D A I L Y   U · P · S · C   E D I T I O N

THE HINDU
COMPLETE ANALYSIS

Current Affairs & Editorial

WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2026

VEDANTA COACHING ACADEMY & LIBRARY

by **Sapna Chauhan**

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THE HINDU — COMPLETE ANALYSIS · WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2026

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

- Each **top news** gives the **core facts in bullets** plus a **navy box of static/linked facts** for revision.
- The four editorials carry the **original Hindu clipping** alongside a point-wise gist.
- Attempt the **10 MCQs** first, then read the explanations; frame the **3 mains answers** using the pointers.

TOP NEWS OF THE DAY

EXPLAINED · STATIC-LINKED

1

GS-II · POLITY / GOVERNANCE

Centre tightens norms for foreign contributions

The 5 permitted FCRA categories and their newly notified activity lists.

- NGOs wanting foreign funds must now stick to a **list of activities specified by the Centre**, under the latest amendment to the **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010 Rules**, notified on Monday. For the first time, **separate activity lists** have been laid out for each of the five permitted categories — **social, economic, educational, cultural and religious**.
- NGOs must disclose their **activities, geographical scope, websites, social-media accounts and publications**, and pay **separate fees for each category and each State/UT** they operate in (earlier a single fee).
- New registrations must follow the new norms; **existing registrations must comply within a year**. Violations attract a **minimum fine of ₹1 lakh** (per a separate Union Home Ministry order).
- The definition of an NGO's **'key functionary'** is broadened beyond office-bearers and directors to include **trustees, partners, the Karta/head of a Hindu Undivided Family, governing-body members**, and anyone controlling or managing the organisation.
- Associations having **foreign nationals (other than PIOs)** as key functionaries will ordinarily be **ineligible** for registration/prior permission unless specifically permitted. NGOs must also declare any **publications** (books, magazines, newspaper articles) brought out during the year.

◆ STATIC / LINKED FACTS

- **FCRA** regulates the acceptance, utilisation and accounting of foreign contributions/hospitality by individuals, associations and NGOs. Enacted **2010**, in force **2011**; amended in **2016, 2018 and 2020**. Administered by the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**.
- About **16,000 associations** are registered under FCRA, receiving roughly **₹22,000 crore** annually.
- **Eligibility:** registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860 / Indian Trusts Act 1882 / Section 8 (erstwhile 25) of the Companies Act; ≥3 years' track record; minimum spend of **₹15 lakh** over the last 3 years.
- All foreign contributions must be received only in a **single designated FCRA account at SBI, New Delhi (Main Branch)**. Funds cannot be sub-granted to non-FCRA entities. Registration is valid for **5 years** (renew ≥6 months before expiry).
- **Objective:** ensure foreign funds are not used against national interest, sovereignty or public order, and prevent misuse for anti-national, political or religious-conversion activities.

2

PRELIMS · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

IMO announces plan to evacuate vessels stuck in Persian Gulf

- **IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez** announced a plan to evacuate all ships — and the **11,000 seafarers** aboard — stranded in the **Persian Gulf** due to the war in West Asia.

- The large-scale operation will be carried out in cooperation with **Iran, Oman, other coastal States, the United States and the maritime industry**.
- The plan (put out by the Sultanate of Oman) mentions **two routes** for transiting the **Strait of Hormuz** — one along the **Omani coast** and one along the **Iranian coast**; vessels must contact the **'coastal state'** of their chosen route to confirm transit.

Ships transiting the Strait of Hormuz; the plan involves two routes. (REUTERS)

- Dominguez said the **necessary safety guarantees** were secured and conditions for safe navigation verified. The IMO cited a letter from Oman's Defence Ministry to **Pakistan's National Hydrographic Office**; **Pakistan and Qatar** acted as mediators in Iran–U.S. negotiations.

◆ **STATIC / LINKED FACTS**

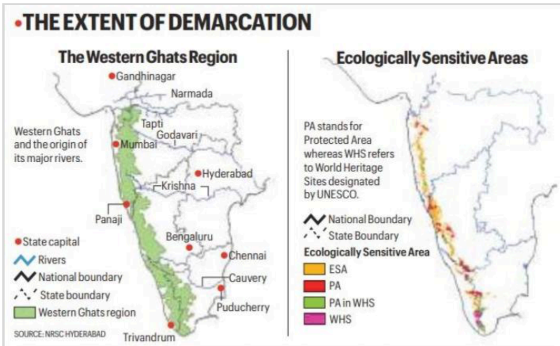
- **IMO** is a specialised **UN agency** that regulates global shipping — the global standard-setting authority for the **safety, security and environmental performance** of international shipping.
- Established **1948** as the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO); renamed **IMO in 1982**. It has **176 Member States** + 3 Associate Members; HQ in **London**. **India has been a member since 1959**.
- The IMO **does not itself enforce** its rules — implementation rests with member states.
- Key conventions: **MARPOL** (1973, pollution), **SOLAS** (1974, safety of life at sea), **STCW** (1978, seafarer training), **Hong Kong Convention** (2009, ship recycling) and the **Ballast Water Management Convention** (2004).
- **2023 IMO GHG Strategy**: net-zero GHG emissions from shipping by around **2050**. The **Strait of Hormuz** is a vital global oil/LNG chokepoint between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman.

