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THE HINDU ANALYSIS

18 June 2026

Curated from The Hindu — UPSC Prelims & Mains Focus

TOPICS COVERED TODAY

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1

Modi Meets Trump — Seafarers, Strait of Hormuz & Trade

GS 2 · IR

The Hindu · Page 1



PM Narendra Modi with U.S. President Donald Trump on the sidelines of the G7 meet in Evian, France. (Photo: AP)

WHY IN NEWS

On the fringes of the G7 Summit in Evian, France, PM Modi held a bilateral meeting with U.S. President Trump, raising the safety of Indian seafarers, the keeping open of the Strait of Hormuz, and the pending India-U.S. trade deal.

Key Highlights of the Meeting

- ◆ **Safety of seafarers:** Modi flagged the safety of hundreds of thousands of Indian seafarers working across global trade routes, referring to the killing of three Indian seafarers in a U.S. strike off the coast of Oman last week.
- ◆ **Strait of Hormuz:** Both leaders agreed that keeping the Strait open is vital for the world economy; Modi commended Trump for efforts to restore peace in West Asia.
- ◆ **Iran & non-proliferation:** Trump said Iran would not have a nuclear weapon and that Modi felt “very strongly” on the issue.
- ◆ **Trade deal:** Trump called India and the U.S. “very close” to finalising a trade deal and described Modi as a “very tough” negotiator. A deal announced in February is yet to be signed, held up over U.S. tariff changes and finer details.
- ◆ **Defence assurance:** Trump said that though there was no formal contract, if India were attacked “we would be there to help”, and signalled a possible future visit to India.
- ◆ **Ties “not fraying”:** Trump dismissed perceptions of a strained relationship, saying India would have a “great friend” in the White House as long as he was President.

QUICK FACTS · STRAIT OF HORMUZ

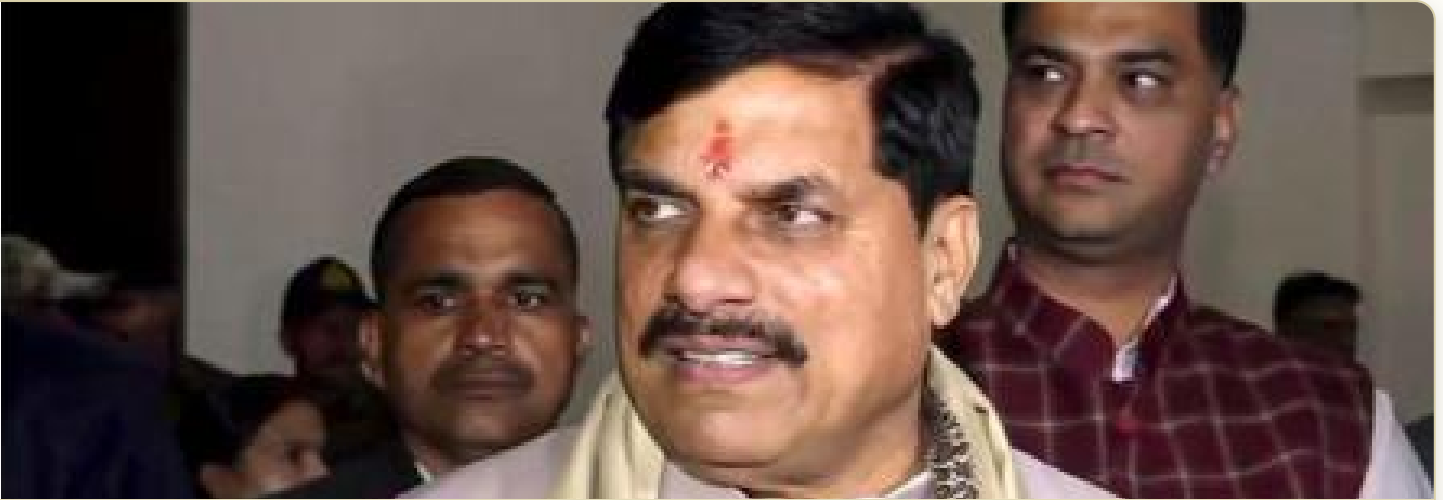
- ▶ A narrow waterway connecting the **Persian Gulf** to the **Gulf of Oman** and the Arabian Sea.
- ▶ Bordered by **Iran** (north) and **Oman / UAE** (south); one of the world’s most critical oil chokepoints.
- ▶ Roughly a fifth of global oil supply transits the strait — any disruption sharply impacts energy prices and India’s import bill.

