



P.L.RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY

Building Bureaucrats Since 2006

Editorial of the Day – 23.05.2026

Index

- | | | |
|----|---|------------|
| 1. | Alarm Bells – On the Index of Eight Core Industries Data (TH) | -01 |
| 2. | For India, Weakening Monsoon and Fertiliser Crisis, A Double Whammy (IE) | -04 |
| 3. | Recent FTAS Could Erode India's Policy Space (TS) | -07 |
| 4. | The Slow Death of Peacekeeping (TP) | -10 |

1. Alarm Bells – On the Index of Eight Core Industries Data (TH)

GS Paper III – Indian Economy and Industrial Growth

Topic – Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment; Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth.

Sub-Topic – Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI), Structural Growth Deceleration, Energy Infrastructure Deficits, and Macro-Industrial Indicators.

1. Introduction

India's industrial economy has begun the Fiscal Year 2026–27 on a highly fragile note, with the Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) slowing sharply to a growth rate of 1.7% in April 2026. While recent external headwinds—such as the escalating geopolitical crisis in West Asia—have exacerbated global supply chains, India's core sector slowdown represents a deeper domestic structural problem rather than a temporary external shock.

The deceleration follows a downward trend line, where annual core sector growth averaged just 2.8% in FY 2025–26, a substantial decline from the 4.5% recorded in FY 2024–25. Because these eight infrastructure sectors contribute over 40.27% of the total weight in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), this persistent slowdown signals systemic demand-side and supply-side challenges.

2. Deepening Vulnerabilities in the Energy Sector

The energy landscape within the eight core industries is facing significant stress, with key production metrics continuing a prolonged multi-month decline –

The Contraction Timeline – Out of the eight core industries, only steel, cement, and electricity registered positive growth in April 2026. Conversely, crude oil and natural gas production contracted continuously for 16 and 22 months, respectively.

The Storage Infrastructure Deficit – This domestic production decline highlights a major vulnerability in India's energy security framework – the lack of adequate, long-term strategic commercial gas storage infrastructure, which restricts the country's capacity to manage sudden external supply shocks.

Forex Défense Interventions – To control large foreign exchange outflows amid currency volatility, the government reduced Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) imports by 30% in April 2026.

Industrial Spill over – The combination of falling domestic output and forced import cuts has restricted total industrial power capacity and input fuel access for energy-intensive manufacturing units.

3. Upstream Fuel Shocks and Rural Agrarian Distress

The core sector data reveals a parallel contraction in fuel utilization and chemical inputs, pointing to underlying stress in the rural economy –

Suppressed Commercial Consumption – Overall domestic natural gas consumption registered a clear decline. This drop is partially driven by direct state-level restrictions on commercial and industrial fuel use to conserve stocks for critical household sectors.

The Fertilizer Contraction – Following a brief, short-term recovery in March, fertilizer production slipped back into negative territory.

The El Niño and Monsoon Link – This contraction in fertilizer demand is closely tied to seasonal uncertainties, with weather models predicting a below-normal southwest monsoon and an intensifying El Niño pattern.

Socio-Economic Risks – Lower fertilizer consumption and drought concerns pose risks to total kharif agricultural output, threatening to worsen rural distress, lower farm-sector incomes, and depress broader rural consumer demand.

4. Infrastructure Buffers and Fiscal Stress Limits

The steel and cement sectors remain the only consistent drivers of growth within the ICI framework, though their long-term sustainability faces limits –

State-Driven Momentum – Steady production expansion in steel and cement indicates that public construction and infrastructure asset creation are ongoing.

The Fiscal Constraint Balance – This infrastructure momentum is primarily driven by targeted government capital expenditure (CapEx). However, maintaining this level of public spending is becoming difficult due to mounting fiscal pressures and narrow budgetary cushions.

Private Investment Void – The absence of a strong revival in private corporate capital expenditure leaves infrastructure growth entirely dependent on state funding, which is vulnerable to broader economic uncertainties.

5. Convergence of Macro-Economic Risk Indicators

The core sector slowdown matches a broader drop visible across several primary macroeconomic metrics –

PMI at Historic Lows – The manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) has dropped close to a four-year low, confirming an absolute contraction in new industrial order books and factory output.