3

PRELIMS · ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

The Ecologically Sensitive Area — Western Ghats demarcation

- The Centre is moving to finalise the demarcation of **Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs)** in the Western Ghats in a **phased, state-wise manner**, beginning with states such as **Gujarat** where consensus has been achieved.
- An **ESA** is a legally protected zone under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**, with a customised management regime to shield fragile, biologically rich ecosystems from industrial degradation while allowing pre-existing settlements to pursue sustainable development.



Extent of demarcation in the Western Ghats — ESA, Protected Areas and World Heritage Sites.

- **Key committees:** the **Madhav Gadgil Panel (2010–11)** recommended the entire Western Ghats (**1,29,037 sq km**) be an ESA with uniform restrictions; the **K. Kasturirangan Working Group (2012–13)** rejected the blanket approach (60% cultural + 40% natural landscape), proposing only ~**60,000 sq km** of natural landscape be notified.
- The **2014 baseline draft** earmarked **56,825.7 sq km** (cut after Kerala ground-truthing); the **Sanjay Kumar Committee (2022–26)** is reconciling village revenue maps, examining state objections and finalising a phased execution strategy.
- **Restrictions:** ban on new mining/quarrying, thermal power plants and red-category industries; ban on new/expansion commercial buildings and townships of ≥**20,000 sq m**; a clause permitting **state-wise sequential notification**.

◆ STATIC / LINKED FACTS

- The **Western Ghats** are older than the Himalayas, a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, and one of the world's recognised **biodiversity hotspots**.
- They span **six states** — Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu — and are the source of major peninsular rivers (Godavari, Krishna, Cauvery).
- ESAs (also called Eco-Sensitive Zones around protected areas) are notified by the **MoEFCC** using powers under **Section 3 of the EPA, 1986**.
- The Gadgil panel was formally the **Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP)**; the Kasturirangan group was the **High-Level Working Group (HLWG)**.

4 PRELIMS · MODERN HISTORY

The Chapekar Brothers

- On **22 June 1897**, the three Chapekar brothers assassinated British official **Walter Charles Rand** in Pune to avenge colonial atrocities committed during the bubonic-plague response.
- **Damodar Hari (28), Balkrishna Hari (24) and Vasudeo Hari (18) Chapekar** — late-19th-century revolutionaries from the **Konkan region** who pioneered armed resistance. They remain the **only instance of three biological brothers hanged** in the service of India's independence.

The three Chapekar brothers — pioneers of armed resistance against colonial rule.

- **Influences:** the armed struggle of **Vasudev Balwant Phadke** and the writings of **Lokmanya Tilak**, whose fiery critiques they read in the newspaper **Kesari**.
- **Plague crisis:** after the October 1896 outbreak in Pune, Governor Sandhurst appointed Rand as **Poona Plague Committee Chairman**; troops entered homes with leather boots, violating kitchens and home temples.
- The brothers struck during **Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee** and had even sent a pre-emptive warning letter. **Damodar was hanged on 18 April 1898**, Vasudeo on 8 May and Balkrishna on 12 May 1898.

◆ STATIC / LINKED FACTS

- **Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak** — 'Swaraj is my birthright'; founder-editor of **Kesari** (Marathi) and **Mahratta** (English).
- **Vasudev Balwant Phadke** — an early armed revolutionary (Ramoshi uprising, 1879), often called a father of the Indian armed rebellion.
- Rand's killing is widely regarded as one of the **first acts of revolutionary violence** in modern Indian history.
- The episode is tied to Pune's role as a hub of nationalist ferment in the late 19th century.

EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

THE FOUR BEST, WITH ORIGINAL CLIPPINGS

EDITORIAL 1 · GS-II · Public Health · *Mathew George*

Reconnect public health with people's needs

Reconnect public health with people's needs

Mathew George
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Public health policies, like other public policies, are crucial in determining the overall health of the population and are an important contributor to a nation seeking to reap the benefits of its demographic dividend. One of the major claims of health policies in recent years has been the achievement of universal health coverage (UHC), a novel idea that seeks to ensure that every individual has access to needed health services without suffering financial hardship. Yet, populist ideas often dominate public policy despite evidence to the contrary, as seen in the case of publicly funded health insurance schemes. The changing nature of public health policy in recent years is particularly concerning, not only because it has often failed to be evidence-based, but also because of its inability to guarantee even minimal health benefits to the population.

More troubling is the failure of public health policies to improve access to health care at a time when such access is deteriorating significantly owing to rising costs in the private sector and poor quality in the public sector. Two recent government initiatives – the Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres and the Digital Health Mission – illustrate these inadequacies.

The interpretation

The Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres, introduced as a policy initiative in 2018, were intended to strengthen health infrastructure. What eventually happened, however, was that the names and identities of grassroots-level institutions – namely, the health sub-centres (SCs), primary health centres (PHCs), and community health centres (CHCs) – were altered by mandatorily adding "Health and Wellness Centre" as a prefix. The identity of these grassroots institutions and their mandates have evolved over time based on their roles within the district health system. The use of a common prefix has created considerable ambiguity among health professionals and policymakers regarding their actual mandate. Another consequence of the "health and wellness" approach has been a shift in focus from population health outcomes to individual well-being. The major challenge in using well-being as an outcome measure lies in the elusive and subjective nature of the concept itself.

