAG to audit the accounts of the Union and the States, ensuring financial accountability and legislative control over executive spending.
- **Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Principles:** Dictate that state governments adhere to fiscal discipline, transparent budget estimations, and avoid unauthorized reappropriations or unspent balance parking.



Conclusion

While welfare programs like the Ladki Bahin Scheme are pivotal for women's financial independence and nutritional security, they must balance social equity with fiscal prudence. The CAG's findings underscore that structural deficiencies in implementation, ad-hoc fund diversions, and hasty exclusion criteria undermine both democratic accountability and intended welfare outcomes.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Governance, Government Policies and Interventions for Development, Welfare Schemes for Vulnerable Sections (Women), and Statutory/Regulatory bodies (CAG).
- **GS Paper III:** Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, and Government Budgeting (Fiscal discipline and financial propriety).

9. Indo-Centric Maritime Traffic in the Strait of Hormuz

Key Highlights & Summary

- **Surge in Transit Applications:** Merchant vessels travelling to and from India and China emerged as the top applicants for passage through Iran-recommended maritime routes following the June 17 US-Iran peace Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).
- **High Regional Trade Share:** Combined data over a three-week period revealed that India and China accounted for 40% of the total vessel requests seeking to transit the strategic waterway.

- **Centralized Regulation:** The newly established Persian Gulf Strait Authority (PGSA) coordinated permits and provided temporary insurance coverage for over 200 non-Iranian vessels navigating the strait.
- **Strategic Energy Vulnerability:** Tankers comprised the largest share of transit requests at 41%, underscoring the critical reliance of Asian economies on this corridor for crude oil and LNG imports.
- **Resurgence of Geo-Political Friction:** The initial post-MoU rise in commercial traffic rapidly fell following renewed hostilities and conflicting interpretations of freedom of navigation between Washington and Tehran.

Essential Definitions

- **Strait of Hormuz:** A vital international maritime chokepoint connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea, through which a significant fraction of global petroleum consumption passes.
- **Persian Gulf Strait Authority (PGSA):** A centralized Iranian government agency established in May 2026 to regulate maritime traffic, dictate specific vessel routings, and issue transit clearances.
- **Freedom of Navigation:** A principle of international law ensuring that ships flying the flag of any sovereign state shall not suffer interference from other states, subject to limited exceptions under treaty law.



Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **UNCLOS, 1982:** Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Strait of Hormuz is governed by the regime of "Transit Passage" for international navigation, which coastal states cannot hamper or suspend arbitrarily.
- **Territorial Jurisdiction vs. International Rights:** While Iran exercises sovereignty over its territorial waters, international law prohibits the unilateral imposition of discriminatory transit tolls or mandatory domestic insurance on foreign vessels exercising transit passage rights.
- **Strategic Autonomy and Constitutional Duty:** For India, securing these sea lines of communication (SLOCs) directly relates to its sovereign energy security, guided by the executive powers of the Union over external affairs under the Indian Constitution.

Conclusion

The disproportionate reliance of Indian merchant shipping on the Strait of Hormuz emphasizes the volatile intersection of energy security and West Asian geopolitics. Unilateral regulations by regional actors like the PGSA threaten established maritime laws, requiring India to navigate complex diplomatic channels to protect its trade interests and ensure unhindered resource flows.

UPSC Relevance

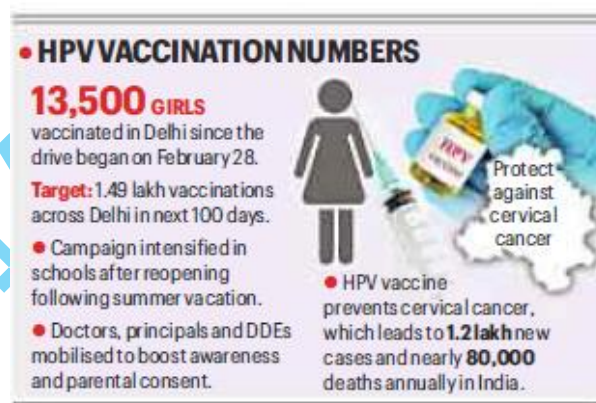
- **GS Paper II:** India and its Neighborhood-Relations, Bilateral Regional and Global Groupings involving India, and Effect of Policies of Developed/Developing Countries on India's Interests.