Stagnant GST Inflows – Growth in monthly Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections originating from domestic sales has slowed, rising only slightly above prevailing inflation levels, which points to flat core consumer spending.

The Structural Triad – The intersection of weak consumption, declining energy output, and rural distress signals that the economy is facing structural demand-side challenges rather than a temporary cyclical dip.

6. Way Forward

Securing Strategic Energy Reserves – Accelerating the construction of underground strategic gas storages and diversifying LNG supply networks to protect domestic industries from regional geopolitical conflicts.

Reviving Private Sector CapEx – Transitioning away from state-funded infrastructure growth by introducing targeted tax incentives and regulatory simplifications to encourage private investment in manufacturing.

Strengthening the Rural Safety Net – Deploying proactive micro-irrigation subsidies, expanding the MGNREGA asset-creation matrix, and providing direct credit support to insulate rural incomes from El Niño shocks.

Optimizing Supply Chain Inputs – Re-evaluating domestic natural gas allocation priorities to ensure that essential, employment-generating industries receive steady fuel access during import reductions.

7. Conclusion

The 1.7% core sector growth recorded in April 2026 serves as an early warning for India's macroeconomy, revealing deeper structural vulnerabilities that require policy attention. Managing this slowdown effectively involves looking beyond short-term relief measures. By building resilient energy storage infrastructure, addressing the root causes of rural demand distress, and managing fiscal pressures through private-public partnerships, India can stabilize its core industrial base and secure sustainable, long-term economic growth.

Source – <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/alarm-bells-on-the-index-of-eight-core-industries-data/article71011079.ece>

Question

"The performance of India's eight core industries is heavily dependent on state-driven capital expenditure, masking structural vulnerabilities in energy security and rural demand. Elaborate on this statement in light of the recent deceleration in the Index of Core Industries, and suggest policy interventions to secure sustainable industrial growth." (250 Words, 15 Marks)

1. Introduction

The Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) slowed to 1.7% in April 2026, marking a fragile start to the new fiscal year. Because these eight foundational sectors comprise over 40.27% of the weight within the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), this sharp deceleration highlights structural vulnerabilities across India's energy, agricultural, and infrastructure landscapes.

2. State CapEx Masking Structural Vulnerabilities

An elaboration of the recent core sector data reveals a widening gap between state-supported construction and a broader slowdown in industrial activity –

The Energy Security Bottleneck – While the overall index slowed, crude oil and natural gas production continued a long-term decline of 16 and 22 months, respectively. This structural shortfall is worsened by India's lack of long-term commercial gas storage facilities. To control foreign exchange outflows, the government implemented a 30% cut in LNG imports, which has restricted input fuel access for energy-intensive domestic manufacturing.

The Agrarian Demand Deficit – Fertilizer production contracted due to projections of a below-normal monsoon and an intensifying El Niño pattern. This reduction in input demand points to underlying rural distress, threatening to lower farm incomes and depress broader rural consumer demand.

The Fiscal Capital Imbalance – Steel and cement remain the only sectors growing consistently, driven almost entirely by government capital expenditure on public infrastructure. However, relying solely on state funding is unsustainable over the long term due to rising fiscal pressures, while private corporate capital investment remains sluggish.

3. Suggested Policy Interventions

Restoring sustainable industrial growth requires moving beyond reactive measures toward targeted structural interventions –

Building Energy Infrastructure – Prioritizing public-private partnerships to build underground strategic natural gas reserves, reducing vulnerability to geopolitical supply shocks in West Asia.

Incentivizing Private Investment – Transitioning infrastructure funding away from an exclusive reliance on state budgets by offering clear regulatory pathways and asset-monetization incentives to crowded-in private capital.

Insulating the Rural Economy – Expanding climate-smart agricultural interventions, upgrading localized canal networks, and adjusting natural gas pricing mechanisms to ensure the domestic fertilizer industry has steady access to affordable feedstock during energy crises.

