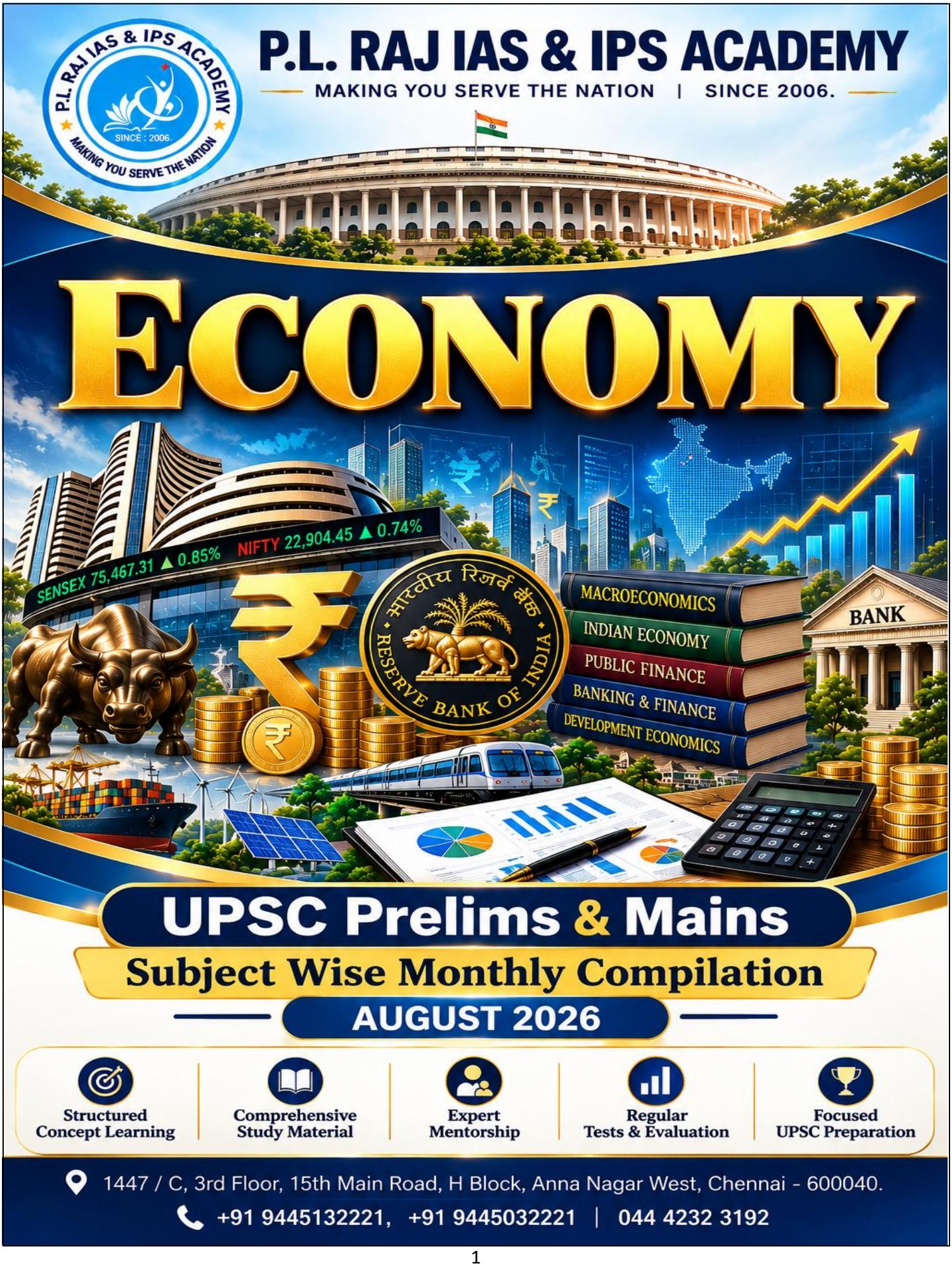

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Contents

1. GI & Beyond 2.0 Summit 3
2. Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026 4
3. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026 6
4. UPI Charges and Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) 10
5. E-Samudra 14
6. Mustard Honey 17
7. Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) 20
8. National Food Security (Amendment) Bill, 2026 22
9. Renewable Energy Transition for India's Secondary Steel Sector 25
10. India's Merchandise Exports Surge Amid Trade Diversification 27
11. NITI Aayog Report: Key Sectors to Position India as a Global Manufacturing Hub 30
12. Sovereign Green Bonds 32
13. South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) agreement 35
14. Qatar–India Pos Transfer Powered by UPI Remittance Service 38
15. Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2026 40
16. Regional Rural Banks 44
17. Online Bond Platform Providers (OBPPs) 47
18. Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS) 50
19. India–Mauritius Investment Ties and DTAA Reforms 53
20. Information Technology Resilience Index 55
21. GENESIS Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EIR) Cohort-3 57
22. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) 60
23. National Health Claim Exchange (NHCX) 63
24. Mission Rangeen Machhli 2031 66
25. Integrated Fertilizer Management System (iFMS) 68

1. GI & Beyond 2.0 Summit

Prelims:

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

Mains:

GS Paper III-Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

Current relevance:

The **Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles**, in association with the **Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC)**, will organize **the GI & Beyond 2.0 Summit** on 5 August 2026 in New Delhi.



Highlights:

1. The Summit aims to **promote India's GI-tagged handloom and handicraft products** and strengthen their presence in **domestic and international markets**.
2. To facilitate **collaboration among stakeholders** across the GI ecosystem and enhance market opportunities for GI products.
3. More than **100 GI-registered handloom and handicraft products** from across India will be displayed, along with **thematic exhibits** and **live demonstrations** of traditional weaving and handicrafts.

4. The Summit will launch the **Digital Handloom Atlas – "One Platform. Endless Markets"**, a digital platform designed to showcase India's handloom products, including GI products, and connect artisans with global markets.
5. The **Diamond Jubilee Logo of the Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC)** will also be unveiled during the inaugural session.
6. **Key Areas of Discussion:**
    - GI Registration and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)
    - Promotion of GI products in the domestic market
    - Strategies for leveraging GI handloom products in international markets
7. The Summit is expected to foster collaboration among key stakeholders, enhance the visibility of India's GI-tagged handloom and handicraft products, expand their access to global markets, and strengthen the country's overall GI ecosystem.

Source: PIB -

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2293352&reg=48&lang=1

2. Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026

Prelims:

Indian Economy

Mains:

GS Paper III-Indian Economy

Current relevance:

The **Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026** proposes tax relief measures to strengthen **India's fund management ecosystem**, promote **electronics manufacturing**, encourage **foreign investment**, and support **diamond trading and data centre infrastructure**.



Highlights:

Objective:

The Bill seeks to provide **tax certainty**, promote **fund management activities**, encourage **foreign investment**, and strengthen India's competitiveness across key sectors.

Proposed tax reforms:

1. The Bill proposes substantial relaxation of the eligibility conditions for **Eligible Investment Funds (EIFs)** managed from India to avail tax exemption on their global income.
2. Offshore funds will be required to satisfy only a limited set of eligibility conditions, providing greater operational flexibility and aligning India's framework with global fund structures.
3. Tax exemption for foreign companies supplying **capital goods, equipment, or tooling** to contract manufacturers engaged in electronics production in India has been proposed for an extended period.

4. The Bill also proposes tax exemption for foreign companies engaged in the **storage and sale of electronic components** through customs bonded areas for supply to Indian contract electronics manufacturers.
5. A new tax holiday has been proposed for specified foreign companies engaged in **mining, brokerage, aggregation, tender, auction, and sale of rough diamonds** in a notified special zone in India.
6. The Bill seeks to replace the earlier Ordinance by providing tax exemption on **interest income and capital gains** earned by **Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs)** from investments in Government securities.
7. The Bill proposes expanding the definition of eligible data centres to include facilities operated through **ownership and leasing**, while simplifying eligibility requirements for tax exemptions.

Source: THE HINDU- https://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/government-proposes-to-ease-tax-relief-conditions-for-offshore-funds/article71301421.ece

3. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026

Prelims:

Indian Economy

Mains:

GS Paper II-Government Policies and Interventions, GS Paper III- Indian Economy and Issues Relating to Growth and Employment

Current affairs:

The **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026** was passed by the Lok Sabha on 7 August 2026.



Highlights:

Background:

1. **Need for Amendment:**
    i. The **MSMED Act was notified in 2006** and has completed 20 years since its enactment.Technological advancements, **emergence of IT-enabled systems** and changes in the legal landscape created the need to update the Act.
    ii. The amendments seek to strengthen the legal framework, improve ease of doing business, introduce **decriminalisation**, create institutional mechanisms for MSME promotion and address delayed payments.
2. **Growing MSME Sector:**
    i. Udyam-registered MSMEs increased from 1.65 crore on 1 April 2023 to 9.16 crore.
    ii. The MSME sector provides employment to over 40 crore people and is regarded as the backbone of the Indian economy.

Key Amendments:

1. **MSME Classification and Udyam Registration:**

i. The Act incorporates the twin criteria of **investment in plant/machinery and turnover** for MSME classification.

ii. The **Udyam Registration Portal** is given permanence as a **digital, free and voluntary registration platform**.

iii. Registration of MSMEs continues to remain **voluntary.**

2. **Online Dispute Resolution:**

i. **Online Dispute Resolution (ODR)** has been introduced to enable Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) to settle disputes in a **timely and cost-effective manner.**

ii. Where an application challenging a decree, award or order remains pending for more than six months, courts must order payment of **at least 50% of the awarded amount** to the MSE supplier.

3. **Time-Bound Adjudication:**

i. Mediation must be completed within **90 days** from the date fixed for the first appearance.

ii. Following termination of mediation, the **MSEFC** must refer the dispute for arbitration within **30 days**.

iii. The arbitral award must subsequently be made within **90 days from completion of pleadings.**

4. **Stronger Recovery of Dues:**

i. Mediated settlements and arbitral awards under the prescribed mechanism can be recovered as **arrears of land revenue.**

ii. Recovery can be undertaken through the **District Collector, Deputy Commissioner or another notified authority** where the buyer's assets are situated.

5. **Faster Payments through TReDS:**

i. All **Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs)** must route settlement of invoices for procurement from MSMEs through the **Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS).**

ii. An enabling mechanism allows States to encourage their PSEs to use TReDS.

iii. Invoice discounting through TReDS increased from ₹40,000 crore in 2022–23 to **₹3.47 lakh crore** in **2025–26.**

6. **Strengthening MSE Facilitation Councils:**

i. The composition of Micro and Small Enterprises Facilitation Councils (MSEFCs) has been **rationalized.**

ii. States can establish **multiple MSEFCs** to facilitate faster disposal of payment disputes.

iii. State Governments are also empowered to frame rules governing MSEFCs.

7. **Decriminalization and Trust-Based Regulation**

i. The amendment replaces **conviction-based fines with graded civil penalties** for specified violations.

ii. For furnishing incorrect information, a **warning is issued for the first instance**, followed by penalties for subsequent violations.

iii. Similar graded treatment is introduced for non-disclosure of unpaid amounts with interest in buyers' annual accounts.

iv. The changes seek to promote **Ease of Doing Business and a trust-based regulatory environment**.

