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THE HINDU ANALYSIS

14 JULY 2026 · TUESDAY

◆ IN TODAY'S EDITION ◆

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1 Citizenship Decisions Must Be ‘Fair, Reasoned’, Says Supreme Court

GS 2 · PAGE 1

THE HINDU · 14 JULY 2026

WHY IN NEWS

The Supreme Court held that determination of citizenship and foreigner status must follow a “**fair, lawful and reasoned**” process, setting aside a batch of **27 Gauhati High Court judgments** that had declared the appellants to be foreigners, and remanding the cases to the Foreigners’ Tribunals for fresh adjudication.

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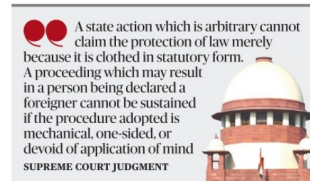
Citizenship decisions must be ‘fair, reasoned’, says SC

Top court sets aside 27 judgments of Gauhati HC on ‘foreigners’, asks tribunals to adjudicate afresh; Citizenship declarations can’t be sustainable if ‘procedure adopted is mechanical, says the court

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday held that the determination of citizenship and foreigner status must be undertaken through a “fair, lawful, and reasoned” process, as it set aside a batch of 27 Gauhati High Court judgments declaring the appellants to be foreigners, and remanded the cases to the Foreigners’ Tribunals concerned for fresh adjudication.

A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta observed that while the state has a legitimate interest in ensuring that persons who are legally ineligible for an Indian citizenship do not obtain such a status through “false claims”, the “grave consequence” of being declared a foreigner must follow a procedure that adheres to constitutional guarantees.



Fair opportunity
“A state action which is arbitrary cannot claim the protection of law merely because it is clothed in statutory form. A proceeding which may result in a person being declared a foreigner cannot be sustained if the procedure adopted is mechanical, one-sided, or devoid of application of mind.”

“A state action which is arbitrary cannot claim the protection of law merely because it is clothed in statutory form. A proceeding which may result in a person being declared a foreigner cannot be sustained if the procedure adopted is mechanical, one-sided, or devoid of application of mind,” the judgment, authored by Justice Nath, said. The Tribunal must examine whether the person had a “fair opportunity, whether the main grounds were disclosed, whether the evidence before it was capable of supporting the reference, and whether the

conclusion follows from the material on record,” it added.

The HC had dismissed the appeals against the orders of the Foreigners’ Tribunals declaring the appellants to be foreigners after noting that none of them had appeared before the tribunals despite having been served notices. It had observed that, in the absence of any written statement, documents, or evidence from the appellants, the tribunals had “no option” but to affirm the references.

The top court, however, clarified that the remand should not be construed as an affirmation of the appellants’ claim to Indian citizenship.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

SOURCE: THE HINDU, 14 JULY 2026 · PAGE 1

KEY OBSERVATIONS OF THE COURT

- A Bench of **Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta** observed that while the state has a legitimate interest in ensuring that persons legally ineligible for Indian citizenship do not obtain it through “**false claims**”, the “**grave consequence**” of being declared a foreigner must follow a procedure that adheres to **constitutional guarantees**.
- “**A state action which is arbitrary cannot claim the protection of law merely because it is clothed in statutory form**” — a proceeding declaring a person a foreigner cannot be sustained if the procedure is **mechanical, one-sided, or devoid of application of mind**.
- The Tribunal must examine whether the person had a **fair opportunity**, whether the **main grounds were disclosed**, whether the **evidence could support the reference**, and whether the **conclusion follows from the material on record**.
- The HC had dismissed appeals after noting none of the appellants appeared before the tribunals despite notices; the SC clarified the **remand is not an affirmation** of the appellants’ claim to Indian citizenship.

1A

Foreigners' Tribunals (FTs) — Complete Background

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WHAT ARE FOREIGNERS' TRIBUNALS?

- **Quasi-judicial bodies** formed by the central government through the **Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964** issued under **Section 3 of the Foreigners Act, 1946** — letting local authorities in a State refer a person suspected to be a foreigner to a tribunal.
- **2019 Amendment:** lays down modalities for FTs to decide appeals by persons not satisfied with the outcome of claims/objections filed against the **NRC**.
- MHA has empowered **District Magistrates in all States/UTs** to set up tribunals; the orders apply to the **whole country**, not any single state.