Conclusion

The slowdown in the core sector shows that public infrastructure spending alone cannot sustain high industrial growth if energy security and rural demand remain vulnerable. Achieving long-term economic resilience requires balancing state-led capital expenditure with structured energy storage solutions, agricultural protection policies, and reforms that encourage private sector participation. This approach will ensure India's core sectors can withstand both external shocks and domestic demand transitions.

Source – <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/alarm-bells-on-the-index-of-eight-core-industries-data/article71011079.ece>

2. For India, Weakening Monsoon and Fertiliser Crisis, A Double Whammy (IE)

GS Paper III – Indian Economy / Agriculture / Food Security

Topic – Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies; Buffer stocks and food security; Major crops – cropping patterns; Government policies and interventions.

Sub-Topic – Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS), Weaponization of Maritime Chokepoints (Strait of Hormuz), El Niño and Kharif Vulnerability, and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger).

1. Introduction

India's agricultural sector is facing an unprecedented structural crisis as it enters the 2026 kharif sowing season. The sector is caught in a "double whammy" – a severe, geopolitically driven fertilizer supply disruption combined with an atmospheric shock to the southwest monsoon. Following maritime chokepoint closures in West Asia, the fundamental issue for India's food security has shifted. The primary challenge is no longer merely sourcing sufficient volumes of crop nutrients, but whether the Union exchequer can continuously afford the rapidly expanding fiscal burden required to guarantee stable, subsidized prices for farmers.

2. Geopolitical Shock – The Strait of Hormuz Crisis

The Maritime Choke Point – Following regional military escalations in West Asia, Iran effectively closed the Strait of Hormuz.

Global Transit Interruption – This closure is highly significant because one-third of the world's fertilizers normally transit through this narrow strait.

The Domestic Production Shock – The supply disruption severely hit domestic manufacturing. India's internal fertilizer production declined by 24.6% in March 2026—marking the sharpest single-month contraction in recent memory, which broke a consecutive three-month streak of expansion.

The Deficit Scale – To save the upcoming kharif crop, India must source nearly four times its current urea opening stocks. This shortfall must be bridged entirely through emergency international spot imports purchased at inflated, crisis-level global prices.

3. The Fiscal Dilemma – Subsidy Absorbency Limits

The Policy Response – To shield farmers ahead of the June peak sowing window, the Union Cabinet approved a 12% increase in the Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) for the kharif 2026 season. Concurrently, retail prices for key fertilizers like Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) have been held flat.

Fiscal Spending Shock – Under the current design, every additional dollar spike in global fertilizer prices translates directly into an open-ended subsidy liability for the government.

Budgetary Strain – If the West Asian maritime conflict continues, absorbing these inflated import costs will create a spending shock that the fiscal budget cannot easily accommodate, creating a clear trade-off with other developmental capital expenditure.

4. Atmospheric Headwinds – The El Niño Impact

The supply chain shock matches a severe meteorological deficit –

Below-Normal Projections – The India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast indicates that the 2026 southwest monsoon will drop to 92% of the Long Period Average (LPA). This marks the first below-normal forecast in three years.

Kharif Vulnerability – This deficit is driven by the rapid development of El Niño conditions in the Pacific Ocean.

The Timing Mismatch – The sharpest drop in rainfall is projected for the second half of the monsoon season—precisely when standing kharif crops like paddy, cotton, pulses, and oilseeds enter their most water-dependent development stages.

The Strategic Vacuum – Unlike food grains or crude oil, India completely lacks a centralized strategic reserve architecture or alternative routing pathways for bulk fertilizers, leaving the supply chain highly vulnerable to sudden maritime blockades.

5. Socio-Economic Risks and Impact on SDG 2

The Squeeze on Incomes – If fertilizer input costs rise due to supply limits or if the monsoon fails, India risks facing a combination of food price inflation and a sharp drop in rural agricultural incomes.

The Shadow on Progress – This crisis threatens India's commitments under Sustainable Development Goal 2 (Zero Hunger by 2030).

Persistent Vulnerability – India has made progress by reducing its undernourished population from 243 million in 2006 to 172 million today. However, the country still ranks 102nd out of 123 nations on the 2025 Global Hunger Index. Any crisis that lowers agricultural yields risks reversing these hard-won nutritional gains.