Significance:

1. **Addressing Delayed Payments**

The combination of **ODR, statutory timelines, stronger recovery mechanisms and compulsory TReDS-based invoice settlement for CPSEs** seeks to improve payment security and liquidity for Micro and Small Enterprises.

2. **Formalization and Scaling Up**

Permanent recognition of **Udyam Registration**, stronger institutional mechanisms and simplified compliance are intended to promote **enterprise formalisation and provide a pathway for MSMEs to scale up.**

3. **Towards Viksit Bharat at 2047**

The amendments align with the Government's vision of **Viksit Bharat at 2047** by seeking to build a vibrant MSME sector capable of supporting **inclusive, sustainable and employment-intensive economic growth.**

Source: PIB-

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2296358&reg=48&lang=1

4. UPI Charges and Merchant Discount Rate (MDR)

Prelims:

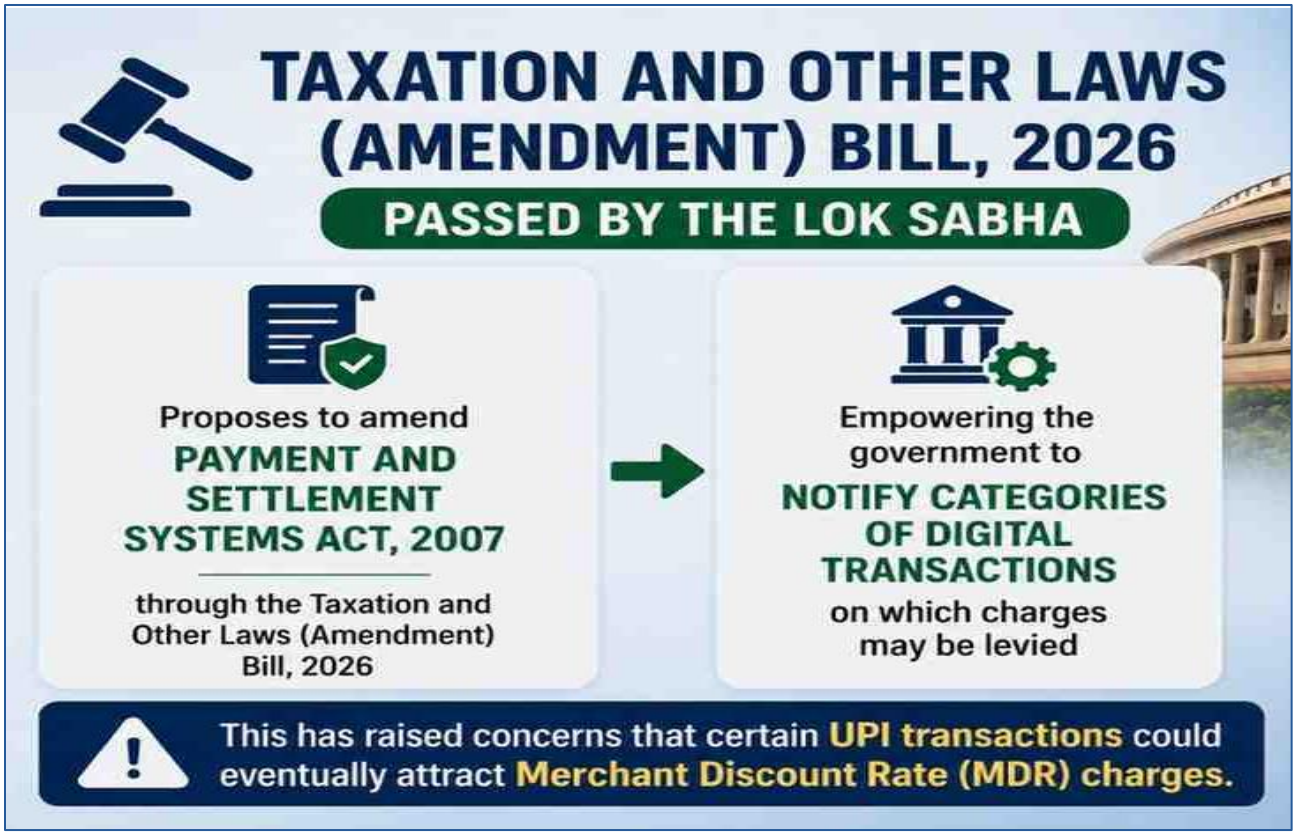
Indian Economy

Mains:

GS Paper III – Indian Economy

Current relevance:

The **Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026**, passed by the Lok Sabha, proposes to amend the **Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007**, empowering the government to notify categories of digital transactions on which charges may be levied. This has raised concerns that certain **UPI transactions could eventually attract Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) charges.**



Highlights:

Merchant Discount Rate (MDR)

1. MDR is a fee paid by merchants to **banks and payment processors** for processing digital transactions through their payment networks.
2. A typical MDR has four components:
   - **Interchange fee**: Paid to the bank that issued the credit/debit card.
   - **Processing charges**: Paid to the payment processor/gateway.
   - **Network fee**: Paid to payment networks such as Visa, Mastercard and NPCI.
   - **Tax:** Goods and Services Tax (GST) is applicable on these services.
3. Other electronic payment methods continue to attract MDR, ranging from
   - Non-RuPay debit cards: **0.4%–0.9%**
   - Domestic credit cards: **1%–1.5%**
   - Netbanking: **1.5%–2.2%**
   - International credit cards: **3%–4.5%**

4. Since **2020**, the government has mandated that **UPI and RuPay debit-card** transactions will not attract MDR charges.
5. Therefore, merchants do not directly pay MDR on these transactions.
6. The government has been supporting the cost of promoting **low-value UPI transactions** through an **incentive/subsidy mechanism**.

Cost of UPI transactions:

1. The cost of UPI transactions is currently borne by a combination of **Banks, payment processors, other stakeholders in the payment ecosystem, the government, through incentives/subsidies.**
2. In a recent press conference, RBI Governor, said that someone has to bear the cost of UPI transactions, with some of the cost being **absorbed by banks and payment processors** and some being borne by taxpayers.

Incentive Scheme for Promotion of Low-Value BHIM-UPI Transactions:

1. The government launched the Incentive Scheme for Promotion of **Low-Value BHIM-UPI Transactions** in **December 2021.**
2. It provides a subsidy/incentive to banks for UPI transactions of **less than Rs. 2,000** in value at small merchants.The subsidy is shared among various stakeholders in the UPI ecosystem.

Government's proposal:

1. The proposed legislative change would enable banks and **UPI companies to charge MDR** for certain UPI payments.
2. The **Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007**, currently instructs banks not to impose a charge for using electronic modes of payment when the prescribed methods under **Section 269SU of the Income Tax Act** are used.
3. Section 269SU covers specified electronic payment modes, including UPI and BHIM-UPI transactions, and certain QR-code-based payments.

4. The **Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026** seeks to modify the relevant provision so that such transactions can attract MDR charges.

Possible MDR Framework:

1. Apply to **large merchants** with an annual turnover of around **₹1 crore–₹1.5 crore** and UPI transactions **above ₹2,000**, potentially leaving nearly **95% of existing UPI transactions outside** its scope, with a proposed MDR of around **0.25%–0.4% of the transaction value**, though the final rates have not yet been decided.
2. According to the Finance Minister, an MDR mechanism could help **banks and fintech companies invest further in payment infrastructure, innovation and security**, with users benefiting from improvements in the UPI ecosystem.

Significance of UPI:

1. UPI has become an **important pillar** of India's **digital payment ecosystem**.
2. Its major attraction has been its convenience and absence of direct transaction charges for users.
3. Maintaining **low-cost digital payments supports**:
    - Financial inclusion
    - Digitalisation of the economy
    - Reduction in dependence on cash
    - Wider adoption of formal financial services
4. At the same time, the growing scale of UPI creates a need for **sustainable financing of payment infrastructure, innovation and security.**

Major concerns:

1. The primary concern is that UPI may **no longer remain completely free**.
2. If merchants have to pay MDR, some may pass the cost on to customers.
3. This could make **digital payments more expensive.**
4. Higher costs could potentially:
    - Discourage digital payments

- Affect small businesses and consumers
- Encourage some users to return to cash

5. This is particularly significant because digital payments and financial inclusion have become important pillars of India's ongoing financial reforms.

Source: THE HINDU - https://www.pressreader.com/india/the-hindu-mumbai-9wwd/20260809/282037628979847?srsltid=AfmBOorX_oP2qyqeHfeDQa621Hykc7k3yVP4wgbjNL5vAxScfLio25bF

5. E-Samudra

Prelims:

Indian Economy, E-Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II: E-Governance, GS Paper III: Indian Economy –Infrastructure

Current relevance:

The **Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways**, launched **E-Samudra** on 8 August 2026 in Mumbai as a comprehensive digital platform integrating services for **seafarers, shipping companies, ports and other maritime stakeholders** under a single digital ecosystem.



Highlights:

Key Features:

1. **Single Digital Window**: Integrates multiple maritime services with **end-to-end digital workflows.**
2. **Digital Service Delivery**: Provides **online payments, real-time application tracking** and digitally issued certificates.
3. **Digital First & Faceless Governance**: Shifts maritime administration from a physical office-based system to an **integrated digital ecosystem**.
4. **Ease of Governance:** Aims to make services predictable, **transparent and time-bound**, while promoting Ease of Living for seafarers and **Ease of Doing Business for the maritime sector.**
5. It supports India's broader maritime transformation under **Maritime India Vision 2030** and **Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047.**

Seafarer Welfare & Digital Initiatives

1. **e-NAVIK:** Provides a **24×7**, **transparent and trackable grievance-redressal mechanism** to protect the welfare, safety, dignity and rights of Indian seafarers, including assistance in cases such as abandonment, wage disputes, recruitment issues and repatriation.
2. **Seafarer Tracking Dashboard:** Aims to strengthen **real-time monitoring and tracking of seafarers**, supporting improved administrative oversight and seafarer welfare.
3. **Digital Seafarers Employment Agreement (d-SEA):** Aims to **digitise seafarers' employment** agreements, making employment-related processes more transparent, accessible and efficient.
4. **Seafarers Welfare Fund Society (SWFS):** Provides and strengthens **welfare support for seafarers and eligible beneficiaries,** with recent measures aimed at rationalising and consolidating welfare schemes.
5. **Sagar Mein Yog**: Promotes the **physical and mental well-being of seafarers** through standardised wellness and yoga modules, including their integration into maritime training and digital learning systems.
6. **Sagar Mein Samman**: Promotes **gender equality and inclusion in the maritime sector**, with particular emphasis on improving opportunities, participation and support for women seafarers through a **2025–2030 action plan**.
7. **Merchant Shipping Act, 2025:** By recognising seafarers as **Key Workers**, it strengthens the policy framework for placing **seafarer welfare, dignity and protection** at the centre of maritime governance.

Significance:

1. India's active seafarer workforce increased from approximately **1.03 lakh in 2013 to more than 3.23 lakh in 2025**, increasing the need for efficient digital regulation, service delivery and welfare mechanisms.