- **GS Paper III:** Security Challenges and their Management in Border Areas, Infrastructure (Ports, Shipping), and Energy Security.

10. Accelerating HPV Vaccination: Delhi's 100-Day Target

Key Highlights & Summary

- **Renewed Immunization Drive:** Following a slow initial progress after launching India's nationwide Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination programme, Delhi's health department has introduced a targeted 100-day push.
- **Ambitious Target Metrics:** The campaign aims to administer 1.49 lakh HPV vaccine doses to 14-year-old girls across the capital within the specified 100-day window.
- **School-Centric Strategy:** The health department is collaborating directly with the education department, mobilizing school principals, teachers, and Deputy Directors of Education to boost institutional enrollment.
- **Mitigating Vaccine Hesitancy:** A comprehensive communication strategy utilizing myth-busting videos, doctor testimonies, and parental counseling sessions has been deployed to counter misinformation.
- **High Cervical Cancer Burden:** Cervical cancer ranks as the second most common cancer among Indian women, accounting for nearly 1.2 lakh new cases and approximately 80,000 annual deaths.



Essential Definitions

- **Human Papillomavirus (HPV):** A viral infection passed between people through skin-to-skin contact, certain high-risk strains of which are directly linked to the development of cervical cancer.
- **Cervical Cancer:** A type of cancer that occurs in the cells of the cervix, which is preventable through timely administration of the prophylactic HPV vaccine.
- **Vaccine Hesitancy:** A delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines despite the availability of vaccination services, often driven by misinformation, cultural barriers, or safety apprehensions.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 21 of the Constitution:** The Right to Life includes the right to health and access to timely preventive healthcare measures, which forms the bedrock of universal immunization strategies.
- **Article 47 (Directive Principles):** Mandates that the State shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties.

- **National Health Policy, 2017:** Explicitly targets the reduction of premature mortality from non-communicable diseases, including cancers, through enhanced screening and preventive healthcare infrastructure.

Conclusion

Delhi's intensified HPV vaccination drive underscores the critical role of inter-departmental convergence and proactive community engagement in executing public health interventions. Successfully combating the high burden of cervical cancer demands sustained resource mobilization, absolute elimination of vaccine hesitancy, and robust integration of preventive oncology into the primary healthcare delivery system.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Issues relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources, and Government policies and interventions.
- **GS Paper III:** Science and Technology-Developments and their applications in everyday life, and achievements of Indians in science & technology (indigenization of vaccines).

11. Crisis of Institutional Accountability and Passive Governance

Key Highlights & Summary

- **Structural Accountability Evision:** Contemporary administrative and political landscapes increasingly rely on the "passive voice" to describe governance catastrophes like exam scams, urban flooding, and environmental degradation, treating them as causeless phenomena without specific agents.
- **Systemic Anonymization:** Critical policy failures and decisions are consistently anonymized under broad abstractions such as "The System," "The Bureaucracy," or "Norms," effectively shielding decision-makers from direct responsibility.
- **Cult of Personality Fallacy:** The growing trend of highly personalized politics acts as a convenient alibi; by holding a singular leader or an abstract entity responsible for all outcomes, the actual chain of individual administrative decisions remains unexamined.
- **Democratic Dilution:** True democratic politics requires a clear "grammatical subject"—meaning identifiable human agency and institutional actors—before broken public institutions can be structurally repaired.
- **Public Participation in Evasion:** The ongoing crisis of public policy in India is not rooted in a shortage of ideas or technical science, but in a collective culture that chooses to anonymize known structural malfeasance, enabling citizens and state actors to defer to power passively.

Essential Definitions

- **Accountability:** The governance obligation of an administrative or political authority to explain its actions, accept responsibility for decisions, and be subject to consequence or remediation.