TYPES OF CASES & COMPOSITION

- **Two kinds of cases:** (i) persons against whom a “**reference**” is made by border police; (ii) persons whose names in electoral rolls carry a ‘**D**’ (**Doubtful**) marking — D-voter cases can also be referred by the **Election Commission of India**.
- **Composition:** each FT is headed by a member drawn from **judges, advocates and civil servants with judicial experience**, appointed as per government guidelines.

FUNCTIONING OF FTS

- Under the 1964 Order, an FT has **powers of a civil court** — summoning and enforcing attendance, examination on oath, requiring production of documents.
- Notice must be served in English or the State’s official language **within 10 days** of receiving the reference; case must be disposed of **within 60 days**.
- **Section 9, Foreigners Act:** the **onus of proving** one is not a foreigner lies **on the person**, notwithstanding the Indian Evidence Act, 1872.
- On failure to prove citizenship, the FT can send the person to a **detention centre (now ‘transit camp’)** for later deportation.

2

Retail Inflation Climbs Past RBI Target to 4.4%

GS 3 · PAGE 1

THE HINDU · 14 JULY 2026

WHY IN NEWS

India's retail inflation crossed the RBI's **4% target for the first time since January 2025**, touching **4.4% in June** (3.93% in May), driven by rising food and fuel prices amid the West Asia crisis and a weaker-than-normal monsoon.

Page No.1 , GS 3

Retail inflation climbs past RBI target to 4.4%

T.G.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

India's retail inflation has crossed the Reserve Bank of India's 4% target for the first time since January 2025, touching 4.4% in June. It stood at 3.93% in May.

Inflation, as measured by the new series of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), was driven by rising food and fuel prices amid the crisis in West Asia as well as a weaker-than-normal monsoon. Food inflation touched 5.05% in June, the highest in the new series of the CPI.

The transport segment saw inflation rising to 4.3% in June, compared with 1.7% in May, following rise in fuel prices.

"The June CPI inflation of 4.4%, exceeding the RBI's medium-term target of 4%, reflects persistent pressures from global geopolitical uncertainties and supply chain disruptions,"

Trade deficit jumps 430% as imports surge

NEW DELHI

India's trade deficit grew over fourfold to \$15.3 billion in June primarily due to high growth in merchandise imports, which were skewed by a spurt in the value of imports of crude oil, and gold. » PAGE 13

director of research at Knight Frank India.

'Uneven monsoon'

"On the domestic front, food inflation has remained a key driver, due to weather-related disruptions to agricultural output, and uneven monsoon distribution across certain regions," Mr. Rathi said.

Aditi Nayar, chief economist at ICRA, said retail food prices have continued to harden in July too.

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SOURCE: THE HINDU, 14 JULY 2026 · PAGE 1

KEY DATA POINTS

- **Food inflation touched 5.05%** in June — the highest in the new CPI series; the **transport segment** saw inflation rise to **4.3%** (vs 1.7% in May) following the rise in fuel prices.
- Economists flagged **persistent pressures from global geopolitical uncertainties** and supply-chain disruptions; **uneven monsoon distribution** kept food inflation a key driver, and retail food prices have continued to harden in July.

2A

CPI, WPI & PPI — The Price Index Framework

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WHO MEASURES CPI & THE NEW SERIES (BASE 2024)

- **NSO (MoSPI)** → CPI-Combined, CPI-Urban, CPI-Rural; **Labour Bureau** (Min. of Labour & Employment) → CPI-IW, CPI-AL, CPI-RL.
- **New CPI:** base year **2012** → **2024**; item basket **299** → **358 items**; food weight **45.86%** → **36.75%**.

WPI REVISION & THE NEW PPI (BASE 2022–23)

- **Office of Economic Adviser, DPIIT** revised the WPI base from **2011–12 to 2022–23**; basket expanded from **697 to 957 items**.
- **Solar and Wind energy**, alongside Nuclear Electricity, integrated under the ‘Electricity’ group; **Crude Petroleum & Natural Gas** **shifted** from ‘Primary Articles’ to ‘Fuel and Power’.
- **PPI** measures average change in prices **received by domestic producers** — inflation from the seller’s perspective, before prices reach consumers.
- PPI base year: **2022–23**; a **five-year transition (2026–2031)** will see PPI and revised WPI run concurrently before WPI is phased out.