2. India has also emerged as the **second-largest supplier of seafarers globally** and the **world's leading ship-recycling destination**, while seeking to position itself among the **world's top five shipbuilding nations.**
3. By integrating maritime services on a common platform, **E-Samudra seeks to reduce compliance burdens, improve service delivery, enhance transparency and strengthen stakeholder-centric maritime governance.**

Source: PIB -

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2296568&reg=48&lang=1

6. Mustard Honey

Prelims:

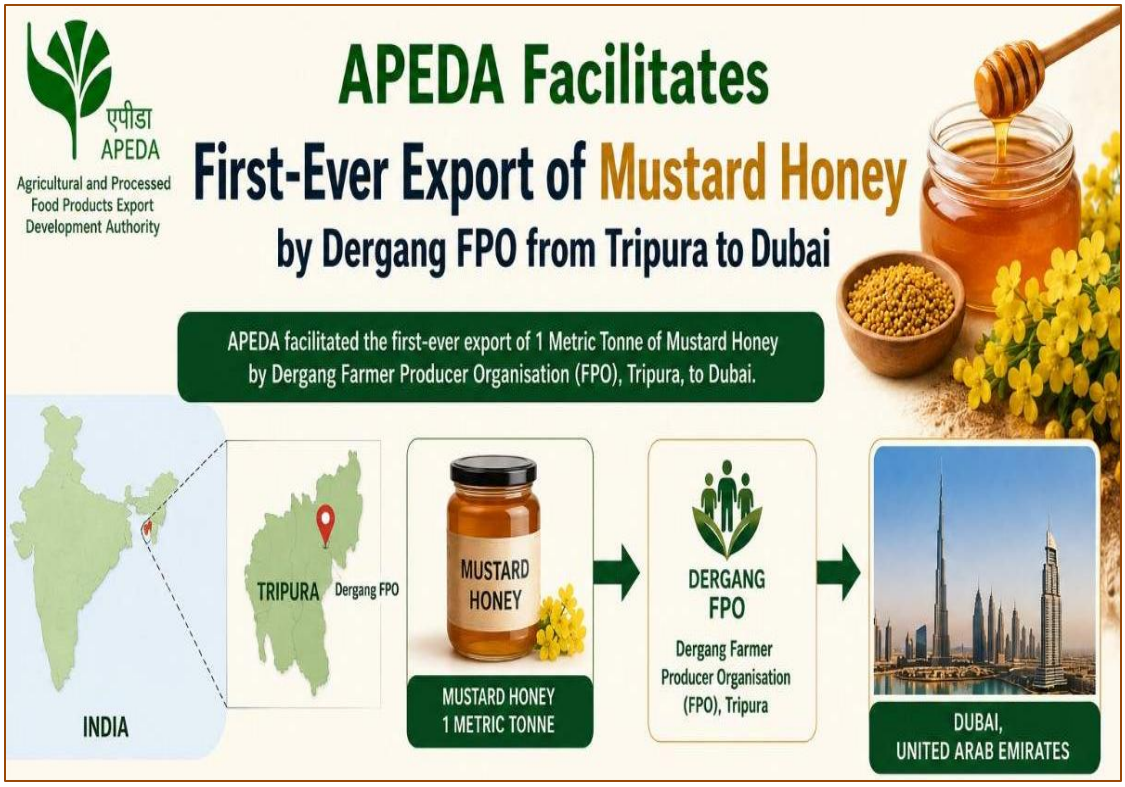
Economy

Mains:

GS Paper III- Indian Economy, Agriculture

Current relevance:

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) facilitated the **first-ever export of Mustard Honey** by Dergang Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO), **Tripura, to Dubai.**



Highlights:

1. The initiative opens a **new international market for local beekeepers** and strengthens Tripura's emerging **agri-export ecosystem**.
2. **About Mustard Honey:**
    i. Rapeseed/Mustard Honey is a **major variety of natural honey** produced in India, derived from the **nectar and pollen collected by honeybees** from flowering mustard and rapeseed plants.
    ii. **Apiary boxes** can be placed in **mustard fields to enhance production**, demonstrating the link between mustard cultivation and apiculture/pollination.
    iii. Major producing states include **Uttar Pradesh (17.11%), West Bengal (16.20%), Punjab (14.08%),** Bihar (12.33%) and Rajasthan (9.15%).
3. **Role of APEDA:**
    i. APEDA works with **State Governments, FPOs, exporters, processors and other stakeholders** to promote agricultural exports from the North Eastern Region through:

- **Market linkages**
- **Capacity building**
- **Quality assurance**
- **Export facilitation**

ii. Such interventions can create **sustainable market opportunities for farmers** while expanding the global footprint of India's diverse agricultural products.

4. **Benefits to Farmers & Beekeepers:**
   i. Provides Dergang FPO farmers with opportunities for **improved price realisation** compared with prevailing local markets.
   ii. Creates an **additional income avenue for beekeepers** through export market access.
   iii. Encourages adoption of **quality-focused and export-oriented honey production practices.**
   iv. Connects farmers with the **international agricultural value chain** through organised FPO-led production.
5. **Significance for Tripura & the North Eastern Region:**
   i. Strengthens Tripura's emerging **agri-export ecosystem**, particularly its honey and beekeeping sector.
   ii. Promotes **diversification of Tripura's honey value chain**.
   iii. Demonstrates the potential of **FPO-led aggregation and industry collaboration** in connecting small producers with global markets.
   iv. Can encourage other FPOs and farmers in **Tripura and the wider North Eastern Region** to pursue **value addition, quality improvement and exports.**

Source: PIB -

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2297240&RegID=6&LID=1&reg=48&lang=2

7. Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)

Prelims:

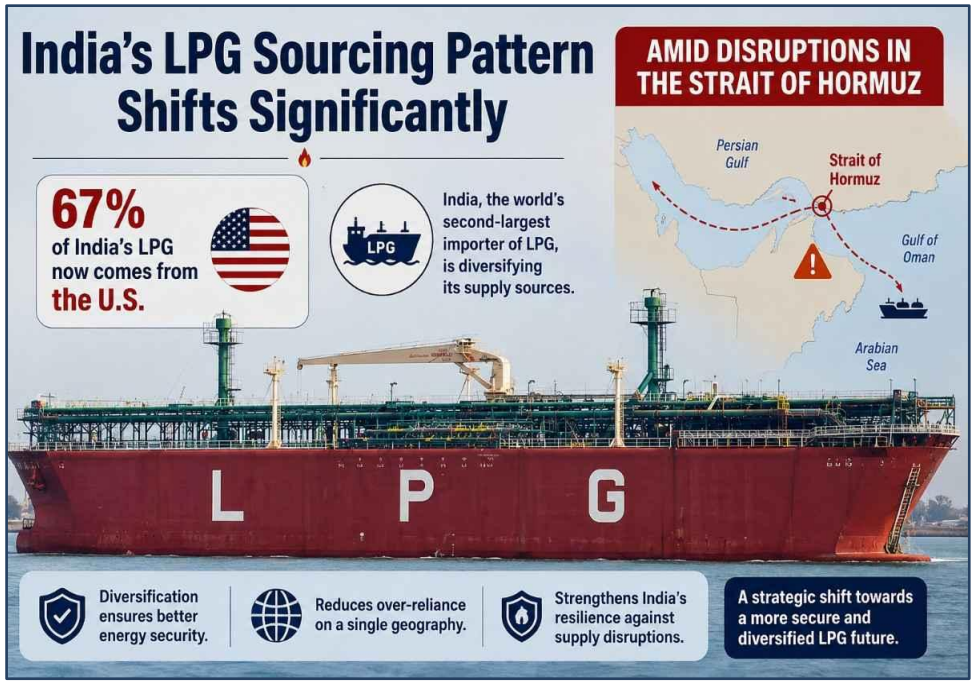
Economy, Energy

Mains:

GS Paper II – Bilateral Relations, GS Paper III – Energy Security, Indian Economy

Current relevance:

India's Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) sourcing pattern has undergone a major shift, with **67% of its LPG reportedly coming from the U.S.,** amid disruptions in the **Strait of Hormuz.**



Highlights:

1. **Shift in India's LPG Supply:**
    i. India is the **world's second-largest importer of LPG.**
    ii. Around **67% of India's LPG is now sourced from the U.S**., indicating a significant diversification away from traditional West Asian suppliers.
    iii. State-run oil refiners signed a long-term agreement to procure **2.2 million tonnes of LPG from the U.S. in 2026.**

iv. India's LPG imports from **West Asia declined by nearly 85%** between February and June 2026.

v. Traditionally, **India imports about 60% of the LPG it consumes, with nearly 90% of these imports** passing through the **Strait of Hormuz.**

2. **Strengthening India's LPG Security:**

i. India needs to avoid **replacing dependence on one supplier or geography with dependence on another**.

ii. Domestic LPG production needs to be strengthened to keep pace with growing consumption.

iii. India should maintain **multiple and geographically diversified supply chains** to reduce disruption risks.

iv. **Australia** offers diversification potential because it lies outside the Hormuz route and is closer than the U.S., although its export volumes are comparatively smaller.

v. Building **larger strategic reserves**, strengthening local production and diversifying suppliers are essential for ensuring **long-term LPG and energy security.**

3. **About Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG):**

i. Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) is a **gaseous fuel** composed mainly of the **light hydrocarbon's propane and butane.**

ii. Under normal atmospheric conditions, LPG remains **gaseous**, but it can be easily **liquefied** under **moderate pressure**, facilitating convenient storage and transportation.

iii. LPG is produced primarily as a by-product of **crude oil refining and natural gas processing.**

iv. It is a **clean-burning and efficient fuel** widely used for **domestic cooking, commercial activities, industries and other energy applications.**

v. In India, domestic consumers primarily receive LPG through **cylinders distributed by Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs).**

vi. Due to its extensive use for **cooking,** LPG constitutes an important part of India's **household energy supply.**

Source: THE HINDU -https://epaper.thehindu.com/ccidist-ws/th/th_international/issues/198924/OPS/GMKGBJR5Q.1+GUPGCN6PD.1.html

8. National Food Security (Amendment) Bill, 2026

Prelims:

Economy & Social Development

Mains:

GS Paper II- Issues relating to poverty and hunger, GS Paper III- Food security, Public Distribution System

Current relevance:

The draft **National Food Security (Amendment) Bill, 2026** proposes to link **Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)** foodgrain entitlements to household size. This has triggered a wider debate on protecting existing foodgrain access, updating NFSA coverage and moving from **food security towards nutrition security.**



Highlights:

Key Provision of the Proposed Amendment:

1. Under the existing system, **Priority Households receive 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month**, while AAY households receive **35 kg per household per month**, irrespective of household size.
2. The draft amendment proposes **7 kg per person for AAY households**, subject to a maximum of 35 kg per household.
3. Consequently, households with five or more members would see no increase, while households with **one to four members could experience a reduction of 20%–80%** in their existing entitlement.
4. An explicit **"no-loss" safeguard** to preserve the existing **35 kg entitlement** for every AAY household.
5. Support beyond 35 kg for **larger or highly dependent households** could be examined separately using consumption, nutritional and fiscal evidence.