A historical inquiry into the concept of wellness reveals that it was initially used to denote the absence of disease and was often contrasted with illness. It was also frequently used interchangeably with health. During the 1950s, the wellness movement popularised the idea of positive well-being by conceptualising health beyond its biological dimensions. The mental cure model similarly emphasised the psychological and spiritual aspects of healing. Influenced by these developments, the World Health Organization (WHO) defined health as not merely the absence of disease, thereby promoting the notion of positive well-being. Over time, wellness expanded beyond physiological health to include mental, spiritual, social and environmental dimensions, offering a more holistic understanding of health. In public health, however, the emphasis shifted towards health promotion – a population-based approach that recognises how social, economic and environmental conditions shape people's ability to adopt healthy behaviours.

Another reason for preferring health promotion over wellness was the greater rigour and feasibility associated with measuring the former. There are no universally accepted measures of well-being at the population level, as the concept is inherently individualistic and deeply subjective. Unlike health promotion, the concept of wellness places the primary responsibility on individuals, assuming that they possess the capacity and opportunity to modify their health-related choices. In doing so, it often underestimates the structural and social determinants that shape health outcomes.

Access to curative care and stronger institutions must anchor India's health policy

The individualisation of health

The shift from population health status to individual well-being is a consequence of the changing wellness narrative brought by the public health policy. The implication is that health status, which was previously assessed through unmet needs in preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative care – including access to basic services such as drinking water, food and nutrition, chronic disease management, emergency care, and maternal and child health services – is increasingly being replaced by the aspiration to achieve individual well-being. This shift in focus has contributed to the rise of health coaches and the proliferation of social media messages promoting individual well-being, often under the banner of public health.

When health outcomes are framed primarily in terms of individual well-being, there is a risk of failing to systematically capture a wide range of unmet health needs that remain significant for the population. The broader narrative increasingly suggests that the achievement of individual well-being is the ultimate objective of health and wellness centres. This presents a serious challenge. As the well-known principle in management states, "If you cannot measure it, you cannot improve it". Given the inherently subjective nature of well-being, an excessive policy focus on this outcome may undermine the ability to evaluate health systems effectively and address concrete deficiencies in health care access and service delivery.

Another major public health policy initiative of recent years is the Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Mission (ABDHM), whose principal objective is to create a digital repository of health information for every individual through a unique health ID, known as the ABHA card. In addition, the mission seeks to maintain registries of health facilities, health-care professionals and information related to health insurance. However, an information portal containing health records and details of health infrastructure cannot, by itself, address the challenges posed by inadequate access to health care. Nor does it justify the annual budget of around ₹300 crore to the ABDHM in the absence of measurable outcomes.

Factors behind inadequate access to care

It is well established that inadequate access to health care in India stems from the unaffordability of care in the private sector and the lack of quality health-care facilities in the public sector. Merely creating databases of individual health records, health facilities and health-care professionals cannot improve access to health care. If the argument is that information is the first step towards strengthening the health system, there exists a substantial body of reports and datasets that provide such information.

The more pertinent question is how information contained in an individual's health record, through an ABHA card, can guarantee access to health care when health-care infrastructure remains grossly inadequate and unaffordable for large sections of the population. Even if every individual in a district possesses an ABHA card and all health facilities and health-care professionals are digitally mapped, the delivery of health care still requires a robust institutional mechanism. Unfortunately, the ABDHM, as currently designed, has little to say about the provisioning of care. It primarily generates information on individuals, facilities and health-care professionals, all of which continue to operate largely in silos.

It is therefore difficult to identify a compelling public health rationale for this scale of data generation. What is missing from current policy initiatives are concrete measures to strengthen public health-care institutions, as envisaged under India's three-tier health-care system. Instead, these institutions continue to weaken in many parts of the country.

For most people, access to curative care constitutes an immediate and pressing need. Only after these basic health-care requirements are met can individuals meaningfully engage with preventive and promotive health interventions. When public health policies fail to recognise people's felt needs, they risk becoming mere vehicles for advancing the priorities of policymakers and health-care providers rather than addressing the actual concerns of the population.

The views expressed are personal

As it appeared in The Hindu

- **Context:** Public-health policy shapes population health and the demographic dividend. **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** — access to needed services without financial hardship — is a major recent claim, but the policy trend is troubling: often **not evidence-based** and unable to guarantee even minimal health benefits.
- **Wellness vs health promotion:** the Ayushman Bharat **Health & Wellness Centres** (2018) merely renamed grassroots SCs/PHCs/CHCs, creating identity ambiguity and shifting focus from **population-health outcomes to individual well-being**. 'Wellness' places responsibility on individuals and **underestimates structural and social determinants**.
- **Individualisation of health:** assessment via unmet needs (preventive, promotive, curative, rehabilitative care — water, nutrition, maternal-child health) is being replaced by aspirational well-being. As management wisdom warns, 'if you cannot measure it, you cannot improve it'.
- **ABDHM / ABHA card:** a digital health-ID repository. But inadequate access stems from **unaffordable private care and poor public facilities** — databases alone cannot improve access, and such information already exists in many reports/datasets.
- **Author's view:** for most people, **curative care is the immediate need**; preventive/promotive interventions engage meaningfully only once basic care is met. Policy must address people's **felt needs**, not providers' or policymakers' priorities.