Parameter	(CPI)	(WPI)	(PPI)
Measures	Prices paid by consumers	Wholesale prices of goods	Prices received by producers
Level	Retail level	Wholesale level	Factory-gate level
Services Included	Yes	No	Yes
Imports Covered	Yes	Yes	No (Domestic output only)
Published By	National Statistical Office (NSO), MoSPI.	Office of Economic Adviser (OEA), DPIIT.	Office of Economic Adviser (OEA), DPIIT.
Key Use	RBI's inflation targeting	GDP deflator, contract escalation	Supply-side inflation tracking

CPI VS WPI VS PPI — COMPARISON AT A GLANCE

3

Trade Deficit Jumps Fourfold in June on Surging Imports

GS 3 · PAGE 13

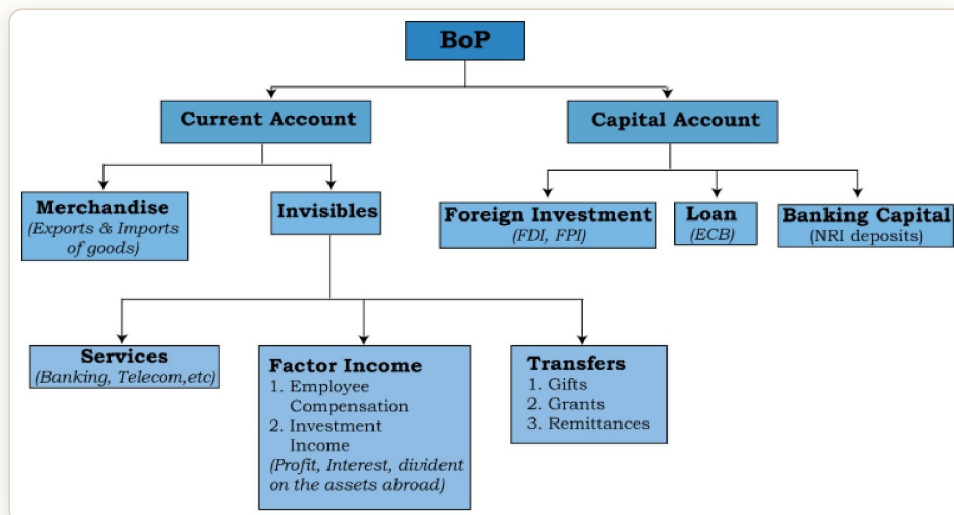
THE HINDU · 14 JULY 2026

WHY IN NEWS

India's trade deficit grew over fourfold to **\$15.3 billion in June 2026**, primarily due to high growth in merchandise imports, skewed by a spurt in the value of imports of **crude oil, electronic & electrical goods, and gold**.

KEY DATA — MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

- Overall exports (goods + services) grew **9.5% to \$73.4 billion**; total imports grew nearly **27% to \$88.8 billion**.
- Merchandise imports grew **31% to \$70.8 bn** vs merchandise exports up 15.5% to \$40.4 bn → merchandise trade deficit of **\$30.4 bn**, about 59% higher than June 2025.
- Services surplus **fell 6.8% to \$15.1 bn** as services imports (12.7%, \$17.9 bn) outpaced exports (2.9%, \$33 bn).
- Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal:** imports are driven by a few commodities — petroleum products/crude, gold and electronics; gold and oil values rose on the **prevailing geopolitical situation**, electronics on higher consumption and manufacturing inputs.



BALANCE OF PAYMENTS (BOP) — STRUCTURE OF CURRENT & CAPITAL ACCOUNTS

4

User Data Exposed Due to Flaws in UMANG Portal

GS 2 · PAGE 11

THE HINDU · 14 JULY 2026

WHY IN NEWS

Security researchers revealed **multiple vulnerabilities in the UMANG portal** — which aggregates hundreds of Union and State public services — exposing data of potentially millions of Indians across databases including the **EPFO**.

WHAT THE RESEARCHERS FOUND

- Vulnerabilities have **likely existed for years** and stem from the **architecture of the portal itself**, which has onboarded over **2,400 services** — “almost everything is broken by design.”
- Data exposed included **UANs (EPFO)**, **LPG cylinder booking details**, and **Aadhaar numbers** found in **plain text** across several services — though such storage is **disallowed by the Aadhaar Act, 2016**. The Aadhaar module itself was not vulnerable.
- The **EPFO module** is UMANG’s most-used service — over **40 crore transactions in three months**; after the disclosure the main EPFO portal was taken down for “migration”.
- **IT Ministry acknowledged** the vulnerabilities and said corrective and preventive measures are being implemented; researchers reported the flaws to the Ministry and **CERT-In**.