Coverage and Inclusion Challenge:

1. The NFSA permits coverage of up to **75% of the rural** and **50% of the urban population,** but its **81.35-crore** beneficiary ceiling remains based on **Census 2011,** with around **80 crore** people currently receiving **free foodgrains.**
2. Against an estimated population of **146.4 crore in 2025**, the existing ceiling represents only about **55.6% of the population**.
3. The beneficiary ceiling could be **recalculated after Census 2027** using updated population estimates and deprivation criteria, supported by **accessible inclusion and appeal mechanisms.**

From Food Security to Nutrition Security:

1. India faces a **double burden of malnutrition**. While child stunting declined from **35.5% to 29.3%**, wasting and underweight showed only limited improvement, and only around **15% of children aged 6–23 months receive a minimally adequate diet.**
2. At the same time, India had an estimated **101 million people with diabetes** and **136 million with prediabetes in 2021.**
3. Instead, excessive dependence on a **cereal-heavy diet combined with insufficient protein-rich foods** may contribute to dietary imbalance.
4. ICMR-NIN's 2024 guidelines recommend that **cereals and millets provide at most 45% of energy,** alongside greater consumption of pulses, beans, milk, nuts, vegetables, fruits and other protein sources.
5. States could therefore **offer pulses and choices among local rice, wheat and millets,** and where feasible, healthy edible oils.
6. Dietary diversification should be **separately funded rather than financed by reducing existing cereal entitlements.**
7. PDS, **Anganwadi services and PM POSHAN** could work together to improve nutrition across different population groups.

Strengthening PDS and Last-Mile Delivery:

1. India has developed an extensive technology-enabled food distribution network. By the end of 2025, **5.50 lakh out of 5.51 lakh Fair Price Shops used electronic point-of-sale devices, while One Nation One Ration Card** covered nearly all NFSA beneficiaries. However, **technology-based delivery** should be supported by:
2. **Offline alternatives** where digital systems fail.
3. Assisted or **doorstep access for persons** with limited mobility.
4. A clear safeguard against denial of foodgrains due to **authentication failure.**
5. Use of Fair Price Shops for simple **multilingual nutrition information and health-service referrals**, without linking participation to ration eligibility.

Source: THE HINDU - https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/a-timely-reset-for-the-food-security-act/article71337424.ece

9. Renewable Energy Transition for India's Secondary Steel Sector

Prelims:

Economy & Environment

Mains:

GS Paper III – Indian Economy, Infrastructure, Energy, Environment & Climate Change

Current relevance:

A report titled **"Powering India's Secondary Steel Transition"** has highlighted that India's smaller steel producers could **reduce electricity costs by up to 34%** while significantly cutting carbon emissions by shifting towards renewable electricity.



Highlights:

Significance of the Secondary Steel Sector:

i. Smaller steel companies account for nearly **40% of India's crude steel production.**

ii. Electricity constitutes **up to 40% of operating costs** for many small steel producers.

iii. Rising fuel costs associated with the **Iran war have affected the profit margins** of several smaller steel companies.

iv. Renewable energy adoption among **small and medium-sized steel firms remains limited**, despite India's clean-power capacity tripling over the past decade.

Benefits of Renewable Energy Transition:

i. Renewable electricity could reduce annual electricity costs by around **₹22–24 million per unit.**

ii. This represents potential electricity-cost **savings of up to 34%.**

iii. Switching from conventional electricity to renewable power can **sharply reduce carbon emissions** from steel production.

iv. Cleaner production could also help Indian steelmakers respond to **European carbon taxes that took effect at the beginning of 2026.**

Steel Sector & Decarbonisation:

i. The steel sector accounts for as much as **12% of India's annual emissions.**

ii. Decarbonising steel production is therefore important for achieving India's **net-zero emissions target by 2070.**

iii. Given the rapid expansion of renewable power in India, switching electricity sources represents a relatively **accessible way of reducing the sector's carbon footprint.**

Cluster-Based Renewable Energy Model:

i. The report identifies **joint investment and ownership of renewable-energy projects** as a practical option for smaller steel producers.

ii. Individual companies can draw electricity according to their **investment and electricity requirements.**

iii. Aggregating demand through **industrial associations** can reduce the upfront financial burden on individual firms.

iv. The approach can make renewable projects **commercially viable, improve optimal plant sizing and distribute investment risks among participating units.**

Source: THE HINDU - https://www.pressreader.com/india/the-hindu-international-9bn2/20260813/282114938399456?srsltid=AfmBOopeO-rJwNIoF9PMMeLwT6ASIaotgLf-Ds1L_EzsnI5QpJIeXCuz

10. India's Merchandise Exports Surge Amid Trade Diversification

Prelims:

Indian Economy

Mains:

GS Paper III – Indian Economy

Current relevance:

India's **merchandise exports grew by 19.6% in July 2026 to $44.2 billion**, despite the ongoing turmoil in West Asia. The recovery was supported by **diversification of export destinations and rerouting of shipments through alternative ports and shipping lines.**



Highlights:

Merchandise Trade Performance:

1. Merchandise exports reached **$44.2 billion in July 2026**, registering **19.6%** year-on-year growth.
2. Merchandise imports increased by **17.5% to $76.2 billion.**
3. Export growth was therefore **faster than import growth** during the month, continued **diversification of export destinations** contributed to the strong merchandise export performance.

Diversification of Export Markets:

1. India recorded improved export performance in markets such as **China, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, Austria and Malaysia.**
2. Exports to **China increased 65% to $2.2 billion in July**, although this was on a low base.
3. During **April–July 2026**, exports to China increased by **36%.**

4. Export growth was also reported in African markets, including **Kenya, the South African Customs Union region and Tanzania;** Tanzania recorded **130% export growth.**

Recovery of Trade with West Asia:

1. The **West Asian conflict initially disrupted India's exports to the region**, resulting in a significant decline in trade flows.
2. Subsequently, **India's exports to West Asia recovered**, reflecting improved trade flows despite continuing **regional instability.**
3. Recovery was facilitated by **rerouting trade through alternative ports and shipping lines.**
4. Ports in **Oman outside the Strait of Hormuz**, along with **Fujairah and Khor Fakkan in the UAE**, handled greater cargo traffic as alternatives to **Jebel Ali port in Dubai.**

About west Asia:

1. **Ministry of External Affairs** identifies the Gulf as important to India across **trade, investment, energy, security, defence, technology and food security.** It also notes that the **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)**has been one of India's most important **regional trading groupings** and that India's energy imports from the region are substantial.
2. **Important Water Bodies:**
    i. **Red Sea:** In West Asia, it borders **Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Jordan and Israel.**
    ii. **Persian Gulf:** It is bordered by **Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).**
    iii. **Mediterranean Sea:** In West Asia, it borders **Türkiye, Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Palestine (Gaza Strip).**
3. **Maritime Chokepoints**
    i. **Strait of Hormuz:** Connects the **Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman** and onward to the Arabian Sea. For map questions, remember **Iran lies to its north and Oman/UAE side lines to its south.**

ii. **Bab-el-Mandeb:** Connects the **Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden**. It lies between **Yemen** and the Horn of Africa.

iii. **Suez Canal:** Connects the **Mediterranean Sea and Red Sea**, providing the major maritime connection between the Indian Ocean trade system and Europe.

Source: THE HINDU - https://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/indias-exports-rise-1963-to-4424-billion-in-july-trade-deficit-widens-to-3198-billion/article71340628.ece

11. NITI Aayog Report: Key Sectors to Position India as a Global Manufacturing Hub

Prelims:

Indian Economy

Mains:

GS Paper II – Governance, GS Paper III – Indian Economy

Current relevance:

NITI Aayog has released the report **"Key Sectors to Position India as a Global Manufacturing Hub"**, identifying **Chemicals, Textiles, Telecom & Networking Equipment, and Solar Photovoltaic (PV) manufacturing** as four high-potential sectors for strengthening India's manufacturing ecosystem. The report will subsequently be followed by assessments of **eight more sectors.**

Highlights:

Objectives of the Report:

1. Identify manufacturing sectors with **high domestic and global growth potential.**
2. Assess India's competitiveness based on **market potential, infrastructure, policy support, raw materials, technology readiness and employment potential**

3. Identify opportunities to strengthen **domestic capabilities and value addition.**
4. Promote **export-oriented manufacturing growth** and improve India's position in global value chains.
5. Draw lessons from **leading manufacturing countries** and develop sector-specific interventions.

Four-Phase Assessment Framework:



1. **Sector Shortlisting:** Identification of sectors based on domestic and global **market size and growth prospects.**
2. **Comprehensive Assessment:** Evaluation of shortlisted sectors based on their **market potential, competitiveness and strategic relevance.**
3. **Global Benchmarking:** Study of successful practices adopted by **top-performing manufacturing countries.**
4. **Actionable Roadmap:** Development of **sector-specific recommendations** to improve competitiveness and unlock growth potential.

Key Sectors and Priority Areas:

1. **Chemicals** - Expand downstream production, improve feedstock utilisation, increase domestic value addition, strengthen competitiveness and strategically utilise FTAs.
2. **Textiles** - Improve raw-material availability, scale manufacturing, strengthen skilling and technology adoption, and promote technical textiles, MMF products, sustainable textiles and premium Indian weaves.
3. **Telecom & Networking Equipment** - Deepen localisation, strengthen component manufacturing, encourage joint ventures and technology transfer, develop industrial clusters and improve testing, certification and skills.

4. **Solar PV -** Strengthen upstream manufacturing, reduce import dependence, promote technology partnerships and R&D, develop integrated clean-tech clusters and improve industry-led skilling.

Significance for India:

1. **Domestic Value Addition:** Strengthening upstream and downstream manufacturing can increase India's participation across manufacturing value chains.
2. **Reduced Import Dependence:** Greater localisation and domestic production can reduce dependence on imported components, inputs and technologies.
3. **Export Competitiveness:** Trade integration, FTAs and stronger global partnerships can expand access to international markets.
4. **Employment Generation:** Manufacturing expansion, particularly in textiles and other labour-intensive activities, can support large-scale employment and MSME-led development.
5. **Technology & Productivity:** R&D, technology transfer, joint ventures and skilling can improve innovation and manufacturing efficiency.
6. **Viksit Bharat:** Coordinated interventions by Government and industry can strengthen the manufacturing ecosystem and help place India on a higher manufacturing-led growth trajectory.

Source: PIB -

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2298965&reg=48&lang=1

12. Sovereign Green Bonds

Prelims:

Indian Economy

Mains:

GS Paper III – Indian Economy & Environment

Current relevance:

India sold **₹50 billion worth of 30-year Sovereign Green Bonds**, recording a **greenium of four basis points**, indicating sustained investor appetite for bonds financing environmentally sustainable projects.

Highlights:

Sovereign Green Bonds & Greenium:

1. **Sovereign Green Bonds** are government debt instruments used to finance **environmentally sustainable projects**.
2. A **greenium** refers to the **lower yield that investors are willing to accept** on green bonds compared with similar conventional government securities.
3. India's latest 30-year Sovereign Green Bond issuance recorded a **four-basis-point greenium.**
4. Including the latest issuance, India has around **₹877 billion worth of Sovereign Green Bonds** outstanding.

Growing Investor Demand:

1. Green bonds are witnessing **strong and steady demand** from **insurance companies.**
2. They can be classified under the **infrastructure category**, providing insurance companies an advantage from **asset-allocation and regulatory perspectives**.
3. Existing demand-supply conditions have resulted in green bonds trading at a **premium relative to**



comparable conventional government securities.

4. The sustained greenium indicates investors' willingness to accept slightly lower returns for securities financing environmentally sustainable activities.

