



VEDANTA COACHING ACADEMY
& LIBRARY

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

THE HINDU ANALYSIS

29 June 2026

CURATED FROM THE HINDU — UPSC PRELIMS & MAINS FOCUS

TOPICS COVERED TODAY

- | | | |
|---|--|--------|
| 1 | Shared Responsibility — India, Seychelles & the Indian Ocean | GS 2 |
| 2 | The New Digital Slavery — Constitutional Guardrails for AI | GS 3 |
| 3 | Buyer Beware — Tracking Defective & Counterfeit Drugs | GS 2 |
| 4 | Sharing Waters — The Tungabhadra Dam & Inter-State Cooperation | GS 2 |
| 5 | India-U.K. Free Trade Agreement (CETA) Comes Into Force | GS 2&3 |
| 6 | Adolescent Malnutrition — How Schools Can Tackle It | GS 2&3 |
| 7 | SC Collegium — Justice P.S. Narasimha Joins | GS 2 |

COMPILED BY

Sapna Chauhan

READ · ANALYSE · REVISE

UPSC / STATE PCS | THE HINDU ANALYSIS

1 Shared Responsibility — India, Seychelles & the Indian Ocean

GS 2 · IR

India & its Neighbourhood

The Hindu, Pg 1

WHY IN NEWS

During his visit to the **Seychelles**, PM Narendra Modi held wide-ranging talks with President **Patrick Herminie** and called the Indian Ocean “our shared home”, declaring that its “security, sustainability and prosperity are our shared responsibility”. The two sides unveiled **19 outcomes**.



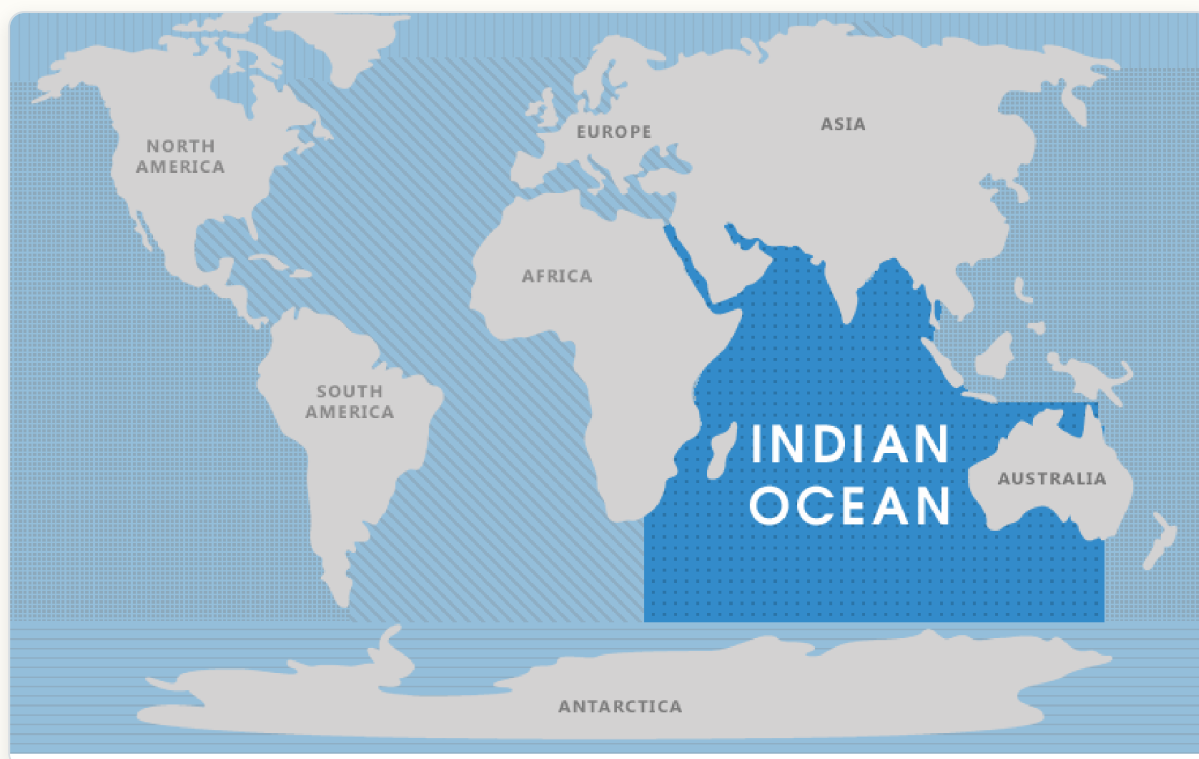
Seychelles — an archipelago in the Western Indian Ocean, with capital Victoria, lying off the East African coast near Madagascar & Comoros.