2

Uniform Civil Code — M.P. Bill & the Constitutional Debate

GS 2 · Polity

The Hindu · Page 3



“The Bill will be passed in this session itself,” said M.P. CM Mohan Yadav. (File Photo)

WHY IN NEWS

M.P. CM Mohan Yadav announced that a Bill on the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) would be tabled in the State Assembly’s Monsoon Session (July 20–24), with a six-member panel headed by retired SC judge Justice Ranjana Prasad Desai drafting it.

Developments in M.P.

- ◆ A high-level committee formed in April is drafting the Bill after touring the State; it must submit the draft and findings within **60 days**.
- ◆ The panel will study models adopted by other BJP-ruled States that have implemented UCC, especially **Uttarakhand** and **Gujarat**.
- ◆ The public was invited to share suggestions via a government portal; the **Assam Assembly** also passed a UCC Bill in May.

CONCEPT · WHAT IS THE UCC?

- ▶ A single set of laws governing **marriage, divorce, adoption, inheritance and succession** for all citizens.
- ▶ Mentioned in **Article 44** (Directive Principles) — the State shall endeavour to secure a UCC; **not** a legally enforceable right, only a guiding principle.
- ▶ Personal laws fall under the **Concurrent List**, so both Centre and States can legislate.

Constituent Assembly Views

- ◆ **K.M. Munshi**: Advocated UCC for national unity and secularism.
- ◆ **Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar**: Argued it would promote harmony, citing the existing common criminal code.
- ◆ **B.R. Ambedkar**: Stressed its optional nature; placement in DPSP was a compromise.

Key Judicial Pronouncements on UCC

- ◆ **Shah Bano (1985):** Upheld a Muslim woman's right to maintenance; linked UCC to national integration.
- ◆ **Jorden Diengdeh (1985):** Highlighted inconsistencies in divorce laws; called for uniformity.
- ◆ **Sarla Mudgal (1995):** Strongly favoured UCC, questioning the delay in implementation.
- ◆ **Pannalal Bansilal Pitti (1996):** Acknowledged India's pluralism; argued for gradual implementation.
- ◆ **Lily Thomas (2000):** Emphasised the significance of UCC in matters of succession.
- ◆ **John Vallamattom (2003):** Struck down discriminatory provisions in Christian personal law.
- ◆ **Shabnam Hashmi (2014):** Linked the Juvenile Justice Act to UCC, stressing secular laws.
- ◆ **Shayara Bano (2017):** Addressed triple talaq, reigniting the UCC debate.

Arguments in Favour

- ◆ **Equality under law:** Equal rights for all citizens regardless of religion.
- ◆ **Simplifying the legal system:** Streamlines the complex landscape of multiple personal laws.
- ◆ **National integration:** Emphasises citizenship over religious identity in civil matters.

PRELIMS POINTER · PYQ 2012

Among the DPSP — (1) securing a uniform civil code, (2) organising village Panchayats, (3) promoting cottage industries, (4) reasonable leisure for workers — the Gandhian Principles are: (b) 2 and 3 only. (UCC and leisure are linked to liberal-intellectual / socialistic ideals.)

3 Health Data Must Drive Action, Not Just Headlines

GS 2 · Governance/Health

The Hindu · Page 6 · Editorial

CORE ARGUMENT

Three major surveys — NFHS-6, the NSO 80th Round on health consumption, and the National Health Accounts 2022-23 — should have prompted national stocktaking and course correction, but ended up as ritualistic data releases rather than triggers for policy action.