Scope for Expanding Green Finance:

1. Strong demand has prompted market participants to seek an **increase in the supply of Sovereign Green Bonds.**
2. Insurance companies managing growing investment portfolios are seeking additional suitable investment instruments.
3. Market participants believe that the Indian market is capable of **absorbing a higher supply of green bonds** in the **second half of FY27.**
4. Increased **green-bond issuance** can expand the availability of financing for **environmentally sustainable** projects.

About Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrBs):

1. India announced SGrBs in the **Union Budget 2022–23**, and the first issuances took place in **January 2023**.
2. SGrBs provide the government with a mechanism to **mobilise financial resources for green infrastructure** and environmentally sustainable public-sector projects.
3. Under India's framework, eligible **green expenditure** covers areas associated with:
    - Renewable energy
    - Energy efficiency
    - Clean transportation
    - Climate-change adaptation
    - Sustainable water and waste management
    - Pollution prevention and control
    - Green buildings
    - Sustainable management of natural resources and land use
    - Terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity conservation

4. SGrBs are sovereign securities, they operate within India's broader **Government Securities (G-Sec) market**.
5. The **RBI conducts auctions of Government securities** as part of its role in managing government borrowing. RBI auction calendars have specifically included Sovereign Green Bonds.
6. SGrBs have been issued across **multiple maturity periods**, including **5-year, 10-year and 30-year tenures.**
7. Eligible foreign investors in India's **International Financial Services Centre (IFSC)** can also invest in SGrBs under the RBI framework, widening the potential investor base.

Source: THE HINDU - https://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/indias-green-bonds-find-footing-as-stable-greenium-underscores-investor-appetite/article71347030.ece

13. South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) agreement

Prelims:

Indian Economy

Mains:

GS Paper III – Indian Economy & Internal Security

Current relevance:

The **Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI)** has dismantled a network that allegedly imported **areca nuts** originating from **Southeast Asian countries** into India by falsely declaring them as being of **Bangladeshi origin** to fraudulently obtain **customs-duty exemption under the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA).**



Highlights:

1. **Modus Operandi of Fraudulent Imports:**
    i. Areca nuts were sourced from **Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and other Southeast Asian countries.**
    ii. They were routed through an **Export Processing Zone (EPZ)** in Bangladesh before entering India.
    iii. Containers and bags were changed and the products were falsely presented as **Bangladeshi-origin areca nuts.**
    iv. The network allegedly obtained **SAFTA Certificates of Origin** from Bangladeshi authorities to claim preferential treatment.
    v. The investigation also revealed the alleged use of **dummy entities and hawala channels** for movement and layering of financial proceeds.
2. **Customs Duty & SAFTA Provision:**
    i. Imports of areca nuts into India normally attract a **Basic Customs Duty (BCD) of 100%.**
    ii. Eligible areca nut imports under **SAFTA are fully exempt from customs duty.**

iii. Areca nuts originating from Bangladesh can receive this exemption only when they satisfy the prescribed **Rules of Origin criteria.**

iv. False declaration of the country of origin was therefore used to **fraudulently claim preferential tariff benefits.**

3. **DRI Investigation & Action:**

i. Searches were conducted at premises connected with **importers, Customs Brokers and IEC holders in Kolkata and Visakhapatnam.**

ii. The investigation revealed a potential **customs-revenue loss** exceeding ₹2,500 crore, along with the seizure of around **₹75 lakh in cash and approximately 160 MT of areca nuts.**

4. **Economic & Trade Implications:**

i. Such illegal imports can create **unfair price distortions** affecting domestic areca-nut growers.

ii. They disrupt the **level playing field for legitimate businesses and traders.**

iii. Fraudulent tariff concessions cause substantial **loss of customs revenue to the government.**

iv. Misuse of trade agreements and Rules of Origin can undermine **regulated trade practices and economic security**, particularly in border regions.

5. **About South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA):**

i. According to the **Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry,** SAFTA is a regional trade agreement among South Asian countries designed to promote trade through **tariff liberalisation and preferential market access**. The agreement **came into force on 1 January 2006.**

ii. SAFTA provides for a **Tariff Liberalisation Programme (TLP)** aimed at progressively reducing customs tariffs among participating countries.

iii. Members can maintain a **Sensitive List (Negative List)** of products excluded from normal tariff-liberalisation commitments.

iv. The framework provides more favourable treatment to **Least Developed Contracting States.**

v. SAFTA also contains provisions relating to **Rules of Origin, institutional arrangements, safeguards and dispute settlement.**

vi. **Rules of Origin (RoO**) determine whether a product genuinely originates in a SAFTA member country and is therefore entitled to **preferential tariff treatment.**

vii. **A Certificate of Origin (CoO)** serves as evidence that goods satisfy the relevant origin requirements for preferential treatment. The Department of Commerce notes more generally that preferential CoOs under India's FTAs/PTAs are issued after verification of the applicable Rules of Origin.

Source: PIB -

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2300102&reg=48&lang=2

14. Qatar–India Pos Transfer Powered by UPI Remittance Service

Prelims:

Indian economy

Mains:

GS Paper II – Bilateral Cooperation, GS Paper III – Indian economy

Current relevance:

The **Qatar–India postal remittance service** based on **Pos Transfer powered by UPI** became available in Qatar on **15 August 2026**, enabling customers to transfer funds through **Qatar Post outlets directly to UPI-enabled bank accounts in India**.



Highlights:

About the Qatar–India Remittance Service:

1. The service has been developed through collaboration among **Qatar Post, India Post, Universal Postal Union's Interconnection Platform (UPU-IP), and NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL).**
2. It integrates the international postal network with **India's UPI ecosystem** for cross-border remittances.
3. Customers in Qatar can initiate transfers at a **Qatar Post outlet** by providing the **recipient's UPI ID** and required customer-identification details.
4. The recipient must activate the facility for receiving **foreign inward remittances** through the UPI application being used.
5. Once activated, the money is credited **instantly to the beneficiary's UPI-enabled bank account.**

Pos Transfer Powered by UPI:

1. Pos Transfer powered by UPI is an **international inward-remittance service** based on the integration of **UPU-IP with India's UPI ecosystem.**

2. It enables participating postal operators to facilitate remittances directly to **UPI-enabled bank accounts in India.**
3. The integration demonstrates how **postal networks and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** can support **inclusive, interoperable and efficient cross-border financial services.**
4. **India Post** is working with postal **operators in other countries** to establish additional PosTransfer powered by UPI corridors for the Indian diaspora.

Significance for India–Qatar Financial Connectivity:

1. Provides the **large Indian community in Qatar** with an accessible and affordable mechanism for sending money to families in India.
2. Promotes **financial inclusion** by combining physical postal infrastructure with digital payment infrastructure.
3. Strengthens **digital financial connectivity** and **bilateral cooperation** between India and Qatar.
4. The Qatar–India corridor represents an important step towards the **modernisation of international postal financial services.**

Source: PIB -

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=2300462&reg=48&lang=1

15. Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2026

Prelims:

Economy & Geography

Mains:

GS Paper III- Economy, Mineral resources

Current relevance:

The **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2026** has amended the **MMDR Act, 1957** to establish a more uniform, predictable and balanced fiscal framework for India's mineral sector.



Highlights:

Need for the Amendment:

1. India's mineral resources are concentrated in a few States but supply **steel, cement, power, electronics, transport, defence** and other industries across the country.
2. States currently impose around **14 different taxes, charges and fees** on mining, including royalty, auction premium, dead rent, DMF payments, GST and transit fees.
3. Additional taxes on mineral-bearing lands in some States increase the **cumulative fiscal burden** on mining.
4. Differing State levies result in varying mineral prices, thereby **fragmenting the national mineral market and increasing logistics costs.**
5. High levies on **critical and atomic minerals**, including graphite and uranium, can affect their commercial viability.
6. India **imported minerals** worth about **₹10.12 lakh crore in FY 2025-26**, highlighting the importance of keeping domestic mining competitive.

7. A predictable fiscal regime is also considered necessary to attract **long-term investment and technological expansion** in mining.

Major Provisions:

1. **New Section 9D:** A State government cannot impose any **tax, cess or other levy** on mineral rights or mineral-bearing lands, irrespective of whether it is based on mineral quantity, value, royalty or another basis.
2. Such levies can be imposed only according to **conditions or restrictions prescribed by the Central Government.**
3. **Past levies:** Levies that had not been paid or collected before commencement of the amendment will be treated as **invalid.** However, amounts already **deposited or recovered will not be refunded.**
4. **Section 13** has been amended to empower the Central Government to frame rules prescribing conditions or restrictions governing such State levies.
5. **Minor minerals remain under State control**, and the amendment does not affect State authority over nearly **50 minor minerals** such as sand, gravel, clay, silica, granite, marble, gypsum and laterite.

State Revenues & Federal Dimension:

1. The amendment states that the existing position regarding the overwhelming share of mining revenues accruing to States remains **unchanged.**
2. Nearly **90% of mining-sector revenue** currently accrues to States.
3. Since 2014, States have received **more than ₹7 lakh crore**, including revenue from coal.
4. Revenue to States from mineral production has increased by **354% since 2014.**
5. Major mineral States' revenues increased from about **₹13,586 crore in FY 2013-14** to **₹82,366 crore in FY 2025-26.**
6. The **auction regime introduced in 2015** created auction premiums as an additional source of State revenue.

7. **District Mineral Foundation (DMF) collections** also remain unaffected by the amendment.

Link with Critical Minerals & Energy Security:

1. A commercially viable domestic mining sector is considered important for reducing vulnerability to **external supply shocks and mineral imports.**
2. The **National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM)** was approved on 29 January **2025,** with an outlay of ₹16,300 crore, including ₹2,600 crore of budgetary support up to FY 2030-31.
3. **GSI and NMEDT** are working towards **1,200 critical mineral projects.**
4. **Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL)** has secured exclusive **lithium exploration rights in Argentina.**
5. Critical Mineral Processing Parks are being supported in **Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha and Maharashtra.**
6. A stable domestic mining framework therefore supports **energy security, strategic mineral security and self-reliance.**

Broader Mineral-Sector Reforms:

1. The **2015 MMDR amendment replaced** discretionary allocation of mineral concessions with competitive auctions. Since then, **723 major mineral blocks across 17 States** have been auctioned.
2. India's major mineral production value increased by **26.8% in FY 2025-26.**
3. The **Unified Mining Portal (UMP)** tracks the lifecycle of mineral blocks from auction to operationalisation.
4. Exploration has expanded significantly, with **51 private agencies** notified for exploration activities.
5. **656 District Mineral Foundations**, including 106 in aspirational districts, support welfare and infrastructure in mining-affected communities.

Significance:

1. The amendment seeks to establish a **uniform and predictable fiscal environment** for mining across States.
2. Lower and predictable mineral costs can support downstream sectors such as **steel, cement, aluminium, power, construction, railways and defence.**
3. Greater fiscal certainty can encourage **investment, mineral exploration, mine operationalisation and technological development.**
4. A competitive domestic mining sector can help **reduce import dependence** while strengthening **energy and national security.**
5. It can also support **employment**, particularly in mining-dependent and tribal regions.