Key Outcomes of the Visit (19 Deliverables)

- **Vision:** Modi articulated an Indian Ocean where maritime security goes hand-in-hand with economic prosperity, and where partnership is “defined not by size, but by mutual respect and trust”.
- **Defence & maritime security:** Gifting of a **fast patrol vessel**; handover of **10 utility vehicles** and **five Laser Radial class boats** to the Seychelles Defence Force; refit of **PS Zoroaster** for the Coast Guard; upgrade of a **Dornier aircraft** with a glass cockpit.
- **Connectivity & finance:** An agreement to advance **UPI-based digital payments**; an umbrella **line of credit** with the Export-Import Bank of India.
- **Institutional ties:** An **extradition treaty**, an agreement on the peaceful uses of **outer space**, and preliminary preparations for a new **Seychelles National Hospital**.
- **Honour:** Modi was conferred the ‘**Guardian of the Blue Horizon**’ for his green leadership and commitment to the blue economy.

Climate & Global South Framing

- Addressing the National Assembly, Modi stressed that the **Global South — especially island nations — is the most impacted by climate change**, and that those who contributed least should not bear the greatest burden — climate action guided by “**fairness, responsibility and equity**”.



The Indian Ocean — the world's third-largest ocean and a critical theatre for India's trade, energy security and strategic outreach.

Why Seychelles Matters to India

- It is a **cornerstone of India's Global South strategy** and a critical maritime partner in the Western Indian Ocean.
- It helps India combat **seaborne terrorism, piracy and illegal fishing**, and serves as a counterweight to expanding Chinese influence in the region.
- **Historic diaspora link:** Indians first arrived in 1770 as plantation workers; persons of Indian origin today comprise about **5%** of the population. During British rule, Seychelles was governed for a time from the **Bombay Presidency**.

SEYCHELLES — PRELIMS SNAPSHOT

Location	Archipelago of ~115 islands in the Western Indian Ocean, off East Africa
Capital	Victoria (on Mahé island)
Neighbours	Madagascar, Comoros, Mauritius; near Kenya / Tanzania coast
Strategic value	Sea-lanes monitoring; anti-piracy; Blue Economy partner

STATIC / SYLLABUS LINKAGE

- SAGAR** 'Security and Growth for All in the Region' — India's maritime doctrine (2015), now broadened as MAHASAGAR.
- IOR Groupings** IORA, Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), Colombo Security Conclave.
- Blue Economy** Sustainable use of ocean resources for growth while preserving ecosystem health.

2 The New Digital Slavery — Constitutional Guardrails for AI

GS 3 · Sci-Tech

AI & Democracy

The Hindu, Pg 6 (Op-Ed)

WHY IN NEWS

Drawing on Pope Leo XIV's encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas*, the op-ed argues that **unchecked Artificial Intelligence threatens democracy** and demands constitutional safeguards that go beyond conventional regulation. India, it warns, stands at the “absolute epicentre” of this crisis.