◆ **STATIC / LINKED FACTS**

- **UHC** is a target under **SDG-3** (Good Health & Well-being) — 'leave no one behind'.
- **Ayushman Bharat (2018)** has two arms: **Health & Wellness Centres** (now Ayushman Arogya Mandirs) and **PM-JAY** (cover up to ₹5 lakh/family/year).
- The **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)** and the **ABHA** health ID are run by the **National Health Authority (NHA)**.
- India's **three-tier rural health system**: Sub-Centre → Primary Health Centre (PHC) → Community Health Centre (CHC).

EDITORIAL 2 · GS-III · Sci-Tech & Economy · *Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw*

India's next challenge — from invention to global scale

India's next challenge — from invention to global scale

India has never lacked technological vision. Time and again, it has anticipated transformative technologies long before they became mainstream. It has built impressive scientific capabilities, developed indigenous innovations, and demonstrated remarkable ingenuity. Yet, in several critical sectors, it has struggled to convert early technological leadership into globally dominant industries.

As India embarks on ambitious missions in semiconductors, artificial intelligence (AI), quantum computing and space technologies, it is worth reflecting on an important lesson from its past: invention alone is not enough. The true measure of technological success lies in scaling innovation into globally competitive enterprises.

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw

Executive Chairperson, Biocon Limited

Ahead of its time

Consider semiconductors. India established the Semiconductor Complex Limited (SCL) in the 1970s – when semiconductors were still an emerging industry – recognising early that integrated circuits would become the foundation of the digital age. Yet, while Taiwan built TSMC and South Korea developed Samsung's semiconductor empire, India failed to translate its early lead into a globally competitive manufacturing ecosystem. The problem was not vision or scientific capability, but limited capital, inadequate scale, inconsistent policy support and an inward-looking public sector approach.

A similar story can be told about ECIL. Established in 1967, it developed indigenous computers, control systems and strategic electronics when India faced severe technology embargoes. ECIL played a vital role in building technological self-reliance. However, its focus remained on strategic requirements rather than globally competitive commercial products. As a result, scientific excellence stayed within institutions instead of creating large industrial ecosystems. The Simputer followed a similar trajectory. Conceived in 1998 by Indian technologists, it anticipated many features that would later define smartphones and tablets. Yet, despite its innovation, the supporting ecosystem was absent. Venture capital, software platforms, component supply chains and consumer markets were not mature enough to help it achieve global scale. A few years later, Apple transformed personal computing through the iPhone and built one of the world's most valuable technology ecosystems. The lesson is clear: being first matters little if you cannot scale.

India has seen similar patterns elsewhere. It developed early expertise in computing, telecommunications and electronics. Yet, many pioneering initiatives remained prototypes, pilots or public-sector achievements rather than globally dominant businesses.

The country must transform innovation into globally dominant technology enterprises

Models of success

Fortunately, history also offers examples of success. India's pharmaceutical industry evolved into a globally competitive manufacturing powerhouse, making the country the pharmacy of the world and a leading vaccine producer. India also developed indigenous supercomputing capabilities through the PARAM programme. More recently, Aadhaar and UPI have shown how technology platforms designed for scale can transform a nation. Scale creates ecosystems, ecosystems create industries, and industries create global leadership.

Today, India stands at another technological inflection point. AI, quantum computing and space technologies are likely to shape the next half-century, just as semiconductors and software shaped the last. India already possesses significant strengths in software engineering and digital infrastructure. The challenge now is to build globally scalable AI products and platforms. The emergence of DeepSeek showed that technological leadership is not only about building the largest models. It is also about making intelligence cheaper and more accessible. The AI race may ultimately be won by those who make intelligence affordable, ubiquitous and widely available.

India is uniquely positioned to lead this movement. Just as UPI democratised financial inclusion, India should aspire to democratise intelligence through low-cost, energy-efficient AI models that can serve billions of people.

Quantum computing presents another opportunity. Rather than merely replicating existing approaches, India should focus on reducing the cost of quantum infrastructure and developing practical applications in health care, materials science, climate modelling and drug discovery.

The same should extend to space. The successes of Chandrayaan and Mangalyaan proved that frugal innovation can coexist with world-class ambition. As computing demands escalate globally, concepts such as space-based data centres powered by continuous solar energy are attracting serious attention. India should not merely participate in these conversations; it should lead them. We should ask bold questions about orbital computing infrastructure, space-based AI platforms or even data centres and quantum communication networks.

These ideas may seem futuristic today. But so did semiconductors, smartphones and AI when they first emerged.