Way Forward:

1. Strengthen reforms in **critical mineral exploration, processing and recycling** to improve long-term mineral security.
2. Promote a **stable and investor-friendly regulatory framework** to sustain investment and production.
3. Continue expanding **exploration and technological capabilities** to meet future mineral demand.
4. Ensure mineral-sector development supports **self-reliance, sustainable resource development and the goal of Viksit Bharat.**

Source: PIB -

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=2301002&reg=48&lang=1

16. Regional Rural Banks

Prelims:

Indian Economy

Mains:

GS Paper III – Indian Economy

Current relevance:

During **FY 2025–26**, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) recorded strong growth in credit delivery, with **gross loans outstanding increasing by 10.3% to ₹5.78 lakh crore.** RRBs also maintained a strong focus on **Priority Sector Lending (PSL),** agriculture, MSMEs and weaker sections, reinforcing their role in rural development and financial inclusion.



Highlights:

Expansion of Rural Credit:

1. Gross loans outstanding of RRBs increased from **₹5.24 lakh crore in FY 2024–25 to ₹5.78 lakh crore in FY 2025–26**, registering **10.3% growth**.
2. The expansion reflects the growing role of RRBs in providing **institutional credit to rural and underserved segments**.
3. RRB credit supports **farmers, micro-enterprises and other rural economic activities**, contributing to rural livelihoods and balanced economic growth.

Strong Priority Sector Lending Performance:

1. Under the **Reserve Bank of India's Priority Sector Lending (PSL) framework**, RRBs have an overall prescribed PSL target of **75% of Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC)**.
2. Their average PSL achievement reached **91.7% of ANBC**, with almost all RRBs achieving the prescribed overall target.
3. **Agriculture and allied activities** remained the largest component, accounting for **77% of total PSL**.
4. Farm credit constituted nearly **98% of agricultural lending**, supporting crop cultivation, allied activities and rural investment.

Support to MSMEs & Rural Entrepreneurship:

1. Credit to the **MSME sector stood at ₹66,978 crore**, accounting for **13.6% of total PSL**.
2. More than **95% of MSME lending was directed towards micro enterprises**.
3. Such lending supports **first-generation entrepreneurs, self-employed persons, artisans and small businesses** in rural and semi-urban areas.
4. Within MSME lending, the **services sector accounted for the largest share**, followed by manufacturing and Khadi & Village Industries.

Financial Inclusion & Inclusive Development:

1. RRBs extended **₹3.49 lakh crore of credit to weaker sections**, promoting equitable access to institutional finance.
2. Credit for **housing, education, renewable energy and social infrastructure** contributes to broader rural development.
3. Such lending supports **human capital formation, household asset creation, clean-energy adoption and local infrastructure development.**
4. Thus, RRBs continue to function as important institutional pillars for **financial inclusion, rural livelihoods and inclusive economic growth.**

About Regional Rural Banks (RRBs):

1. **Regional Rural Banks (RRBs)** were established under the **Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976** to expand institutional credit for **agriculture and the rural sector.**
2. **RRBs** are regulated by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** and supervised by **NABARD.**
3. RRBs are jointly owned by the **Government of India, concerned State Government and Sponsor Bank.**
4. Their mandate includes providing credit and other facilities for the development of **agriculture, trade, commerce, industry and other productive activities in rural areas.**
5. Particular emphasis is placed on **small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, artisans and small entrepreneurs**, making RRBs important institutions for **rural development and financial inclusion.**

Source: PIB –

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=2300842&reg=48&lang=1

17. Online Bond Platform Providers (OBPPs)

Prelims:

Indian Economy

Mains:

GS Paper III – Indian Economy

Current relevance:

The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has proposed an advertisement code for **Online Bond Platform Providers (OBPPs)** to ensure that advertisements remain fair, balanced and conducive to informed investment decisions, while improving investor awareness about bonds as an asset class.



About Online Bond Platform Providers (OBPPs):

Background & Regulatory Framework:

1. **Online Bond Platforms (OBPs)** developed as digital channels enabling investors, particularly **non-institutional investors, to access debt securities.**
2. Growing participation of retail and other non-institutional investors highlighted the need for an appropriate **regulatory and investor-protection framework.**
3. Initially operating outside SEBI's direct regulatory framework, these platforms raised concerns regarding **transparency, disclosures, grievance redressal, investor protection and settlement risks.**
4. Consequently, **SEBI introduced a dedicated regulatory framework in November 2022** under Regulation 51A of the **SEBI (Issue and Listing of Non-Convertible Securities) Regulations, 2021.**
5. Under the framework, an OBPP must be a company **incorporated in India and registered as a stock broker in the debt segment** of a recognised stock exchange.

Key Features:

1. The basic purpose of an online bond platform is to provide an electronic avenue through which investors can **discover, compare and invest in debt securities.**
2. Under SEBI's framework, OBPPs can offer specified products, including:

i. **Listed debt securities**

ii. **Listed municipal debt securities**

iii. **Listed securitised debt instruments**

3. The framework seeks to provide appropriate safeguards relating to disclosures, investor grievance redressal, risk management, conflicts of interest, data governance, reporting and monitoring.
4. SEBI further modified the OBPP regulatory framework on **14 August 2026** as part of measures aimed at promoting **ease of doing business.**

Working Mechanism:

1. An Online Bond Platform Provider (OBPP) provides a digital interface where investors can **discover and compare listed debt securities offered by issuers or sellers, place investment orders, and complete transactions through the recognised stock exchange and clearing corporation infrastructure**, which facilitates the subsequent **settlement of the securities** and funds.
2. A key principle behind SEBI's framework was that transactions undertaken through these platforms should use the **trading and settlement infrastructure of stock exchanges and clearing corporations**, helping mitigate payment and settlement risks.
3. Importantly, an **OBPP should not be understood as the issuer of the bond itself**. It primarily provides the online interface through which eligible fixed-income securities can be accessed.

Significance:

1. **Enhances retail participation:** OBPPs provide **non-institutional investors easier access to the corporate bond market**, widening the investor base.
2. **Deepens the bond market:** Greater investor participation can improve activity in the **secondary bond market** and contribute to the development of India's corporate debt market.

3. **Promotes transparency:** Disclosure requirements provide investors with relevant information **on risk factors, credit ratings and bond-related documents,** facilitating informed investment decisions.
4. **Strengthens investor protection:** SEBI's regulatory framework improves grievance redressal, disclosure standards, operational transparency and payment and settlement safeguards.
5. **Broadens financing channels:** A stronger corporate bond market provides an alternative source of financing alongside traditional bank-based lending, contributing to a more diversified financial system.

Source: THE HINDU - https://www.thehindu.com/incoming/sebi-proposes-advertisement-code-for-online-bond-platforms/article71374557.ece

18. Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS)

Prelims:

Indian Economy

Mains:

GS Paper III: Indian Economy,

Current relevance:

The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** has notified the **Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS)** with an outlay of **₹62,500 crore** to promote **domestic smartphone assembly, local component sourcing, Indian brands, domestic design and intellectual property.**



Highlights:

Objectives & Targets:

1. **Indian Brands:** Promote the development of **Indian brands, Indian designs and Indian intellectual property** in mobile-phone manufacturing.
2. **Local Value Addition:** Increase overall domestic value addition from the existing **18–23% to 35–40%.**
3. **Employment:** The scheme is expected to generate around **60,000 direct jobs.**
4. **Production:** Target cumulative mobile-phone production worth **₹39 lakh crore** by the end of the scheme.
5. **Exports:** Target cumulative exports worth **₹15 lakh crore** through 2030-31.

Key Features:

1. **Financial Outlay:** The scheme has an overall allocation of **₹62,500 crore.**
2. **Duration:** It will operate for **five years through 2030-31.**
3. **Production Incentive:** The base incentive for mobile-phone assembly **tapers from 2.75% to 2.25%,** with applicable incentive rates varying according to the year and incremental sales.
4. **Domestic Component Incentive:** An additional incentive of up to **1.5%** is available for sourcing specified components domestically, with individual component incentives ranging from **0.2% to 0.5%.**

5. The additional 1.5% incentive applies only when domestic sourcing covers at least **25% of phones sold by the firm in a financial year.**
6. **Incremental Production:** Incentives are provided only for eligible sales exceeding **115% of the previous financial year's production.**

Special Incentives for Indian Brands:

1. **Indian Ownership:** Eligible Indian brands must be **majority-owned by Indian citizens and incorporated in India**, with their intellectual property and trademarks held domestically.
2. **Flat Incentive:** Indian brands will receive a **5% incentive** throughout the scheme's tenure.
3. **No Minimum Sales Threshold:** Unlike other brands, Indian brands are **not subject to a minimum sales threshold**, with their baseline fixed at **2025-26.**
4. **Design & R&D:** Indian brands are eligible for an additional **3% domestic design** and **research & development incentive.**
5. **Lower Entry Threshold:** Indian brands need to demonstrate ₹1,000 crore turnover, compared with ₹10,000 crore for others.

Significance:

1. **Manufacturing Deepening:** Greater domestic component sourcing can move India beyond assembly towards **higher local value addition**.
2. **Domestic Technology Capabilities:** Incentives for design, R&D and locally held IP can strengthen India's indigenous electronics ecosystem.
3. **Export Competitiveness:** India has moved from importing around **70–75% of phones in 2014-15** to becoming an exporter of finished handsets.
4. **Global Manufacturing Position:** India is currently the **second-largest phone manufacturer in the world**, with practically all phones sold domestically being manufactured within the country.

5. **Spillover Benefits:** Technology and skill transfer from mobile manufacturing can support sectors such as **laptops, gaming consoles, drones, medical devices, components, tablets, smart watches and automobile windshields**.

Source: THE HINDU – https://www.thehindu.com/business/govt-notifies-mobile-phone-manufacturing-scheme-extra-incentives-for-indian-brands/article71374233.ece

19. India–Mauritius Investment Ties and DTAA Reforms

Prelims:

Indian Economy

Mains:

GS Paper II- Bilateral Economic Cooperation, GS Paper III- Indian Economy

Current relevance:

Mauritius has reaffirmed that **India remains an attractive destination for global investment**, supported by its economic fundamentals, large market, reforms and digital transformation.



Highlights:

Mauritius as a Major Source of FDI into India:

1. Mauritius has historically been an important **source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India**.
2. In **2025–26**, Mauritius contributed about **$6.6 billion**, accounting for **11.2% of India's total FDI inflows**, making it the **second-largest source after Singapore**.
3. Between **April 2000 and March 2026**, Mauritius accounted for around **$186 billion**, nearly a quarter of India's total inward FDI during the period.
4. India's **large domestic market, economic reforms and rapid digital transformation** continue to support investor confidence.

India–Mauritius DTAA: Evolution

1. The **India–Mauritius DTAA was signed in 1982** and has played an important role in facilitating bilateral investment flows.
2. Concerns subsequently emerged over investments being routed through **shell companies in Mauritius primarily to obtain tax benefits**.
3. The **2016 Protocol** introduced **source-based taxation of capital gains** on shares acquired on or after **1 April 2017**, allowing India to impose capital gains tax.
4. Following this change, Mauritius moved from being the leading FDI source to generally being among India's **second or third-largest sources of FDI**.

Principal Purpose Test (PPT):

1. A further amendment in **2024** introduced the **Principal Purpose Test (PPT)**.
2. Under the PPT, if the **principal purpose of establishing an entity or routing an investment through Mauritius is to obtain tax benefits**, India can refuse those treaty benefits.
3. The amendment was signed in **March 2024** and subsequently **ratified by the Mauritian Cabinet in July 2026** after concerns raised by investors were addressed.