6. Way Forward

Building Strategic Fertilizer Reserves – Establishing a national strategic buffer stock for urea and DAP—similar to strategic petroleum reserves—to insulate farmers from sudden geopolitical shocks.

Diversifying Supply Geographies – Reducing absolute reliance on West Asian transit corridors by securing long-term supply agreements with alternative producers in Africa, North America, and Central Asia.

Enhancing Nutrient Efficiency – Accelerating the rollout and adoption of Nano-Urea and precision drone-based spraying to lower total bulk chemical demand per acre.

Expanding Domestic Capacity – Investing in indigenous production, particularly green ammonia and coal-gasification-based urea plants, to structurally decouple India's food security from global gas and maritime volatility.

Source – <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/india-monsoon-fertiliser-crisis-urea-iran-war-strait-hormuz-10703157/>

Question

"The intersection of volatile geopolitical chokepoints and climate-linked monsoon deficits exposes structural vulnerabilities in India's agricultural supply chain. Comment on the sustainability of using open-ended fiscal subsidies to manage external input shocks while maintaining national food security." (250 Words, 15 Marks)

1. Introduction

India's agricultural economy is facing a critical juncture as it enters the 2026 kharif season, caught between a below-normal monsoon forecast (92% of LPA) driven by El Niño and a major fertilizer supply shock caused by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. This situation highlights a key policy challenge – while the subsidy system stabilizes internal prices in the short term, relying on open-ended fiscal absorption to handle global supply crises faces clear financial and structural limits.

2. The Limits of Subsidies in Managing External Shocks

The government's response—approving a 12% increase in the Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) to keep retail Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) prices flat—protects farm incomes but creates broader macroeconomic challenges –

Unpredictable Fiscal Burden – Because India relies heavily on imported raw components and must source four times its urea opening stocks at crisis-level spot prices, flat retail pricing turns global market shocks directly into central debt. If maritime disruptions continue, this rising subsidy bill will strain the national budget.

The Lack of Strategic Buffers – Unlike crude oil, India lacks a centralized strategic reserve architecture for fertilizers. Without physical buffer stocks, financial subsidies alone cannot fix real supply shortages if ships cannot pass through vital trade routes.

The Threat to Food Security (SDG 2) – Rising input costs combined with an El Niño-driven drought during critical crop growth cycles threaten the yields of essential crops like paddy and pulses. This pressure on output risks fuelling food inflation and slowing down India's progress toward Sustainable Development Goal 2 (Zero Hunger), where the nation still ranks 102nd on the Global Hunger Index.

3. Proposed Policy Shift

To ensure sustainable agricultural growth, India must move away from purely reactive fiscal measures toward structural supply chain resilience –

Supply Diversification – Reducing dependence on West Asian shipping lanes by locking in multi-year import contracts with alternative producers in South America and Africa.

Physical Strategic Reserves – Building dedicated, state-managed storage facilities for bulk fertilizers to maintain a minimum two-month supply buffer before peak sowing seasons.

Demand-Side Efficiency – Expanding the use of technology-driven alternatives, such as Nano-Urea and precision farming, to lower overall chemical input requirements.

Conclusion

Using fiscal subsidies to absorb global price spikes protects farmers during immediate crises, but it functions as a short-term solution for deeper structural vulnerabilities. Long-term agricultural

resilience cannot be sustained by the exchequer alone. To protect national food security against future climate and geopolitical shocks, India must combine its pricing support with strategic storage buffers, diversified trade routes, and domestic manufacturing self-sufficiency.

Source - <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/india-monsoon-fertiliser-crisis-urea-iran-war-strait-hormuz-10703157/>

3. Recent FTAs Could Erode India's Policy Space (TS)

General Studies Paper - General Studies Paper II – International Relations

Topic - Effects of liberalisation on the economy

Sub-Topic - WTO and trade negotiations

Introduction

India has recently signed or negotiated multiple Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with countries such as the UAE, Australia, UK, and the European Union. These agreements aim to improve market access, increase exports, and integrate India into global value chains. However, concerns are emerging that certain provisions related to intellectual property, government procurement, digital trade, and investment rules may reduce India's future policy flexibility or "policy space."