The Problem — Data Without Action

- ◆ Survey findings often confirm what is already known instead of driving accountability or reform.
- ◆ **Business of disease:** Rising obesity, diabetes and NCDs become market opportunities for weight-loss products, devices, screening and private clinics where public health messaging is weak.
- ◆ Obesity and NCDs have spread from urban/affluent groups to all social and economic groups — the new data merely add fresh numbers to an old warning.
- ◆ **Temporal problem:** Peer-reviewed studies appear 3–5 years after data collection, so findings lose policy relevance by the time they are analysed.

From Data to Action — The Way Forward

- ◆ Each finding should be linked to a programme and a clearly accountable authority; data should trigger corrective action, not just describe problems.
- ◆ Hold State-level health review meetings as working sessions, not ceremonial events.
- ◆ Build the **Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP)**; combine HMIS and IHIP data for real-time analytics.
- ◆ Make primary data and source files a **public good** — available early for independent analysis, not a guarded file.
- ◆ Findings must influence **budgetary allocation** (NCD prevention, drug availability, school health, food regulation, urban planning).
- ◆ *Aaron Levenstein*: “Statistics are like bikinis — what they reveal is suggestive, but what they conceal is vital.” Health data is useful only when interpreted correctly and followed by action.

4

Innovate or Be Eaten — India at the Frontier

GS 3 · Sci-Tech/Economy

The Hindu · Page 6 · Editorial

CENTRAL THEME

India must realise the importance of innovating *up to the frontier*. Indian and Indian-origin tech leaders prove the talent exists; the challenge is to make India a stable and attractive home for capital and talent.

Key Points

- ◆ **Bharat Innovates 2026** (Nice, France, backed by the Ministry of Education) showed patient incubation of startups in strategic areas can produce world-class results from India.
- ◆ Brute-forcing **frontier AI or semiconductors** is hard — tens of billions are needed for incremental advances; being an “AI deployment superpower” may be a losing battle as India is not alone in seeking AI efficiencies.
- ◆ **Open contests remain:** deep tech in **space exploration, defence and material sciences**.
- ◆ **Two ingredients for innovation:** a stable, attractive home for (i) **capital** — rein in rent-seeking, ensure VC can assess cutting-edge pitches, and keep tax policy clear and predictable; (ii) **talent** — top talent must see a future in India.
- ◆ **Public goods matter:** clean air, urban green spaces, and reliable public transport are what returnees miss most.
- ◆ **Key insight:** India’s oldest, most stubborn problems block a truly innovative ecosystem — and these need **political capital, not risk capital**.

CONTEXT · MIDDLE-POWER TECH COLLABORATION

- ▶ French President Macron advocated **middle-power collaboration** at the event — a route for India to pursue innovation without competing head-on with the largest players.
- ▶ Reflects a strategy of partnering on emerging tech rather than relying solely on domestic scale.

5

Step Forward — Economic Value of Unpaid Domestic Work

GS 2 · Society

GS 3 · Economy

The Hindu · Page 6

WHY IN NEWS

In *Shishupal @Shish Ram vs Surjeet*, a Supreme Court Division Bench (Justices Sanjay Karol and N.K. Singh) gave an economic value to unpaid domestic work — a likely landmark for recognising homemakers' contribution.

The Ruling

- ◆ Originated from a 2001 road-accident claim. The first MACT awarded the family of victim Reshma **₹2.42 lakh**; the Punjab & Haryana HC revised it to **₹8.43 lakh** (2024).
- ◆ The SC revised it to **₹62.78 lakh**, attaching **₹30,000/month** as Reshma's 'economic value' as a homemaker.
- ◆ The ₹30,000 figure is a **notional floor**, to be hiked 10% every three years; a woman's salary (where applicable) must be added to it.
- ◆ Applies to MACT compensation only — it does not create a salary, wage entitlement, pension or employment relationship.