UMANG — PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance** — a key initiative under the **Digital India** programme (MeitY/NeGD).
- Develops a **common, unified platform** and mobile app — a single point of access to all government services; a **one-stop solution** that removes the need for multiple apps.

5

India–Japan Review Defence Ties, Prepare Ground for 2+2 Dialogue

GS 2 · PAGE 10

THE HINDU · 14 JULY 2026

WHY IN NEWS

India and Japan reviewed the entire spectrum of their expanding defence cooperation at the **8th India–Japan Defence Policy Dialogue in Tokyo**, agreeing to deepen collaboration in **defence industry, cybersecurity, space and advanced technologies**.

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India, Japan review defence ties, prepare ground for 2+2 dialogue

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

India and Japan on Monday reviewed the entire spectrum of their expanding defence cooperation and agreed to deepen collaboration in emerging domains such as defence industry, cybersecurity, space and advanced technologies during the eighth India-Japan Defence Policy Dialogue held in Tokyo.

The dialogue was led by Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh and Japan's

Vice-Minister of Defence for International Affairs, Kano Koji.

According to Ministry of Defence, the two sides assessed the progress made since the previous round of talks and reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership.

The discussions covered the regional and global security environment. They also reviewed ongoing defence engagements, including military-to-military

exchanges, cooperation between the two countries' joint headquarters, maritime cooperation, bilateral and multilateral exercises, capacity building, and defence equipment and technology collaboration, particularly in the maritime domain. They also discussed preparations and expected outcomes of the India-Japan ministerial engagements, including the next India-Japan 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministers' Dialogue scheduled later this year.

SOURCE: THE HINDU, 14 JULY 2026 · PAGE 10

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Led by **Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh** and Japan's Vice-Minister of Defence for International Affairs **Kano Koji**; both sides reaffirmed the **India–Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership**.
- Reviewed military-to-military exchanges, cooperation between **joint headquarters**, maritime cooperation, bilateral/multilateral exercises, capacity building and **defence equipment & technology collaboration**, particularly in the maritime domain.
- Discussed preparations for the next **India–Japan 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministers' Dialogue** scheduled later this year.

2+2 MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE

- An annual diplomatic summit format **initiated in 2018**, originally between **India and the US**; later expanded to **Japan, Australia, Russia and the United Kingdom**.
- Involves the **Foreign and Defence Ministers** of participating countries — strengthens bilateral ties and addresses shared security concerns.

6

PMFME Scheme — Formalising Micro Food Processing Enterprises

PRELIMS SPECIAL

THE HINDU · 14 JULY 2026

WHY IN NEWS

The **Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME)** Scheme is in focus as the flagship programme to formalise, upgrade and scale up India's heavily unorganised micro food processing sector.

ABOUT THE SCHEME

- A comprehensive, **centrally sponsored** national programme that moves small-scale local food operators into the formal banking and regulatory economy.
- Provides **credit-linked capital subsidies**, shared machinery platforms and professional branding packages — acting as a primary operational buffer for micro units.
- **Launched:** 29 June 2020, under the **Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**.
- **Implementing ministry:** Union **Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI)** — conceptualised, funded and managed directly by it.
- **Aim:** bring the estimated **25 lakh informal, unorganised** micro-scale food processors into the mainstream formal economy.

7

Global Liveability Index 2026 (EIU)

PRELIMS SPECIAL

THE HINDU · 14 JULY 2026

WHY IN NEWS

The **Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)** released its Global Liveability Index 2026, evaluating living conditions across **173 cities** worldwide.

ABOUT THE INDEX

- An **annual benchmark** comparing living conditions across major global cities — how effectively urban systems provide stability, healthcare, culture, environment, education and infrastructure.
- **Published by:** the EIU — the research and analysis division of **The Economist Group**; identifies the world's most and least liveable cities.

FIVE CORE ASSESSMENT PARAMETERS

- **Stability (25%):** crime, terrorism threats, military conflict, civil unrest.
- **Culture & Environment (25%):** climate, corruption, censorship, social restrictions, cultural & sporting opportunities, consumer goods access.
- **Healthcare (20%):** availability/quality of public & private healthcare, medicines, public health services.
- **Infrastructure (20%):** roads, public transport, international connectivity, housing, energy, water, telecom.
- **Education (10%):** quality and accessibility of public & private educational institutions.