The Core Problem: A Mismatch of Speeds

- **AI and morality do not keep the same time.** AI is built at start-up speed — “move fast and run perpetual beta tests on society” — while law in democracies moves slowly.
- By the time landmark laws like the **EU AI Act** or the **UK Online Safety Act** were debated and passed, the specific harms they targeted had already **mutated**, leaving a generation exposed to unaddressed digital vulnerabilities.

How Platforms Amplify the Risk

- Big Tech business models are engineered to **maximise engagement**; since outrage, fear and sensationalism drive the highest click-through rates, algorithms **prioritise hyper-partisan content** and drive radicalisation.
- **Echo chambers** normalise online hate and accelerate social fragmentation — private platforms effectively rewrite the rules of the public square for quarterly profit.
- A polarised society stripped of a **shared reality** becomes a soft target for **foreign interference**.

The Democracy & Sovereignty Dimension

- Adversarial states and non-state actors have weaponised platforms into theatres of **information warfare** — AI-driven psychological operations that exploit religious, ethnic and socioeconomic fault lines.
- By covertly funding and amplifying divisive narratives, hostile actors can **destabilise a democracy from within** — a direct threat to democratic sovereignty.
- As the world's largest democracy and a tech hub where **digital adoption outpaces digital literacy**, India faces a unique threat to its pluralistic society.

A Proposed Constitutional Framework

- **Individual rights:** A rights-based framework prioritising human dignity and digital autonomy — ownership of personal data, strict consent, protections against algorithmic discrimination in credit, employment and health.
- **Platform accountability:** End absolute safe-harbour immunity; mandate structural transparency and independent audits of recommendation engines.
- **Free-speech caution:** Combat disinformation without creating a tool for state censorship; target platform mechanics, not individual ideological speech.
- **Cognitive resilience:** A national programme in **media literacy and digital citizenship**.
- **National sovereignty:** Cross-sector early-warning systems to detect coordinated, real-time disinformation operations.

STATIC / SYLLABUS LINKAGE

DPDP Act, 2023 Digital Personal Data Protection Act — India's data-privacy law.

IT Rules, 2021 Intermediary guidelines governing safe-harbour under Sec 79, IT Act.

Art. 19(1)(a) Freedom of speech — with reasonable restrictions under Art. 19(2).

3 Buyer Beware — Tracking Defective & Counterfeit Drugs

GS 2 · Governance

Health Regulation

The Hindu, Pg 6 (Edit)

WHY IN NEWS

The Health Ministry has expanded **Schedule H2** drugs from a curated list of brands to **entire therapeutic classes** — shifting from regulation based on revenue to regulation based on **risk**. The move aims to trace defective and counterfeit batches.

What Has Changed

- **Schedule H2** (introduced 2022-23) requires a **barcode/QR code** on each pack to verify authenticity, encoding the product identifier, manufacturing licence number and batch number.
- It is part of a wider framework also covering **active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs)** and export-oriented compliance.
- The **Jan Vishwas Act, 2026** complements this by distinguishing **procedural** from **substantial** non-compliance — treating only the latter as meaningful enforcement.

Why It Matters

- Counterfeit networks target **vaccines, cancer medicines and antimicrobials**; the WHO flags high volumes of fake antimicrobials in low- and middle-income countries.
- India has one of the world's **highest antimicrobial resistance (AMR) rates**; substandard antimicrobials cause sub-therapeutic dosing that breeds resistant strains.
- Recurring quality concerns from the **US FDA** and **European Medicines Agency** — and India's setbacks over **contaminated cough syrups** — threaten its reputation as the “pharmacy of the world”.

Challenges Ahead

- The QR system works only if backed by a **state-managed, real-time database** with interoperable software and scanning infrastructure across States.
- Compliance and IT-integration costs will **strain MSME manufacturers** in particular.
- Prescription data on controlled substances is sensitive and needs a **digital governance layer that does not yet exist**.
- Long-term, the government must rationalise the compliance burden and remove the risk of corruption from **discretionary enforcement**.