Stopping too soon

The deeper lesson from SCL, ECIL and Simputer is not that India failed, but that it often stopped too soon. We celebrated technological capability before building the ecosystems needed for global scale. The next phase of India's technological journey must combine self-reliance with global ambition. The challenge is no longer merely to invent; it is to build, scale, commercialise and create enterprises that can compete globally.

India has already demonstrated world-class scientific and engineering capabilities. The opportunity now is to translate that ingenuity into globally competitive industries that shape the technologies of the future.

The countries that lead tomorrow may not be those that invent first, but those that scale best. This time, India must do both.

As it appeared in The Hindu

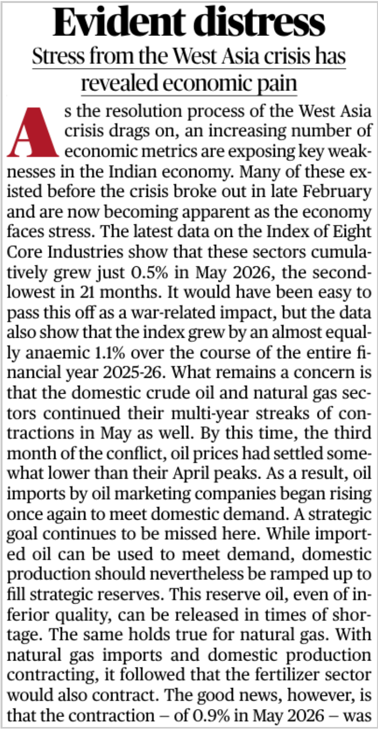
- **Core idea:** India has never lacked technological vision but has struggled to convert early leadership into globally competitive industries. **Invention alone is not enough** — success lies in **scaling innovation into globally competitive enterprises**.
- **Ahead of its time: SCL** (1970s) preceded Taiwan's TSMC and Korea's Samsung, yet India failed to scale — limited capital, inadequate scale, inconsistent policy and an inward-looking PSU approach. **ECIL** (1967) and the **Simputer** (1998) anticipated future tech but stayed within institutions instead of building ecosystems.
- **Models of success:** pharma became the 'pharmacy of the world'; **PARAM** built indigenous supercomputing; **Aadhaar and UPI** show scale-designed platforms transform a nation — 'scale creates ecosystems, ecosystems create industries, industries create global leadership'.
- **Opportunities: AI** — democratise intelligence via low-cost, energy-efficient models (as UPI did for finance); **quantum** — cut infrastructure cost, apply to healthcare, materials, climate, drug discovery; **space** — frugal innovation (Chandrayaan, Mangalyaan) plus ambition, even space-based data centres and orbital computing. **DeepSeek** showed leadership is about cheaper, more accessible intelligence.
- **'Stopping too soon':** the deeper lesson is that India often **stopped too soon** — celebrating capability before building ecosystems for global scale. The countries that lead tomorrow may not invent first but **scale best** — India must do both.

◆ STATIC / LINKED FACTS

- **SCL** = Semiconductor Complex Limited, Mohali; **ECIL** = Electronics Corporation of India Ltd (1967, under the DAE).
- The **PARAM** supercomputers were developed by **C-DAC** (PARAM 8000, 1991).
- **Aadhaar** (UIDAI) and **UPI/RuPay** (NPCI) are India's flagship digital-public-infrastructure platforms.
- Policy anchors cited: **Make in India**, the **India Semiconductor Mission**, **Viksit Bharat @2047** and the **net-zero by 2070** goal.

EDITORIAL 3 · GS-III · Economy

Evident distress — the West Asia crisis and the economy



Evident distress

Stress from the West Asia crisis has revealed economic pain

As the resolution process of the West Asia crisis drags on, an increasing number of economic metrics are exposing key weaknesses in the Indian economy. Many of these existed before the crisis broke out in late February and are now becoming apparent as the economy faces stress. The latest data on the Index of Eight Core Industries show that these sectors cumulatively grew just 0.5% in May 2026, the second-lowest in 21 months. It would have been easy to pass this off as a war-related impact, but the data also show that the index grew by an almost equally anaemic 1.1% over the course of the entire financial year 2025-26. What remains a concern is that the domestic crude oil and natural gas sectors continued their multi-year streaks of contractions in May as well. By this time, the third month of the conflict, oil prices had settled somewhat lower than their April peaks. As a result, oil imports by oil marketing companies began rising once again to meet domestic demand. A strategic goal continues to be missed here. While imported oil can be used to meet demand, domestic production should nevertheless be ramped up to fill strategic reserves. This reserve oil, even of inferior quality, can be released in times of shortage. The same holds true for natural gas. With natural gas imports and domestic production contracting, it followed that the fertilizer sector would also contract. The good news, however, is that the contraction – of 0.9% in May 2026 – was

As it appeared in The Hindu

- **Context:** as the West Asia crisis drags on, more economic metrics are exposing weaknesses in the Indian economy — many of which **pre-existed** the late-February crisis.
- **Core sector:** the **Index of Eight Core Industries grew just 0.5% in May 2026** — the second-lowest in 21 months — with anaemic **1.1% growth for FY2025-26**. **Crude oil and natural gas** continued multi-year contractions; oil imports rose while domestic output and strategic-reserve build-up lagged.
- **Fertilizer & coal:** fertilizer output contracted **0.9% in May 2026** (milder than two months earlier); **coal** contracted the most in nearly a year, leaving summer power more reliant on variable renewables or costly imported coal.
- **Demand problem: GST revenue from domestic transactions contracted 2.6% in May 2026**, with six-month average domestic GST growth just **3.1%**. With merchandise exports at a record high, this is a **demand** issue — low real-wage growth meets rising inflation.
- With India entering a **deficient monsoon**, these are distressing signals. The editorial's verdict: **'trade deals are no substitute for hard-hitting reforms'**.