GLI 2026 — Rankings Snapshot

PRELIMS SPECIAL

THE HINDU · 14 JULY 2026

GLOBAL TOP 5

City		Country	Rank	Ov
Copenhagen		Denmark	1	
Vienna		Austria	2	
Melbourne		Australia	3	
Sydney		Australia	4	
Zurich		Switzerland	5	

TOP 5: COPENHAGEN · VIENNA · MELBOURNE · SYDNEY · ZURICH

PERFORMANCE OF INDIAN CITIES

Performance of Indian Cities:

Indian Rank	Global Rank	City
1	120	New Delhi
2	121	Mumbai
3	123	Chennai
4	127	Bengaluru

NEW DELHI (120) · MUMBAI (121) · CHENNAI (123) · BENGALURU (127)

8

Holding the Court Accountable Amid Democratic Strain

GS 2 · PAGE 6

THE HINDU · 14 JULY 2026

WHY IN NEWS

In late June, 23 Opposition parties wrote to CJI Surya Kant raising concerns that the **Special Intensive Revision (SIR)** of electoral rolls is exclusionary and burdensome for ordinary citizens — and expressing disappointment over the Supreme Court’s refusal to interfere with the disenfranchisement.

THE EDITORIAL'S CORE ARGUMENTS

- For marginalised citizens, **voting is a powerful political act**; the SIR exercise initiated by the ECI has “poked at the heart” of electoral enfranchisement and created an **atmosphere of anxiety** tied to political identity.
- **Critique of the Court’s role**: the Bihar SIR case was adjudicated on **27 May 2026** — **after the election was over**; the Court has a history of postponing decisions until the state action becomes a *fait accompli* (as in the **demonetisation (2016)** and **Article 370/J&K** cases).
- The Court **actively involved itself** in the revision that led to deletion of several lakhs of voters — a “judicial abetment” shifting its nature from a **forum of judicial review to an administrative body**.
- Issues like **vagueness, lack of reasoning, disproportionate paperwork, rigid time limits**, and the discriminatory impact on **minorities, women and migrants** were overlooked; realities of illiteracy, poverty and lack of institutional access were not appreciated.
- **Judicial accountability**: many Court decisions involving legal questions are essentially political; evaluating fundamental aberrations in the judicial realm is **part of the Opposition’s function** in a democracy.

9

Unsafe Practices — Safety in Tourism & Adventure

GS 3 · PAGE 6

THE HINDU · 14 JULY 2026

WHY IN NEWS

Survivor accounts of the **Vietnam (Phú Quốc) boat tragedy** — in which some **15 Indians died and 17 survived** — point to clearly identifiable safety failures, prompting an editorial call to strengthen safety protocols in tourism and adventure.

WHAT WENT WRONG & THE LARGER PICTURE

- As weather turned rough and the speedboat took a sharp turn, passenger weight **shifted at once to one side**; the boat lost balance and **turned turtle** — the captain and guide escaped through the open front door while others were trapped.
- Some **three crore Indians** travel abroad annually, a significant share from **non-metro cities; South-East Asia** (Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia) has emerged as the preferred destination.
- Basic norms violated: operators may carry life jackets but often **do not insist every passenger wears one**; passengers must remain **securely strapped to seats** since even small weight shifts destabilise a speedboat.
- Vietnam has promised to **review safety standards** on such boats; Indians, aided by governments and operators, must strengthen awareness of **fire and water safety**.

10

The Right Path for India's Nuclear Power Development

GS 3 · PAGE 6

THE HINDU · 14 JULY 2026

WHY IN NEWS

With India targeting **100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047** and the sector opened to new public and private entrants, the authors argue India's nuclear future must balance **growth with self-reliance and safety**.