DRUG REGULATION — PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Regulator:** Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), headed by the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).
- **Parent law:** Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, and the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945.
- **Schedule H / H1 / H2:** Schedules listing prescription-only drugs; H1 covers select antibiotics & habit-forming drugs requiring record-keeping.
- **AMR:** India is a signatory to the Global Action Plan on AMR; runs a National Programme on AMR Containment.
- **NCB:** Narcotics Control Bureau flags 'leakage' of medicinal opioids & psychotropics into illicit markets.

4

Sharing Waters — The Tungabhadra Dam & Inter-State Cooperation

GS 2 · Polity

Inter-State Relations

The Hindu, Pg 6 (Edit)

WHY IN NEWS

The Chief Ministers of **Karnataka** (D.K. Shivakumar), **Telangana** (A. Revanth Reddy) and **Andhra Pradesh** (N. Chandrababu Naidu), with Union Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil, jointly inaugurated the **33 spillway gates** of the Tungabhadra dam on **June 25** — pledging greater inter-State cooperation.



The Tungabhadra — a major right-bank tributary of the Krishna, forming a lifeline of the Deccan plateau across Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh & Telangana.

Key Facts About the Dam

- Located in Karnataka's **Koppal district**, it is the lifeline of three southern States, irrigating about **16.4 lakh acres** — 9.26 lakh in Karnataka, 6.25 lakh in Andhra Pradesh and 87,000 in Telangana.
- It has largely stayed dispute-free thanks to an established **water-sharing formula** and the **Tungabhadra Board's** regulation of releases.
- In **August 2024**, a crest gate was washed away during heavy inflows; the damaged gate was replaced and all 32 others upgraded to high-grade steel gates (₹51 crore, ~60-year life).

Lingering Frictions & Concerns

- The **Upper Bhadra project** — a major lift-irrigation scheme upstream in central Karnataka — remains an irritant for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
- **Excessive siltation** has cut the dam's storage from the original **133 tmc ft to about 106 tmc ft**; the Centre has assured a desilting plan.
- The Union government has been urged to monitor and expedite **dam rehabilitation projects across 19 States** — “the focus must be on prevention, not reparation”.

TUNGABHADRA RIVER — PRELIMS SNAPSHOT

Nature	Major right-bank tributary of the Krishna River
Origin	Confluence of Tunga & Bhadra near Kudli (Shivamogga); rise in W. Ghats
Length	~531 km; joins Krishna at Sangameswaram (Andhra Pradesh)
Mouth	Krishna enters Bay of Bengal at Hamsaladeevi

STATIC / SYLLABUS LINKAGE

Entry 17, List II Water (supply, irrigation, drainage) is a State subject.

Entry 56, List I Regulation of inter-State rivers is a Union subject.

Article 262 Empowers Parliament to adjudicate inter-State river disputes & bar SC jurisdiction.

ISRWD Act 1956 Inter-State River Water Disputes Act — framework for tribunals.

5

India–U.K. Free Trade Agreement (CETA) Comes Into Force

GS 2&3 · IR/Economy

Trade & Diplomacy

The Hindu, Pg 6 (Op-Ed)

WHY IN NEWS

From **July 15**, the India–U.K. Free Trade Agreement — formally the **Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)** — comes into force. Described as a “gold standard” deal, it is the U.K.’s most economically significant trade deal since leaving the EU.

Scale of the Deal

- Bilateral trade was already worth **£48 billion** a year in 2025. The FTA is forecast to lift **Indian GDP by £5.1 bn**, **U.K. GDP by £4.8 bn**, and raise bilateral trade by **£25.5 bn** annually in the long run.
- India remains the **fastest-growing G-20 economy**, on track to be the world’s third-largest within five years; the U.K. was the third fastest-growing G-7 economy in 2025.