◆ STATIC / LINKED FACTS

- **Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI):** Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement, Electricity. Base year **2011-12**; ~**40.27%** weight in the IIP; released by the **Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT**.
- **GST** was introduced on **1 July 2017** (101st Constitutional Amendment, 2016); the **GST Council** is a constitutional body under **Article 279A**.
- **El Niño** — the warm phase of ENSO — is generally associated with a weaker Indian summer monsoon.

EDITORIAL 4 · GS-III · Environment & Economy · *S. Goyal & D. Chakraborty*

India's patchy industrial climate strategy

India's patchy industrial climate strategy

Shifali Goyal
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Debashis Chakraborty
Professor, IIFT Kolkata. Views are personal

The inevitable conclusion emerging from the ambitious targets set up by the government's Make-in-India, Viksit Bharat (2047) and net-zero emissions (2070) commitments is that industrial decarbonisation is central to India's long-term climate goals.

As the economy grows, both existing and emerging manufacturing segments expand, fuelling a steep rise in energy demand. Balancing this industrial growth on the one hand and population-driven consumption demand on the other with national emission reduction objectives requires highly targeted policies. The recently submitted First Biennial Transparency Report (BTR1) by India to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change provides a detailed account of national emissions. The report discloses that in 2022, over 20% of India's total emissions stemmed directly from the industrial sector. Specifically, it shows that the fuel consumption in manufacturing industries and construction accounts for 13% of total emissions, while industrial processes and product use accounts for another 9%. This clearly demonstrates how much manufacturing activities contribute to the overall carbon footprint, a trend that has remained consistent over time.

Mitigation planning

To mitigate industrial emissions and energy consumption, the government has relied on two major market-based mechanisms. The BTR1 acknowledges the Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) scheme as a primary initiative, which aims to reduce specific energy consumption across 13 energy-intensive industries. PAT is now transitioning to the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS), which focuses on reducing the emission intensity of nine industrial sectors, including aluminium, cement, fertilizers, iron and steel, petrochemicals, petroleum refining, pulp and paper, textiles, and chlor-alkali. The other four industries, which include thermal power plants, railways, DISCOMs and commercial buildings, will continue under the PAT scheme.

Balancing industrial growth on the one hand and population-driven consumption demand on the other with national emission reduction objectives requires highly targeted policies

While these schemes set benchmarks, encourage energy efficiency, and reduce emission intensity, there is a clear gap in how mitigation planning is envisioned across Indian industries. These policies are designed almost entirely for well-defined, traditional heavy-emitting sectors such as cement, steel, fertilizers, refineries, and textiles. However, they de facto overlook a massive proportion of industrial emissions, specifically those generated by fuel consumption in, what India's emission inventory classifies as, "non-specific industries".

A careful analysis of emissions data for India's manufacturing industries and construction sector for the latest reported year, 2020, reveals a crucial puzzle that needs to be solved urgently. The explicitly specified major industrial sectors accounted for slightly more than 55% of the total emissions generated from manufacturing industries and construction. Conversely, more than 40% of those sectoral emissions were caused by the "non-specific industries" category alone. A similar pattern has been seen in 2014, 2016, and 2019 as well, as per the detailed emission inventory available on NITI Aayog's India Climate and Energy Dashboard. To sum up, the classification of sectors in India's emission inventory reflects that a surprisingly large volume of emissions falls under a single, vague heading of "non-specific industries".

The point of concern is that the scope of mitigation policies in India has relied on an enforcement and incentive-based structure around specific, identifiable sectors. For instance, some of the explicitly identified sectors in the emission inventory, such as power, cement, non-ferrous metals, chemicals, and textiles, are covered by mitigation measures such as PAT and CCTS. Yet, a major part of industrial emissions remains in an administrative grey area, with serious implications for India's broader industrial climate strategy. As this 40% block lacks specific sub-sectoral definitions, the various industries clustered therein effectively fall outside the primary scope of both PAT and CCTS. They are not subject to the same energy efficiency mandates or emission-reduction targets as industries such as steel or cement, despite their contributions to the emissions load. This policy gap keeps a significant portion of the country's industrial base out of the green transition.

Need to identify industries

For India to successfully decouple its industrial growth from greenhouse gas emissions, the next phase of its national climate strategy needs more transparent, disaggregated data. This must begin with breaking down the existing "non-specific industries" in the emission inventory. For timely realisation of the net-zero emissions target, policymakers need to urgently focus on identifying exactly which sub-sectors contribute to these 40% emissions, how their specific energy consumption patterns are evolving, and the part in the process chain where emissions are primarily concentrated.