INDIA'S HOMEGROWN NUCLEAR ADVANTAGE

- Sanctions after the **1974 peaceful nuclear test** forced India to innovate; the **2008 India–US civil nuclear deal** ended restrictions on import of uranium and nuclear plants (with critical exceptions) — free uranium import enabled programme growth.
- Every part of India's plants was designed and manufactured in India via **AEC–Indian industry partnerships**; unit sizes rose from **200 MW → 500 MW → 700 MW** (4 units under construction, 10 more being developed).
- India makes the **world's cheapest nuclear plants (~\$1,700/kW)** vs South Korea ~\$2,200, France >\$5,500, US \$15,000 — potential to become a **major exporter**.
- India's **500 MW fast breeder reactor** is being commissioned; India makes **PHWRs** (natural uranium) while **LWRs** use enriched uranium — India should develop its own LWRs since the **NSG waiver permanently prohibits** transfer of enrichment and reprocessing technology.
- **Ambition needs caution:** India's nuclear safety record is exemplary; a single mishap could trigger a Chernobyl-style backlash — new entrants should first build a few plants, establish rigorous internal safety culture with **continuous external auditing**, then scale gradually. SMRs remain under development; foreign-designed SMRs should operate satisfactorily abroad before deployment in India.

◆ MAINS PRACTICE ◆

GS PAPER 2 · POLITY

8 MARKS · 125 WORDS

Q. “A state action which is arbitrary cannot claim the protection of law merely because it is clothed in statutory form.” In the light of the Supreme Court’s recent ruling setting aside 27 Gauhati High Court judgments, critically examine the procedural deficiencies in the working of Foreigners’ Tribunals and suggest reforms to align citizenship determination with constitutional guarantees.

प्रश्न: “कोई राज्य कार्यवाई केवल इसलिए कानून का संरक्षण नहीं पा सकती कि वह वैधानिक रूप में हो, यदि वह मनमानी है।” सर्वोच्च न्यायालय द्वारा गुवाहाटी उच्च न्यायालय के 27 निर्णयों को रद्द करने के हालिया निर्णय के आलोक में, विदेशी न्याधिकरणों (FTs) की कार्यप्रणाली की प्रक्रियात्मक कमियों की आलोचनात्मक समीक्षा कीजिए तथा नागरिकता निर्धारण को संवैधानिक गारंटियों के अनुरूप बनाने हेतु सुधार सुझाए।

GS PAPER 3 · ENERGY SECURITY

12 MARKS · 200 WORDS

Q. India today builds the world’s cheapest nuclear power plants, yet plans to import foreign reactors persist. Discuss how India can achieve its target of 100 GW nuclear capacity by 2047 while preserving self-reliance, cost competitiveness and an exemplary safety record. In your answer, evaluate the role of private entrants, indigenous LWR development and Small Modular Reactors (SMRs).

प्रश्न: भारत आज विश्व के सबसे सस्ते परमाणु ऊर्जा संयंत्र बनाता है, फिर भी विदेशी रिएक्टर आयात करने की योजनाएं बनी हुई हैं। चर्चा कीजिए कि भारत 2047 तक 100 GW परमाणु क्षमता का लक्ष्य आत्मनिर्भरता, लागत-प्रतिस्पर्धा और अनुकरणीय सुरक्षा रिकॉर्ड को बनाए रखते हुए कैसे प्राप्त कर सकता है। अपने उत्तर में निजी प्रवेशकर्ताओं, स्वदेशी LWR विकास तथा लघु मॉड्यूलर रिएक्टरों (SMRs) की भूमिका का मूल्यांकन कीजिए।

◆ PRELIMS PRACTICE — 10 MCQS ◆

Q1 With reference to **Foreigners' Tribunals (FTs)**, consider the following statements:

1. They are quasi-judicial bodies constituted under the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964, issued under the Foreigners Act, 1946.
2. Under Section 9 of the Foreigners Act, the burden of proving citizenship lies upon the State.
3. The orders establishing FTs apply to the whole country and are not specific to any single state.

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

✓ **Answer: c** — FTs were set up via the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, **1964** under Section 3 of the Foreigners Act, **1946** (not 1955), and their orders apply to the whole country. Under Section 9, the onus lies on the person, not the state.

Q2 An FT must serve notice to a person alleged to be a foreigner and dispose of the case, respectively, within:

(a) 7 days and 30 days

(b) 10 days and 60 days

(c) 15 days and 90 days

(d) 30 days and 120 days

✓ **Answer: b** — Notice within **10 days** of receiving the reference; disposal within **60 days**. FTs also enjoy certain powers of a civil court.

Q3 With reference to the **new CPI series**, consider the following statements:

1. The base year has been revised from 2012 to 2024 and the item basket expanded to 358 items.
2. The CPI-Combined is compiled by the National Statistical Office under MoSPI.
3. The weight of food in the new series has increased relative to the old series.