Tariff & Sectoral Gains

- **99% of U.K. tariff lines** become duty-free for Indian products; India will remove or reduce tariffs on **90% of its tariff lines** for U.K. products.
- **For India:** boosts to labour-intensive sectors — **textiles, leather, jewellery** — and services like **IT and finance**.
- **For the U.K.:** tariff duties on exports to India fall by **~£400 million** initially (later £900 mn), benefiting aerospace, automotives, medical devices and **whiskies**.
- India retains protections for **dairy and edible oils**; the U.K. shields sugar, milled rice, pork, chicken and eggs.

Why This Deal Is Different

- It goes **beyond tariffs** — modern provisions on customs, digital trade and services help goods reach markets faster, especially for SMEs.
- It includes India's **first-ever standalone chapters** on anti-corruption, gender and development, plus comprehensive labour and environmental commitments.
- **Beyond metros:** dedicated provisions ensure gains reach high-growth sectors beyond Mumbai and London — e.g., a textile maker in Indore or an auto-parts maker in Birmingham can trade more cost-effectively.

INDIA-U.K. CETA — PRELIMS SNAPSHOT

Formal name	Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)
Entry into force	July 15, 2026
Negotiation	~3 years of talks; concluded as a 'gold standard' FTA
Firsts for India	Standalone chapters on anti-corruption, gender, development

STATIC / SYLLABUS LINKAGE

- FTA** Free Trade Agreement — cuts tariffs/quotas to ease cross-border trade.
- Rules of Origin** Criteria determining a product's economic nationality for tariff benefits.
- DCC** Double Contribution Convention on social-security — a parallel India-UK pact.

6 Adolescent Malnutrition — How Schools Can Tackle It

GS 2&3 · Social Justice

Health & Nutrition

The Hindu, Pg 7 (Op-Ed)

WHY IN NEWS

A “silent public health emergency” — adolescent malnutrition — is unfolding as India faces a **double burden**: undernutrition among children alongside surging obesity among adults. The authors argue **schools are the most critical setting for prevention**.

The Data (NFHS-6, 2023-24 & CNNS, 2019)

- **Obesity**: among women aged 15-49 rose from 24% to **30.7%**; among men from 22.9% to **27.3%**.
- **High blood sugar**: among men (15+) jumped from 15.6% to **20.9%**; among women from 13.5% to **17.8%**.
- Sedentary behaviour, processed diets and obesity — once urban/affluent — now affect **rural populations** too.
- **Stunting**: CNNS (2019) found **27.4%** of adolescents stunted; 35% of under-fives are stunted yet carry adult-level triglycerides — the “**thin-fat**” phenotype.

What Schools Can Do

- Follow the **Dietary Guidelines for Indians 2024** — half the plate by volume should be fruits and vegetables; use school gardens, fruit breaks and local seasonal produce.
- Actively discourage **sugary drinks, HFSS foods and Ultra-Processed Foods (UPFs)** — WHO data show UPF consumption in India surging at **over 13.7% year-on-year**; display ‘sugar boards’ showing hidden sugar.
- Treat **physical inactivity** as seriously as poor diet — guarantee structured activity and sport as core, not optional.
- Move from textbook nutrition education to **skill-based learning** — reading food labels, recognising marketing tactics, basic cooking.

A Policy Direction

- The **Let’s Fix Our Food (LFOF)** initiative — led by ICMR-NIN — is a multi-stakeholder effort for healthier school food environments through evidence-based policy and youth nutrition literacy.
- A **2025 Lancet study** projected 21.8 crore men and 23.1 crore women in India will be overweight by 2050, with the steepest rise among adolescents and young adults (15-24).

STATIC / SYLLABUS LINKAGE

NFHS	National Family Health Survey — flagship health & nutrition survey (IIPS / MoHFW).
PM POSHAN	Mid-Day Meal scheme — key lever for school nutrition.
Eat Right India	FSSAI movement promoting safe & healthy diets.
ICMR-NIN	Indian Council of Medical Research — National Institute of Nutrition.

7

SC Collegium — Justice P.S. Narasimha Joins

GS 2 · Polity

Judiciary

The Hindu, Pg 10

WHY IN NEWS

Justice P.S. Narasimha is set to join the Supreme Court Collegium following Justice **J.K. Maheshwari's** retirement. As the fifth senior-most judge, he will be part of the Collegium until he retires on **May 2, 2028**.