4. However, the amendment still requires **notification by both India and Mauritius before becoming effective**.

Investment Facilitation vs Tax Integrity:

1. **Investment certainty:** A predictable tax-treaty framework can strengthen confidence among genuine long-term investors.
2. **Prevention of treaty abuse:** PPT helps address the misuse of tax treaties through structures established primarily for obtaining tax advantages.
3. **Quality of FDI:** The amended framework seeks to facilitate **genuine and constructive investment flows** from Mauritius.
4. **India–Mauritius economic partnership:** The DTAA has remained an important component of bilateral economic relations for several decades.
5. **Policy challenge:** India needs to maintain a balance between **attracting global capital and protecting its legitimate taxation rights**.

Source: THE HINDU - https://www.pressreader.com/india/the-hindu-erode-9ww6/20260823/281883010186122?srsltid=AfmBOoqH-BYzxIX_9I94EhxP5ogELdWpwmLoj3_yu0g5ZkUA8z6ZLiyG

20. Information Technology Resilience Index

Prelims:

Indian Economy

Mains:

GS Paper III -Indian Economy

Current relevance:

`The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has introduced an **Information Technology Resilience Index (ITRI)** for **Market Infrastructure Institutions (MIIs)**, including

stock exchanges and depositories, to assess and strengthen the resilience of their IT systems.



Highlights:

About Information Technology Resilience Index (ITRI):

1. The **ITRI** is designed to assess the resilience of IT systems maintained by **Market Infrastructure Institutions (MIIs)**.
2. It covers **stock exchanges and depositories**.
3. Aims: To **strengthen oversight of the resilience of IT systems** by enabling early identification of emerging vulnerabilities and facilitating timely corrective measures to prevent potential disruptions.
4. The index evaluates MIIs across **nine parameters**: Availability, Security, Integrity, Governance, Reliability and monitoring, Business continuity, Modularity and flexibility, Scalability and Other relevant factors.
5. **Early Warning System:**
    i. MIIs are required to establish an **Early Warning System (EWS)** linked to the ITRI.
    ii. It is intended to **detect deterioration in resilience parameters** before they develop into significant operational problems.

iii. It can flag risks that could lead to **system slowness, performance degradation or disruption.**

iv. MIIs are expected to take **timely remedial measures** when such deterioration is identified.

Significance:

1. **Operational resilience:** Strengthens the ability of critical market institutions to maintain reliable IT systems.
2. **Early risk detection:** Enables potential technological vulnerabilities to be identified before they result in major disruptions.
3. **Business continuity:** Helps maintain continuity of market infrastructure during technological problems.
4. **Financial-market stability:** Resilient stock exchanges and depositories are important for the **smooth functioning of securities markets**.
5. **Preventive regulation:** The combination of **ITRI assessment**, an **Early Warning System and timely remedial action** enables proactive management of technology-related risks before they cause significant disruptions.

Source: THE HINDU - https://www.thehindu.com/business/sebi-introduces-it-resilience-index-for-market-infrastructure-institutions/article71385199.ece

21. GENESIS Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EIR) Cohort-3

Prelims:

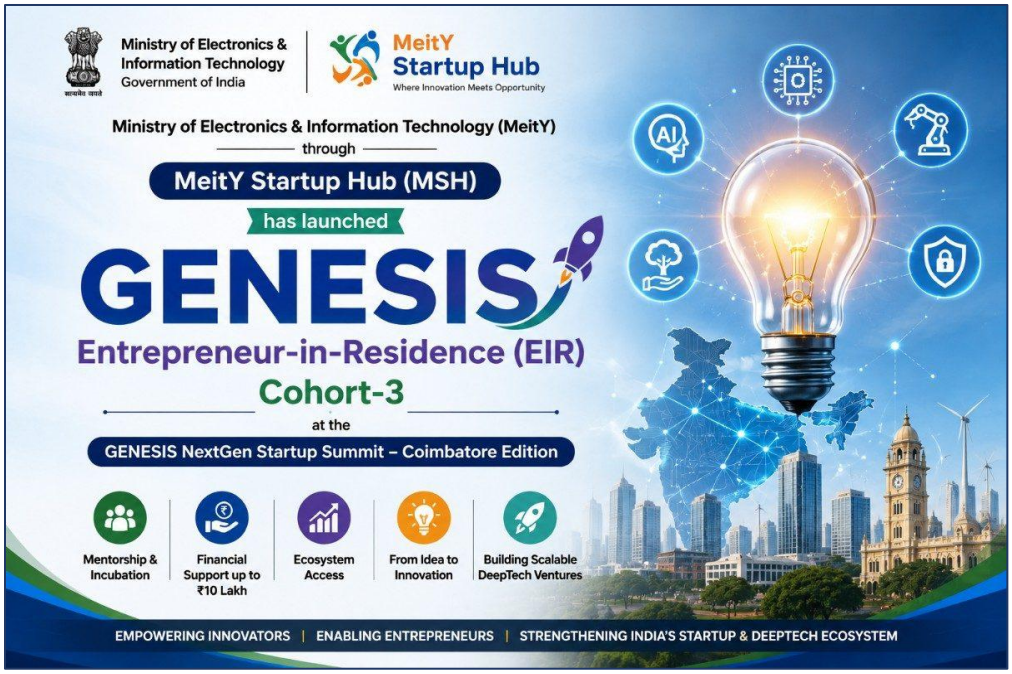
Government initiatives

Mains:

GS Paper III: Science & Technology, Indian Economy

Current relevance:

The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY),** through the **MeitY Startup Hub (MSH)**, has launched GENESIS Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EIR) Cohort-3 at the GENESIS NextGen Startup Summit – Coimbatore Edition.



Highlights:

About GENESIS & EIR Component:

1. **GENESIS: Gen-Next Support for Innovative Startups (GENESIS)** is a flagship initiative of the **MeitY Startup Hub**.
2. **Regional Focus:** It seeks to **discover, support, grow and accelerate startups**, particularly across India's **Tier-II and Tier-III cities**.
3. **Multiple Components:** It supports startups through **Entrepreneur-in-Residence, Pilot, Investment and DeepTech funding components**.
4. **EIR Component:** Provides funding of up to **₹10 lakh per startup** to help innovators at the **ideation/prototype stage** convert early ideas into **pilot-ready solutions** through funding and incubation support.

GENESIS EIR 3.0 – Key Features:

1. **Implementing Agency: MeitY Startup Hub (MSH)**.

2. **Financial Assistance:** Selected innovators can receive up to **₹10 lakh** through participating GENESIS incubators.
3. **Incubation Support:** Provides access to **participating GENESIS incubators**, along with business-growth assistance.
4. **Mentorship:** Offers **one-on-one mentorship and expert guidance**.
5. **Technology Development:** Supports **prototyping, product development, MVP creation, technology validation and early-stage development**.
6. **Commercialisation:** Provides industry connections, networking opportunities and guidance for progressing towards **commercialisation and scalable ventures**.

Focus Areas:

GENESIS EIR Cohort-3 supports technology-based innovations in:

1. **Electronics and Information Technology**
2. **DeepTech**
3. **Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning (AI/ML)**
4. **Internet of Things (IoT)**
5. **Semiconductor/VLSI**
6. **Cybersecurity and Blockchain**
7. **Quantum Technologies**
8. **AR/VR, Spatial and Immersive Technologies**

Eligibility & Application:

1. Applicants must be **Indian citizens** and can include entrepreneurs, innovators, researchers, students or founders/co-founders of early-stage startups.
2. Innovations should fall within the specified **emerging technology and Electronics/IT domains**.
3. The innovation should be at **Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 1–4**, covering stages such as **ideation, proof of concept, prototype, MVP or early validation**.
4. The startup should be based in a **Tier-II or Tier-III city**.

5. If incorporated, the startup should be **less than two years old** on the application date.
6. It must not have received **more than ₹10 lakh of financial assistance** under any Central or State Government scheme for the same proposed idea/startup.

Significance:

1. **Bridges Idea-to-Startup Gap:** Helps innovators transform early-stage concepts into validated and **pilot-ready technology solutions**.
2. **DeepTech Ecosystem:** Encourages entrepreneurship in strategically important technologies such as **AI, semiconductors, cybersecurity and quantum technologies**.
3. **Regional Entrepreneurship:** Focus on **Tier-II and Tier-III cities** can unlock entrepreneurial potential beyond established startup centres.
4. **Integrated Startup Support:** Combines funding, incubation, mentorship, technology validation, industry connections and commercialisation support.
5. **National Innovation Network:** Through MSH, startups can connect with **incubators, accelerators, industry, investors, mentors, academia and government stakeholders**, strengthening India's broader startup and DeepTech ecosystem.

Source: PIB -

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=2302611&reg=48&lang=1

22. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

Prelims:

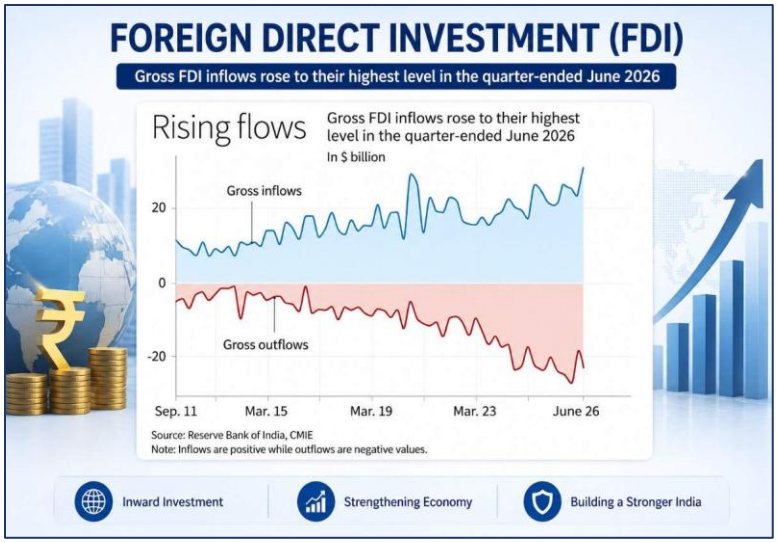
Indian Economy

Mains:

GS Paper III – Indian Economy

Current relevance:

India received **$30.7 billion** in gross Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) during April–June 2026, **the highest quarterly gross inflow** recorded in the available **15-year data.**



Highlights:

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):

1. **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** refers to investment through equity instruments by a person resident outside India, in an **unlisted Indian company**, or **10% or more** of the post-issue paid-up equity capital, on a fully diluted basis, of a **listed Indian company**.
2. FDI is associated with establishing a **"lasting interest"** in an enterprise located in an economy other than that of the investor.
3. It is regarded as an important **non-debt financial resource** for economic development.
4. In contrast, foreign investment below the prescribed **10% threshold in a listed Indian company** is generally treated as **Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI)** under the relevant framework.

Routes of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):

1. **Automatic Route:**

   FDI is permitted **without prior approval of the Government**, subject to the prescribed **sectoral limits and applicable conditions**.

2. **Government Route:**

   FDI requires **prior approval of the Government** before investment can be made in sectors or activities covered under this route.