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

✓ **Answer: a** — The base year moved from 2012 to **2024**, the basket expanded 299 → 358 items, and the food weight **declined** from 45.86% to 36.75%. CPI-Combined is compiled by NSO (MoSPI); the Labour Bureau compiles CPI-IW/AL/RL.

Q4 Consider the following statements regarding the revised **WPI** and the new **PPI**:

1. The base year of both the revised WPI and the new PPI is 2022–23.
2. Crude Petroleum and Natural Gas have been shifted from ‘Primary Articles’ to the ‘Fuel and Power’ group in the WPI.
3. The PPI measures the prices paid by consumers at the retail level.
4. Both indices are released by the Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT.

- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 4 only
(c) 1, 2 and 4 only (d) 1, 3 and 4 only

✓ **Answer: c** — WPI base is now **2022–23** (basket 697 → 957); crude petroleum & natural gas moved to ‘Fuel and Power’; PPI measures prices **received by producers**; both are released by the OEA, DPIIT, with a 2026–2031 transition before WPI is phased out.

Q5 In the **Balance of Payments**, which of the following fall under the **Current Account**?

1. Remittances 2. External Commercial Borrowings 3. Merchandise trade 4. NRI deposits 5. Investment income

- (a) 1, 3 and 5 only (b) 2, 3 and 4 only
(c) 1, 2 and 5 only (d) 1, 3, 4 and 5 only

✓ **Answer: a** — Merchandise trade and invisibles (services, factor income such as investment income, and transfers such as remittances) form the current account; ECBs (loans) and NRI deposits (banking capital) belong to the **capital account**.

Q6 With reference to **UMANG**, consider the following statements:

1. UMANG is a key initiative under the Digital India programme providing single-point access to government services.
2. It aggregates services of both the Union and State governments.
3. Storage of Aadhaar numbers in plain text is disallowed under the Aadhaar Act, 2016.

- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

✓ **Answer: d** — UMANG is a Digital India initiative providing a single unified access point to Union and State services; storage of Aadhaar numbers in plain text is disallowed by the **Aadhaar Act, 2016** — a norm the exposed services violated.

Q7 The 2+2 **Ministerial Dialogue** format involves which ministers, and with which of the following countries does India hold it?

- (a) Home & Finance; US, Japan, France, Russia (b) Foreign & Defence; US, Japan, Australia, Russia, UK
(c) Foreign & Commerce; US, Japan, Australia, Germany (d) Defence & Home; US, Japan, Australia, France

✓ **Answer: b** — Initiated in **2018 with the US**, the 2+2 involves the **Foreign and Defence Ministers** and has expanded to Japan, Australia, Russia and the UK.

Q8 With reference to the **PMFME Scheme**, consider the following statements:

1. It is a centrally sponsored scheme launched in 2020 under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.
2. It is implemented by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
3. It aims to bring about 25 lakh informal micro food processing units into the formal economy.

- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

✓ **Answer: c** — PMFME was launched on **29 June 2020** under Aatmanirbhar Bharat and is implemented by **MoFPI** (not MSME Ministry); it targets ~25 lakh informal micro food processing units with credit-linked capital subsidies.

Q9 With reference to the **Global Liveability Index 2026**, consider the following statements:

1. It is published by the Economist Intelligence Unit and covered 173 cities, with Copenhagen ranked first.
2. New Delhi was the highest-ranked Indian city.
3. Healthcare carries the highest weight (25%) among the five parameters.

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

✓ **Answer: a** — Published by the **EIU** covering **173 cities**; Copenhagen ranked first. **Stability and Culture & Environment** carry **25% each** (healthcare and infrastructure 20% each, education 10%) — statement 3 is wrong. New Delhi (120) was the highest-ranked Indian city.

Q10 With reference to **India's nuclear power programme**, consider the following statements:

1. Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) made in India use natural uranium as fuel.
2. India currently builds the cheapest nuclear power plants in the world at about \$1,700 per kW.
3. India aims to develop 100 GW of nuclear power capacity by 2035.
4. The Nuclear Suppliers Group waiver permanently prohibits transfer of enrichment and reprocessing technology to India.

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1, 2 and 4 only

(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

✓ **Answer: c** — India's PHWRs run on **natural uranium** while LWRs use enriched uranium; at ~\$1,700/kW India builds the cheapest plants; the NSG waiver **permanently prohibits** transfer of enrichment/reprocessing technology; the 100 GW target is for **2047**, not 2035.