Composition & Function

- The Collegium will now comprise **CJI Surya Kant**, and Justices **Vikram Nath, B.V. Nagarathna, M.M. Sundresh** and **P.S. Narasimha**.
- Under the Collegium system — in existence since **1993** — the five senior-most judges recommend appointments, transfers and elevations to the Supreme Court and the **25 High Courts**.

Evolution of the Collegium (Three Judges Cases)

- It is **not a direct constitutional provision** but evolved through landmark judgments.
- **First Judges Case (1981)**: Held “consultation” in Arts. 124(2) & 217 did **not** mean concurrence — giving the executive primacy.
- **Second Judges Case (1993)**: Overruled it — “consultation” means **concurrence**; the CJI’s advice (after consulting two senior-most colleagues) is binding on the President.
- **Third Judges Case (1998)**: Expanded the Collegium to the **CJI + four senior-most judges**.

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS — PRELIMS SNAPSHOT

Constitutional basis	Articles 124 (SC) & 217 (HC) on appointment of judges
Collegium origin	Evolved via Three Judges Cases (1981 / 1993 / 1998)
NJAC	99th Amendment + NJAC Act struck down in 2015 (Fourth Judges Case)
MoP	Memorandum of Procedure guides the appointment process

PRACTICE · ANSWER WRITING

Mains Questions — Reframed for Practice

GS 2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

8 Marks

Q1. Island nations of the Western Indian Ocean have become central to India's maritime diplomacy. Examine their significance for India's security and Global South strategy.

प्रश्न 1. पश्चिमी हिंद महासागर के द्वीपीय राष्ट्र भारत की समुद्री कूटनीति के केंद्र में आ गए हैं। भारत की सुरक्षा और ग्लोबल साउथ रणनीति के लिए इनके महत्व का परीक्षण कीजिए।

GS 2 · POLITY / JUDICIARY

8 Marks

Q2. The Collegium system was a judicial response to safeguard independence in appointments. In light of recurring debates on transparency, critically assess its strengths and limitations.

प्रश्न 2. कॉलेजियम प्रणाली न्यायिक नियुक्तियों में स्वतंत्रता की रक्षा हेतु एक न्यायिक प्रतिक्रिया थी। पारदर्शिता पर बार-बार उठती बहस के आलोक में इसकी शक्तियों और सीमाओं का आलोचनात्मक मूल्यांकन कीजिए।

GS 2 · GOVERNANCE / HEALTH

12 Marks

Q3. Substandard and counterfeit medicines undermine India's standing as the 'pharmacy of the world' and worsen antimicrobial resistance. Discuss the regulatory reforms needed to ensure drug quality, and the challenges in implementing them.

प्रश्न 3. घटिया और नकली दवाइयाँ 'विश्व की फार्मसी' के रूप में भारत की साख को कमजोर करती हैं और रोगाणुरोधी प्रतिरोध को बढ़ाती हैं। औषधि गुणवत्ता सुनिश्चित करने हेतु आवश्यक नियामक सुधारों और उनके क्रियान्वयन की चुनौतियों पर चर्चा कीजिए।

GS 2&3 · SOCIAL JUSTICE / ECONOMY

12 Marks

Q4. India faces a 'double burden' of malnutrition — persistent undernutrition alongside rising obesity and diet-related disease. Analyse the causes of this transition and evaluate the role of schools within a multi-sectoral response.

प्रश्न 4. भारत कुपोषण के 'दोहरे भार' का सामना कर रहा है — लगातार अल्पपोषण के साथ बढ़ता मोटापा और आहार-संबंधी रोग। इस संक्रमण के कारणों का विश्लेषण करें और बहु-क्षेत्रीय प्रतिक्रिया में स्कूलों की भूमिका का मूल्यांकन कीजिए।