1. What is Policy Space?

Meaning

1. Policy space refers to the freedom of governments to design domestic economic, industrial, social, and technological policies according to national priorities.

Importance

1. Helps countries protect vulnerable sectors.
2. Allows governments to support MSMEs, agriculture, public health, and strategic industries.
3. Enables flexibility during crises and development transitions.

2. Why India is Pursuing FTAs

Expanding Export Markets

1. FTAs reduce tariffs and improve access to foreign markets.

Diversifying Trade Partners

1. India seeks alternatives amid global supply chain shifts and geopolitical tensions.

Attracting Investment

1. Trade agreements may encourage foreign investment and manufacturing.

Integrating into Global Value Chains

1. FTAs help India participate in international production networks.

3. Concerns Regarding Erosion of Policy Space

Restrictive Trade Commitments

1. Deep trade agreements may limit future domestic policy flexibility.

Pressure on Domestic Industries

1. Small and medium enterprises may struggle against foreign competition.

Regulatory Constraints

1. Certain FTA clauses may restrict government intervention in strategic sectors.

4. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Concerns

Stronger Patent Rules

1. Some FTAs seek stricter IPR provisions beyond WTO obligations ("TRIPS-plus").

Impact on Generic Medicines

1. India's pharmaceutical sector depends heavily on generic drug production.
2. Stronger patent protections may increase medicine prices.

Compulsory Licensing Issues

1. FTA provisions may weaken India's ability to issue compulsory licences during health emergencies.

5. Government Procurement Concerns**Market Access for Foreign Firms**

1. FTAs may require opening public procurement to foreign companies.

Impact on MSMEs

1. Domestic firms may lose preference in government contracts.

Reduced Industrial Support

1. Government procurement is often used to promote domestic manufacturing.

6. Digital Trade and Data Governance Issues**Restrictions on Data Localisation**

1. Some digital trade provisions discourage local data storage requirements.

Impact on Digital Sovereignty

1. Limits government control over strategic digital infrastructure and data governance.

AI and Emerging Technologies

1. Policy flexibility is important for regulating future technologies and digital platforms.

7. Environmental and Labour Standards**Non-Tariff Barriers**

1. Developed countries may use sustainability standards as trade barriers.

Compliance Burden

1. MSMEs may face difficulties meeting strict environmental and labour norms.

8. Impact on Agriculture and Farmers**Import Competition**

1. Cheaper imports may affect domestic agricultural producers.

Food Security Concerns

1. Trade commitments should not undermine India's public food procurement systems.

9. Importance of FTAs Despite Concerns**Export Opportunities**

1. FTAs can improve access for Indian goods and services.

Strategic Partnerships

1. Trade agreements strengthen geopolitical and economic ties.

Technology and Investment Flows

1. FTAs may support industrial modernisation and infrastructure growth.

10. Balancing Trade and Sovereignty**Need for Calibrated Negotiations**

1. India must protect sensitive sectors while pursuing trade integration.

Safeguard Clauses

1. Agreements should preserve flexibility for public health, food security, and industrial policy.

Support for MSMEs

1. Domestic industries need financial, technological, and policy support to compete globally.

11. India's Strategic Trade Approach

Shift from Defensive to Selective Liberalisation

1. India increasingly prefers carefully negotiated bilateral FTAs.

Emphasis on National Interest

1. Trade agreements should align with long-term developmental priorities.

Way Forward

Protect Core Policy Space

1. Preserve flexibility in public health, digital governance, and industrial policy.

Strengthen Domestic Competitiveness

1. Improve logistics, productivity, and innovation capacity.

Ensure Inclusive Trade Growth

1. MSMEs and farmers must benefit from trade integration.

Balanced Trade Diplomacy

1. India should pursue FTAs without compromising economic sovereignty.

Conclusion

Free Trade Agreements provide important opportunities for exports, investment, and global integration. However, excessively restrictive commitments may reduce India's ability to pursue independent economic and developmental policies. India must therefore negotiate FTAs carefully to balance global integration with national policy autonomy, public welfare, and long-term strategic interests.