Transparency in climate reporting is often framed as an international obligation, a way to prove to the world that a nation is effectively traversing the path for honouring its pledges. But the real value of transparency is deeply domestic. It provides policymakers with an appropriate level of clarity to monitor exactly where the interventions are heading and where there is scope for course correction. Therefore, to build a low-carbon economy, exact knowledge on these passive outliers is non-negotiable.

As it appeared in The Hindu

- **Context:** with **Make in India, Viksit Bharat (2047)** and **net-zero (2070)** commitments, **industrial decarbonisation** is central to India's climate goals; growth fuels a steep rise in energy demand, requiring highly targeted policies.
- **BTR-1 data:** India's **First Biennial Transparency Report** to the UNFCCC shows that in **2022, over 20%** of total emissions came directly from industry — **13%** from fuel use in manufacturing/construction and **9%** from industrial processes and product use.
- **Two mechanisms:** the **PAT (Perform, Achieve and Trade)** scheme cuts specific energy use across 13 energy-intensive industries; it is transitioning to the **Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS)**, covering nine sectors (aluminium, cement, fertilizers, iron & steel, petrochemicals, petroleum refining, pulp & paper, textiles, chlor-alkali). Thermal power, railways, DISCOMs and commercial buildings continue under PAT.
- **The 'non-specific industries' gap:** for 2020, explicitly specified sectors were ~**55%** of manufacturing/construction emissions, but a **'non-specific industries'** category alone caused **over 40%** (a pattern seen in 2014, 2016, 2019 too). This block **lacks sub-sectoral definitions** and falls outside PAT/CCTS — a major policy gap.
- **Way forward:** break down the 'non-specific industries' with **transparent, disaggregated data**; identify which sub-sectors drive the 40% and where in the process chain emissions concentrate. Transparency's real value is **domestic** — clarity for targeting interventions; 'exact knowledge of these passive outliers is non-negotiable'.

◆ STATIC / LINKED FACTS

- **BTRs** are submitted under the **Enhanced Transparency Framework** of the **Paris Agreement (2015)**.
- The **PAT** scheme operates under the **National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency (NMEEE)**, implemented by the **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)**.
- The **CCTS** was established under the **Energy Conservation (Amendment) Act, 2022**.
- India's **NDC**: net-zero by 2070; cut emissions intensity of GDP by 45% (from 2005) by 2030; reach 50% non-fossil installed capacity by 2030.

PRELIMS PRACTICE — 10 MCQs

WITH ANSWERS & EXPLANATIONS

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010:

1. It is administered by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
2. Foreign contributions must be received in a single designated account at the State Bank of India, New Delhi.
3. Registration once granted is valid for five years.

(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (D)

Explanation: All are correct. FCRA is administered by the MHA (1); all foreign contributions must be received only in a single designated account at SBI, New Delhi main branch (2); FCRA registration is valid for five years (3).

Q2. With reference to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), consider the following:

1. It was established in 1948 and renamed the IMO in 1982.
2. The IMO directly enforces its conventions on all flag states.
3. India has been a member of the IMO since 1959.

(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (C)

Explanation: The IMO was set up in 1948 as the IMCO and renamed IMO in 1982 (1 correct). India has been a member since 1959 (3 correct). The IMO does NOT enforce its conventions itself — implementation rests with member states (2 incorrect).

Q3. The 'Ecologically Sensitive Area' (ESA) in the Western Ghats is notified under which law?

(A) The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972
(B) The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
(C) The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980
(D) The Biological Diversity Act, 2002

Ans: (B)

Explanation: An ESA is a legally protected zone established under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (Section 3), with a customised management regime. The Gadgil panel and Kasturirangan group debated its extent in the Western Ghats.

Q4. With reference to the Western Ghats ESA committees, consider the following:

1. The Madhav Gadgil panel recommended the entire Western Ghats extent as an ESA.
2. The K. Kasturirangan group proposed notifying only the natural landscape (~60,000 sq km).
3. The Sanjay Kumar Committee issued the 2014 baseline draft notification.

(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (A)
Explanation: The Gadgil panel proposed the entire 1,29,037 sq km as ESA (1 correct); the Kasturirangan group proposed notifying only ~60,000 sq km of natural landscape (2 correct). The 2014 baseline draft earmarked 56,825.7 sq km — not the Sanjay Kumar Committee, which was set up later (2022) to finalise execution (3 incorrect).

Q5. The Chapekar brothers, recently in the news, are associated with which event?

(A) The Kakori conspiracy
(B) The assassination of W.C. Rand in Pune (1897)
(C) The Chittagong armoury raid
(D) The Alipore bomb case

Ans: (B)
Explanation: On 22 June 1897 the Chapekar brothers assassinated W.C. Rand, the Poona Plague Committee Chairman, in Pune. They were inspired by V.B. Phadke and Lokmanya Tilak (Kesari).

Q6. Consider the following statements regarding the Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI):

1. Its base year is 2011-12.
2. The eight core industries account for about 40% of the Index of Industrial Production.
3. It is released by the National Statistical Office (NSO).