Significance & Ripple Effects

- ◆ Builds on *Lata Wadhwa* (2001, ₹3,000) and *Kirti vs Oriental Insurance* (2021) — homemaker's work cannot be discounted because it is unpaid or done by women.
- ◆ Connects unpaid domestic labour to **suppressed female labour force participation**, a key theme in Indian labour economics.
- ◆ Rural women who assist in sowing, harvesting and cattle-tending can now invoke this reasoning to value their labour higher.
- ◆ May influence maintenance claims under the **Hindu Marriage Act** and 'work from home' / domestic-responsibility disputes; future litigation may test male homemakers' claims.
- ◆ By framing homemakers as nation-builders with a fixed baseline, the law moves past treating women's work as minor charity or sentiment.

6

Water Security is Central for a Viksit Bharat

GS 3 · Environment/Infra

The Hindu · Page 7

CORE IDEA

Drinking water, sanitation, river conservation, groundwater recharge, wastewater reuse and climate resilience must be viewed as parts of **one connected ecosystem** — not isolated interventions. (Authored by Union Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil.)

A Complete Turnaround — Jal Jeevan Mission

- ◆ JJM is the **world's largest rural drinking water supply programme**.
- ◆ At launch, only ~3.23 crore rural households (~17%) had tap connections; today **15.8 crore+** households (over **81%**) have tap water at home — targeting **100% by 2028**.
- ◆ Household taps save more than **5.5 crore person-hours daily**, freeing women's time for education, livelihoods and economic activity, and cutting out-of-pocket health costs from water-borne diseases.

Sanitation, Recharge & Rivers

- ◆ **SBM-Grameen** (WHO assessment) is estimated to have averted over **3 lakh diarrhoea deaths** (2014–Oct 2019); SBM 2.0 moves towards sustainable solid & liquid waste management.
- ◆ **'Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari'**: over 1.55 crore rainwater-harvesting & groundwater-recharge structures built by May 31, 2026, improving groundwater trends.
- ◆ **Ken-Betwa River Linking Project** — the first major river interlinking initiative — advancing to bring water to arid Bundelkhand.
- ◆ **Namami Gange**: 4,260 MLD of new sewage treatment capacity; BOD down from 26 to 10.75 TPD (2017–2024); Ganga now meets bathing criteria at all monitored locations.

KEY CHALLENGE

- ▶ India has nearly **18% of the world's population** but access to only about **4% of global freshwater** resources.
- ▶ Rapid urbanisation and changing weather patterns will raise pressure — investments are long-term stakes in **national resilience**.

7 Children's Climate Risk Report 2026 (UNICEF)

PRELIMS · Reports

GS 3 link



A child stands in floodwater — climate hazards increasingly threaten children's health, education and survival.

WHY IN NEWS

A new UNICEF **Children's Climate Risk Report 2026** reveals that nearly **392 million children in India (92%)** are exposed to extreme heat, while **89 million** face recurrent heatwaves.

About the Report

- ◆ A global assessment of children's **exposure and vulnerability** to climate and environmental hazards.
- ◆ Measures how overlapping risks — extreme heat, drought, floods, storms and air pollution — affect children's health, education, nutrition and survival.

KEY FINDINGS · INDIA

- ▶ **392 million children (92%)** exposed to extreme heat; **89 million** face recurrent heatwaves.
- ▶ India's overall hazard exposure score: **9.21/10** — among the highest globally.
- ▶ In South Asia, only **Pakistan (9.44)** and **Bangladesh (9.38)** scored higher.
- ▶ Air pollution and drought vulnerability remain **critical threats**.
- ▶ Impacts: higher disease burden & malnutrition, plus reduced school attendance and learning capacity.

Prelims Practice — 10 MCQs

BASED ON TODAY'S EDITION · 18 June 2026

Q1. The recent bilateral meeting between PM Modi and U.S. President Trump took place on the sidelines of which summit?