Source - https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/recent-ftas-could-erode-our-policy-space/article71011579.ece#google_vignette

Question

Q. While Free Trade Agreements can boost exports and investment, they may also constrain domestic policy flexibility. Examine in the context of India's recent FTAs. (250 words)

Introduction

India has actively pursued Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with several countries to enhance exports, investment, and strategic partnerships. However, concerns remain regarding the erosion of India's policy space in areas such as public health, digital governance, and industrial policy.

Benefits of FTAs

1. Improve market access for Indian goods and services.
2. Attract foreign investment and technology transfer.
3. Integrate India into global value chains.
4. Strengthen geopolitical and economic partnerships.

Concerns Regarding Policy Space

1. TRIPS-plus intellectual property provisions may affect access to affordable medicines.
2. Government procurement rules may disadvantage MSMEs.
3. Digital trade clauses may restrict data localisation policies.
4. Environmental and labour standards may become non-tariff barriers.
5. Reduced flexibility in industrial and public welfare policies.

Way Forward

1. Negotiate balanced and sector-sensitive agreements.
2. Preserve flexibility in public health and digital regulation.

3. Strengthen competitiveness of domestic industries and MSMEs.
4. Include safeguard mechanisms for strategic sectors.

Conclusion

India must adopt a calibrated trade strategy that promotes economic integration without compromising developmental priorities, economic sovereignty, and policy flexibility.

Source – <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/recent-ftas-could-erode-our-policy-space/article71011579.ece>

4. The Slow Death of Peacekeeping (TP)

General Studies Paper – General Studies Paper III – Internal Security and Conflict Management

Topic – Role of international organisations

Sub-Topic – United Nations peacekeeping operations

Introduction

United Nations peacekeeping operations were established to maintain peace and stability in conflict-affected regions. For decades, peacekeeping symbolised collective global responsibility and multilateral cooperation. However, declining political consensus, inadequate funding, troop shortages, geopolitical rivalry, and changing nature of conflicts are weakening the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions worldwide.

1. What is Peacekeeping?

Meaning

1. Peacekeeping refers to international efforts, usually under the United Nations, to maintain peace and security in conflict zones.

Main Functions

1. Monitoring ceasefires
2. Protecting civilians
3. Supporting political transitions
4. Humanitarian assistance
5. Disarmament and conflict prevention

2. Evolution of UN Peacekeeping

Cold War Period

1. Peacekeeping mainly focused on monitoring ceasefires between states.

Post-Cold War Expansion

1. Missions expanded into nation-building, elections, and civilian protection.

Modern Peacekeeping

1. Current operations often deal with terrorism, civil wars, insurgencies, and humanitarian crises.

3. Why Peacekeeping is Weakening

Declining Political Consensus

1. Major powers increasingly disagree on global conflicts.
2. Rivalries among powerful countries weaken collective decision-making.

Funding Constraints

1. Many member states delay or reduce financial contributions.
2. Missions face shortages in equipment and resources.

Troop Shortages

1. Countries are becoming reluctant to deploy soldiers in dangerous conflict zones.

Mandate Expansion

1. Peacekeeping missions now carry extremely broad responsibilities.
2. Limited resources are insufficient for complex mandates.