- **Malfeasance:** An act that is legally unjustified, harmful, or contrary to law, specifically referring to wrongful conduct by a public official or administrative body.
- **Passive Governance:** A socio-political culture where structural failures (e.g., systemic exam leaks or environmental degradation) are framed as inevitable occurrences rather than the direct consequences of deliberate policy choices or human omissions.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 75(3) and 164(2) of the Constitution:** Establish the foundational principle of Collective Responsibility, dictating that the Council of Ministers is collectively accountable to the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies respectively.
- **Doctrine of Administrative Accountability:** Derived from the Rule of Law under Article 14, requiring the executive and civil services to exercise statutory powers reasonably, transparently, and without arbitrary overreach.
- **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988:** Provides the statutory basis to investigate and punish criminal misconduct and abuse of position by public servants, countering the systemic anonymization of administrative lapses.

Conclusion

A robust democracy cannot function effectively when public policy disasters are treated as masterless anomalies. Institutional reformation demands that governance shift from passive rhetoric to an active framework where specific decision-makers are named, shamed, and held judicially accountable. Restoring faith in public institutions requires rebuilding the broken chains of individual responsibility within the administrative hierarchy.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Public Services, Role of Civil Services in a Democracy, Governance, Important Aspects of Governance, Transparency, Accountability, and Institutional Checks and Balances.
- **GS Paper IV:** Ethics and Human Interface, Probity in Governance, Administrative Ethics, Accountability and Ethical Governance, and Challenges of Corruption.

12. Nuances of Judicial Demolitions: Supreme Court Clarifies 2024 Bulldozer Verdict

Key Highlights & Summary

- **Procedural Clarification Over Blanket Bar:** A three-judge bench of the Supreme Court clarified that its landmark November 2024 judgment against "bulldozer justice" does not create a blanket ban on removing illegal structures.
- **Rule of Law vs. Encroachment:** The apex court noted that bulldozers must be utilized when the rule of law is thwarted by collusion and corruption between municipal authorities and illegal encroachers.
- **Relegation to High Courts:** Refusing to directly adjudicate a batch of contempt pleas, the court transferred the cases to respective High Courts, citing that variations in disputed facts require localized inquiries.

- **Exceptions for Public Spaces:** The bench emphasized that the protective guidelines mandated in the 2024 ruling do not apply to unauthorized constructions on roads, streets, footpaths, railway lines, or water bodies.
- **Protection Against Selective Reprisal:** The judiciary reiterated that under the guise of statutory enforcement, state authorities cannot single out individuals or target the properties of accused persons as a tool of punitive discrimination.

Essential Definitions

- **Bulldozer Justice:** A colloquial term describing the swift, executive-led demolition of residential or commercial properties belonging to individuals accused of crimes, often bypassing judicial determination of guilt.
- **Contempt Jurisdiction:** The specific power of a superior court to investigate and punish instances where its orders, judgments, or directions have been willfully disobeyed or flouted by state or private actors.
- **Negative Equality:** A legal concept dictating that a person cannot demand equal treatment in illegality; an individual cannot claim protection against enforcement merely because other violators have not yet been penalized.



Legal and Constitutional Framework

- **Article 14 of the Constitution:** Establishes the right to equality before the law and prohibits the executive from adopting a "pick-and-choose" policy that selectively targets individuals based on extrinsic factors.
- **Article 21 and Right to Shelter:** The constitutional guarantee to life and personal liberty encompasses the right to shelter, requiring that any deprivation of property follow an established, non-arbitrary legal procedure.
- **Separation of Powers:** A core constitutional principle that prevents the executive branch from usurping the adjudicatory functions of the judiciary by independently declaring guilt and inflicting punitive destruction.

Conclusion

The Supreme Court's balanced stance highlights the fine line between strict municipal administration and arbitrary state overreach. While the demolition of verified public encroachments remains a valid exercise of administrative authority, the institutional preservation of the presumption of innocence requires that due process, statutory notices, and fair hearings are never sacrificed for swift, selective retribution.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II:** Structure, Organization, and Functioning of the Judiciary; Governance; Important Aspects of Governance, Transparency, and Accountability; Statutory, Regulatory, and Quasi-judicial Bodies.
- **GS Paper IV:** Probity in Governance, Ethical Concerns in Administration, and the application of Constitutional Morality in executive decision-making.

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