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| (a) G20 Summit | (b) G7 Summit |
| (c) BRICS Summit | (d) SCO Summit |

Q2. The Strait of Hormuz, in the news recently, connects the Persian Gulf to which of the following?

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| (a) Gulf of Aden | (b) Red Sea |
| (c) Gulf of Oman | (d) Strait of Malacca |

Q3. The Uniform Civil Code finds mention in which Article of the Constitution?

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| (a) Article 51A | (b) Article 44 |
| (c) Article 48 | (d) Article 39A |

Q4. Which of the following States have already implemented a UCC, as referenced in the article?

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (a) Punjab and Haryana | (b) Kerala and Goa |
| (c) Bihar and Odisha | (d) Uttarakhand and Gujarat |

Q5. The Shayara Bano case (2017), linked to the UCC debate, primarily dealt with:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| (a) Triple talaq | (b) Adoption laws |
| (c) Inheritance rights | (d) Maintenance rights |

Q6. Personal laws such as marriage and inheritance fall under which List of the Seventh Schedule?

- (a) State List (b) Union List
(c) Residuary powers (d) Concurrent List

Q7. The Jal Jeevan Mission is associated with which of the following?

- (a) Rural tap water supply (b) Crop insurance
(c) River cleaning only (d) Urban metro rail

Q8. Consider India's water position. India has nearly 18% of the world's population but access to about what share of global freshwater?

- (a) About 25% (b) About 30%
(c) About 4% (d) About 12%

Q9. The Ken-Betwa Link Project, in the news, primarily aims to benefit which arid region?

- (a) Bundelkhand (b) Saurashtra
(c) Marathwada (d) Rayalaseema

Q10. As per the UNICEF Children's Climate Risk Report 2026, India's overall hazard exposure score was approximately:

- (a) 7.50 / 10 (b) 9.90 / 10
(c) 5.80 / 10 (d) 9.21 / 10

ANSWER KEY

Q1 · (b)

Q2 · (c)

Q3 · (b)

Q4 · (d)

Q5 · (a)

Q6 · (d)

Q7 · (a)

Q8 · (c)

Q9 · (a)

Q10 · (d)

NOTE

- Q5 (Shayara Bano) — triple talaq; Q1 (G7 Evian); Q2 & Q8 (Gulf of Oman / 4% freshwater) test factual recall from today's editorials.

Mains Practice Questions

GS PAPER II & III · 18 June 2026

QUESTION 1 · GS 3 / GS 1 · CLIMATE & SOCIETY

“Children are among the most vulnerable groups facing the growing risks of climate change.” Discuss how climate-induced challenges impact children’s health, education and overall development in India. Suggest measures to build child-sensitive climate resilience strategies.

“जलवायु परिवर्तन से उत्पन्न जोखिमों का सबसे अधिक प्रभाव बच्चों जैसे संवेदनशील वर्गों पर पड़ता है।” चर्चा कीजिए कि भारत में जलवायु परिवर्तन बच्चों के स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा और समग्र विकास को किस प्रकार प्रभावित करता है। बाल-केंद्रित जलवायु लचीलापन रणनीतियों के निर्माण हेतु उपाय सुझाइए।

15 Marks · 250 Words

QUESTION 2 · GS 2 · HEALTH

“The rising burden of obesity is emerging as a major public health challenge and a significant driver of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in India.” Discuss the factors contributing to increasing obesity levels and examine its implications for India’s healthcare system. Suggest a comprehensive strategy to address this challenge.

“बढ़ता हुआ मोटापा भारत में एक प्रमुख सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य चुनौती के रूप में उभर रहा है और गैर-संचारी रोगों (NCDs) का एक महत्वपूर्ण कारण बन रहा है।” मोटापे के बढ़ते स्तर के कारणों की चर्चा कीजिए तथा इसके स्वास्थ्य व्यवस्था पर प्रभावों का विश्लेषण कीजिए। इस चुनौती से निपटने के लिए एक व्यापक रणनीति सुझाइए।

15 Marks · 250 Words