(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (A)
Explanation: ICI base year is 2011-12 (1 correct); its eight industries make up about 40.27% of the IIP (2 correct). It is released by the Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT — NOT the NSO (3 incorrect); the NSO releases the IIP.

Q7. With reference to the PAT scheme and the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS), consider the following:

1. PAT aims to reduce the specific energy consumption of energy-intensive industries.
2. The CCTS focuses on reducing the emission intensity of nine industrial sectors.
3. Thermal power plants and railways continue under the PAT scheme rather than the CCTS.

(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (D)
Explanation: All correct. PAT targets specific energy consumption (1); the CCTS focuses on the emission intensity of nine sectors including iron & steel and cement (2); thermal power plants, railways, DISCOMs and commercial buildings continue under PAT (3).

Q8. India's Biennial Transparency Report (BTR), in the news, is submitted under which framework?

(A) The Montreal Protocol
(B) The Enhanced Transparency Framework of the Paris Agreement
(C) The Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism
(D) The Convention on Biological Diversity

Ans: (B)

Explanation: BTRs are submitted under the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) of the Paris Agreement (2015). India's First BTR disclosed that over 20% of its 2022 emissions came directly from industry.

Q9. Match the IMO conventions with their primary purpose:

1. MARPOL — prevention of marine pollution from ships.
2. SOLAS — minimum safety standards for ships.
3. STCW — training and certification of seafarers.

(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (D)

Explanation: All correctly matched: MARPOL — prevention of pollution from ships; SOLAS — safety of life at sea; STCW — standards of training, certification and watchkeeping for seafarers.

Q10. The PARAM series of supercomputers, referenced in the editorial on scaling, was developed by:

(A) ISRO
(B) DRDO
(C) C-DAC
(D) BARC

Ans: (C)

Explanation: The PARAM supercomputers (beginning with PARAM 8000 in 1991) were developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) — an example of indigenous capability cited in the 'invention to scale' debate.

MAINS PRACTICE — 3 QUESTIONS

WITH ANSWER POINTERS

“Despite having one of the largest pools of scientific manpower in the world, India's contribution to global research and innovation remains limited.” Analyse the reasons and suggest a roadmap for improving India's position in global science and technology. (GS-III, 250 words)

Answer pointers

- **Intro:** note India's large STEM talent base and early vision (SCL, ECIL, PARAM), yet a persistent gap between invention and globally competitive enterprises.
- **Reasons:** low R&D spend (~0.7% of GDP vs ~2%+ globally); thin private-sector R&D; weak academia–industry linkages; brain drain; institution-bound innovation that fails to build ecosystems; inconsistent policy and limited risk capital.
- **Strengths to leverage:** pharma 'pharmacy of the world', UPI/Aadhaar scale platforms, frugal space missions (Chandrayaan/Mangalyaan), India Semiconductor Mission.
- **Roadmap:** raise R&D toward 2% of GDP; deepen academia–industry–startup links; reward scaling and commercialisation, not just invention; build globally competitive AI/quantum/semiconductor ecosystems; retain talent and ease IP commercialisation.
- **Conclusion:** the countries that lead tomorrow may not invent first but scale best — India must do both.

Recent public-health policy in India has shifted focus from population health to individual well-being. Critically examine this shift and suggest how policy can be reconnected with people's felt needs. (GS-II, 250 words)

Answer pointers

- **Intro:** define UHC and the WHO's holistic view of health; flag the renaming of grassroots centres as 'Health & Wellness Centres' (2018).
- **The shift:** 'wellness' individualises responsibility and underplays structural/social determinants; population-health measurement via unmet needs is replaced by aspirational well-being ('if you cannot measure it, you cannot improve it').
- **Limits of digitisation:** ABDHM/ABHA build databases but cannot fix unaffordable private care and weak public facilities; information already exists in many datasets.
- **Way forward:** prioritise curative access and basic services (water, nutrition, maternal-child care); strengthen the three-tier system; use evidence-based, felt-need-driven planning; pair PM-JAY with supply-side public investment.
- **Conclusion:** health policy must serve people's needs first, with preventive/promotive care building on a base of accessible curative care.

India's industrial decarbonisation is central to its net-zero (2070) goal, yet a large share of industrial emissions remains 'non-specific' and outside policy scope. Examine the gaps in India's industrial climate strategy and suggest measures. (GS-III, 250 words)

Answer pointers

- **Intro:** anchor with the First BTR — over 20% of 2022 emissions from industry (13% fuel use + 9% processes); decarbonisation vital under Make-in-India/Viksit Bharat/net-zero.
- **Existing tools:** PAT (13 energy-intensive industries) transitioning to CCTS (9 sectors); other four (thermal power, railways, DISCOMs, buildings) stay under PAT.
- **The gap:** 'non-specific industries' caused over 40% of manufacturing/construction emissions (2020) yet lack sub-sectoral definitions and fall outside PAT/CCTS.
- **Measures:** disaggregated, transparent emissions data; identify and define the 40% block; extend market mechanisms to uncovered sub-sectors; green finance, fuel-switching and efficiency; domestic monitoring for course-correction.
- **Conclusion:** transparency's value is chiefly domestic — exact knowledge of 'passive outliers' is non-negotiable for a credible low-carbon transition.