4. Changing Nature of Conflicts**Rise of Non-State Actors**

1. Terrorist groups, militias, and insurgent organisations complicate peacekeeping operations.

Urban Warfare and Civil Conflicts

1. Conflicts increasingly occur within states rather than between states.

Hybrid Threats

1. Cyber threats, misinformation, and transnational networks create new security challenges.

5. Operational Challenges Faced by Peacekeepers**Lack of Clear Mandates**

1. Ambiguous objectives reduce mission effectiveness.

Host Government Resistance

1. Some governments restrict peacekeeping operations or cooperation.

Security Risks

1. Peacekeepers increasingly face direct attacks.

Limited Accountability

1. Allegations of misconduct in some missions have affected credibility.

6. Crisis of Multilateralism**Geopolitical Competition**

1. Great power rivalry weakens the UN Security Council's ability to act decisively.

Erosion of Collective Security

1. Countries increasingly prioritise national interests over global cooperation.

Selective Intervention

1. Humanitarian responses often depend on political calculations.

7. Consequences of Weakening Peacekeeping**Increased Humanitarian Crises**

1. Civilian populations become more vulnerable during conflicts.

Spread of Instability

1. Fragile states may collapse further without stabilising forces.

Refugee and Migration Pressures

1. Conflict zones generate large-scale displacement.

Loss of Faith in Global Institutions

1. Weak peacekeeping reduces trust in international governance mechanisms.

8. Importance of Peacekeeping Despite Challenges**Preventing Escalation**

1. Peacekeeping missions help prevent conflicts from spreading regionally.

Supporting Fragile States

1. They provide breathing space for political reconciliation and institution-building.

Humanitarian Protection

1. Peacekeepers often support civilians during crises.

9. India's Role in UN Peacekeeping

Major Troop Contributor

1. India has historically been one of the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping missions.

Professional Reputation

1. Indian peacekeepers are widely respected for professionalism and humanitarian service.

Strategic Importance

1. Peacekeeping strengthens India's global diplomatic image and commitment to multilateralism.

10. Need for Peacekeeping Reforms

Clearer Mandates

1. Missions should have realistic and achievable objectives.

Better Funding Mechanisms

1. Timely financial support is necessary for operational effectiveness.

Technology Integration

1. Use of drones, surveillance systems, AI, and digital intelligence can improve mission capability.

Stronger Political Backing

1. Sustainable peacekeeping requires diplomatic consensus among major powers.

11. Future of Peacekeeping

From Traditional Peacekeeping to Peacebuilding

1. Long-term stability requires governance, development, and reconciliation efforts.

Regional Cooperation

1. Regional organisations may increasingly complement UN missions.

Flexible and Adaptive Missions

1. Future operations must adapt to hybrid and asymmetric conflicts.

Way Forward

Revitalise Multilateral Cooperation

1. Strengthen collective commitment to international peace and security.

Reform the UN Security Council

1. Improve representativeness and decision-making efficiency.

Enhance Operational Capacity

1. Better training, funding, and technology are essential.

Focus on Preventive Diplomacy

1. Early conflict prevention is more effective than post-conflict intervention.

Conclusion

The weakening of global peacekeeping reflects a broader crisis in international cooperation and multilateralism. While peacekeeping faces serious political, financial, and operational challenges, it remains an essential instrument for maintaining global stability and protecting vulnerable populations. Revitalising peacekeeping will require renewed political commitment, institutional reform, and collective global responsibility.

Source - <https://dailypioneer.com/news/the-slow-death-of-peacekeeping>

Question

Q. The decline of United Nations peacekeeping reflects the broader crisis of multilateralism in the contemporary world. Discuss. (250 words)

Introduction

United Nations peacekeeping operations were created to maintain international peace and security through collective global action. However, geopolitical rivalries, funding shortages, and changing conflict patterns have weakened their effectiveness.

Reasons for the Decline of Peacekeeping

1. Increasing geopolitical tensions weaken consensus in the UN Security Council.
2. Funding shortages and troop fatigue reduce operational effectiveness.
3. Modern conflicts involving militias and terrorism complicate peacekeeping.
4. Expanding mandates exceed available resources and capabilities.
5. Host governments often resist external intervention.

Consequences

1. Greater instability in fragile states.
2. Increased humanitarian crises and civilian suffering.
3. Declining credibility of international institutions.
4. Weakening of collective security mechanisms.

Measures Required

1. Reform and strengthen UN institutions.
2. Ensure adequate funding and technological modernisation.
3. Promote preventive diplomacy and regional cooperation.
4. Build stronger political consensus among major powers.

Conclusion

Peacekeeping remains indispensable for global peace and humanitarian protection. Reviving it requires renewed commitment to multilateralism, institutional reforms, and cooperative international leadership.

Source - <https://dailypioneer.com/news/the-slow-death-of-peacekeeping>