3. **Liberal FDI Regime:**

   India permits **up to 100% FDI** under the **Automatic Route** in **most sectors/activities**, subject to applicable **sectoral caps and conditions**.

Regulatory Framework:

1. **DPIIT**, under the **Ministry of Commerce & Industry**, is the nodal department for formulation of the Government's **FDI policy** and maintenance of inward FDI data based on remittances reported by RBI.
2. FDI policy is implemented within the framework of the **Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999**.
3. Legal effect through the **Foreign Exchange Management (Non-Debt Instruments) Rules, 2019**, administered under the Ministry of Finance framework.
4. **RBI** prescribes requirements relating to **inward remittances and reporting of non-debt instruments**.

FDI Performance:

1. **Gross FDI inflows** reached **$30.7 billion during April–June 2026,** the highest level in the accessible data covering 60 quarters or **15 years.**
2. Quarterly gross inflows were nearly **46% higher than the previous quarter** and around **15% higher year-on-year.**
3. **Net FDI stood at $7.8 billion** during April–June 2026, reaching its highest quarterly level since June 2022.
4. In **June 2026**, net FDI turned positive as inflows exceeded outflows by $**1.3 billion.**

5. **Singapore, the Netherlands, the U.S. and Canada** together accounted for around **74% of June's gross FDI inflows.**
6. **Sectoral Composition:**

   Manufacturing received the **largest share of FDI inflows**, followed by electricity generation, computer and communication services.

Significance:

1. **Investor confidence:** Record gross inflows reflect the continued interest of global investors in India.
2. **Manufacturing investment:** Manufacturing emerging as the largest recipient indicates significant foreign-capital flows into the productive sector of the economy.
3. **Quality of FDI assessment:** Gross FDI alone does not provide the complete picture; repatriation, disinvestment and outward FDI determine the eventual net FDI position.
4. **Improving external capital flows:** The increasing frequency with which FDI inflows are exceeding outflows indicates an improvement in the net direct-investment position.

Source: THE HINDU - https://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/gross-fdi-hit-15-year-high-of-307-billion-in-april-june-2026/article71392237.ece

23. National Health Claim Exchange (NHCX)

Prelims:

Indian Economy & Social Sector

Mains:

GS Paper II – Health, Government Policies & Interventions, GS Paper III – Insurance Sector

Current relevance:

A **Sub-Committee on Health Insurance** of the **Insurance Advisory Committee (IAC)** under IRDAI has emphasised making health insurance policies **simpler, more**

transparent and easier for policyholders to understand and use. The sub-committee considered measures to encourage insurers and hospitals to join the **National Health Claims Exchange (NHCX).**



Highlights:

National Health Claims Exchange (NHCX):

1. The **National Health Claims Exchange (NHCX)** is a digital gateway under the **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)** designed to standardise and streamline health-insurance claim processing across India.
2. **Initiation:** The **National Health Authority (NHA)** announced the Health Claims Exchange as an ABDM initiative on **23 September 2022**.
3. **Institutional Collaboration:** NHCX was developed by the **National Health Authority (NHA) in collaboration with the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** to facilitate its integration with the health-insurance ecosystem.
4. **Testing & Integration:** In **April 2023**, the NHA introduced the **HCX Sandbox**, providing developers and stakeholders with an environment to **test their systems and integrate** with the claims-exchange framework.
5. **Part of ABDM Digital Architecture:** NHCX functions as one of the three major gateways under ABDM, alongside the **Health Information Exchange and Consent Manager (HIE-CM)** and the **Unified Health Interface (UHI)**.

Key Features:

1. **Unified Digital Gateway:** Provides a common digital platform for the exchange of health-claim information among **healthcare providers, insurers/payers, TPAs, beneficiaries** and other stakeholders.
2. **Standardised Claims Processing:** Establishes **common standards and protocols** for processing health-insurance claims, reducing variations across different stakeholders and systems.
3. **Interoperable Ecosystem:** Enables hospital and insurance information systems to communicate and exchange claims data seamlessly.
4. **Machine-Readable Claims:** Structures claims information in a **machine-readable format**, reducing dependence on PDFs, paperwork and manual data processing.
5. **Auditable & Verifiable Data:** Ensures that information exchanged through the platform is auditable and verifiable, supporting greater accuracy and reliability in claims processing.
6. **API-Based Information Exchange:** Uses standard protocols and APIs, along with validation and routing mechanisms, to facilitate electronic exchange of claims and responses between stakeholders.
7. **Paperless Claim Settlement:** Facilitates digital and paperless processing of claims submitted by hospitals to insurance companies, reducing administrative procedures.
8. **Real-Time Claim Visibility:** Enables real-time tracking of claim-settlement status, improving transparency for policyholders and regulatory oversight.
9. **Public–Private Integration:** Supports a common framework for claims-information exchange across both public and private health-insurance programmes, contributing to an integrated health-insurance ecosystem.

Source: THE HINDU - https://www.thehindu.com/business/irdai-panel-calls-for-simpler-transparent-easier-to-use-health-covers/article71405207.ece

24. Mission Rangeen Machhli 2031

Prelims:

Agriculture & Economy

Mains:

GS Paper III: Fisheries and aquaculture, Economy

Current relevance:

The **Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying** is organising an outreach programme at Agatti, Lakshadweep, on 31 August 2026, where the Vice President of India will release the **"Mission Rangeen Machhli 2031"** Strategic Action Plan for Ornamental Fisheries Development.



Highlights:

Mission Rangeen Machhli 2031:

1. **Mission Rangeen Machhli 2031** is a **Strategic Action Plan for Ornamental Fisheries Development** aimed at promoting the sustainable and organised growth of India's ornamental fisheries sector.

2. It provides a uniform framework for **scientific management, biosecurity, quality assurance and regulatory compliance**.
3. **Standard Operating Procedures** will standardise practices across the value chain, including **broodstock management, breeding, hatcheries, quarantine, health management,** traceability, handling, transport and trade.
4. Improved certification, traceability and quality standards are expected to strengthen **market access and global competitiveness**.
5. The plan also seeks to strengthen **stakeholder capacities** and encourage nationwide adoption of best management practices.

Lakshadweep: Marine Resource Potential:

1. Lakshadweep has an **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)of nearly 4 lakh sq. km**, accounting for about **17% of India's total EEZ**, along with more than **4,200 sq. km of lagoon area**.
2. The islands possess significant **marine ornamental fisheries resources**, creating opportunities for **sustainable rearing, exports and livelihood generation**.
3. Lakshadweep has been notified as a dedicated **Seaweed Cluster** to promote **cultivation, processing, value addition and market linkages**.
4. **Yellowfin Tuna and Skipjack Tuna** are important high-value fisheries resources of the islands.
5. These resources provide scope for expanding **mariculture, value addition, exports and coastal livelihoods**, supporting the **Blue Economy**.

India’s Marine Fisheries & Blue Economy Potential:

1. India has a coastline of approximately **11,099 km** and an **EEZ of about 24 lakh sq. km**, with an estimated marine fisheries potential of **58.6 lakh MT**.
2. Marine fisheries support approximately **50 lakh fishers** and contribute to **food security, nutrition, employment, income and exports**.
3. India exported seafood worth around **₹73,890 crore in FY 2025-26**.

4. Fishing activity remains largely concentrated within **40–50 nautical miles from the coast**, leaving deeper waters with significant potential for **high-value tuna and tuna-like resources**.
5. Sustainable development of **deep-sea fishing, mariculture and high-value fisheries** can strengthen livelihoods and exports while requiring continued **marine ecosystem conservation**.

Cluster-Based Sustainable Fisheries Development:

1. The Government is adopting a **cluster-based and value-chain-oriented approach** for fisheries development.
2. The approach seeks to connect **production, processing, value addition and market linkages**.
3. Development of **ornamental fisheries, seaweed and high-value marine fisheries** can diversify livelihood opportunities for island and coastal communities.
4. Strengthening **quality assurance, certification, traceability and biosecurity** can improve access to domestic and international markets.
5. Sustainable utilisation of marine resources can simultaneously support **livelihood generation, export growth and conservation of marine ecosystems**.

Source: PIB –

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=2304612&reg=48&lang=1

25. Integrated Fertilizer Management System (iFMS)

Prelims:

Agriculture & Economy

Mains:

GS Paper III: application of technology in agriculture

Current relevance:

The **Integrated Fertilizer Management System (iFMS)** has entered a new phase with digital initiatives aimed at improving **fertilizer availability, supply-chain transparency and data-driven monitoring**



Highlights:

About Integrated Fertilizer Management System (iFMS):

1. iFMS is described as the **digital backbone** of **fertilizer management** in India.
2. It has been developed and technically supported by the **National Informatics Centre (NIC)** for the Department of Fertilizers.
3. It digitally connects major stages of the fertilizer ecosystem — production, imports, movement, stock availability, retail sales and subsidy processing.
4. It covers more than **14 crore Aadhaar-linked fertilizer buyers** and **over 2.5 lakh retailers.**
5. Dashboards allow fertilizer production, imports, dispatches, stocks and retail sales to be monitored at **national, State, district and retailer levels.**

Linking Fertilizer Transactions with Farmer & Farm Data:

1. iFMS has been integrated with **Meri Fasal Mera Byora (MFMB)** in **Haryana,** while subsequent integration work has been undertaken with **AgriStack**.
2. These integrations enable fertilizer transactions to be linked with **farmer, land and crop information.**
3. Combining agricultural and transaction data can help understand **fertilizer requirements and consumption patterns** more accurately.
4. Analytics can examine fertilizer purchases according to **buyer categories, landholdings, crops, districts and fertilizer types.**
5. This represents a shift from simply recording fertilizer sales towards **data-driven monitoring** and informed decision-making.

Framework for Fertilizer Sale (FFS):

1. The **Framework for Fertilizer Sale (FFS)** integrates a **mobile app-based fertilizer booking system** with the existing iFMS **Point of Sale (PoS)** ecosystem.
2. Farmers can book fertilizers using their **AgriStack ID**, following verification of land and ownership details.
3. A **QR-based booking** is generated and accessed through the PoS device, allowing comparison between the fertilizer required and the quantity actually purchased.
4. The framework enables analysis of:
    i. **Fertilizer consumption per hectare**
    ii. **Consumption across landholding categories**
    iii. **Crop-wise and product-wise fertilizer use**
    iv. **Booked requirement versus actual purchase**
5. It is being implemented in a **phased manner**, providing an additional verification and analytical layer between **AgriStack and iFMS**.
6. The framework aims to enable genuine farmers to obtain fertilizer according to their assessed requirements, while improving transparency in fertilizer sales.

Digital Monitoring of Fertilizer Supply Chain:

1. The **Vehicle Location Tracking System (VLTS)** strengthens digital monitoring of fertilizer movement.
2. It links dispatch information with **vehicle-location data**, allowing fertilizer consignments to be tracked while in transit.It can help identify delays and unusual movement patterns.
3. Integration with **Goods-in-Transit, dispatch and stock information** provides administrators with a more complete view of fertilizer movement from dispatch to destination.
4. This can improve monitoring of both fertilizer movement and its eventual availability at the intended location.

Digital Fertilizer Subsidy Management:

1. Fertilizer subsidy payments under iFMS are linked to actual fertilizer sales recorded through the **PoS network.**
2. From **1 January 2026**, further work was undertaken towards **electronic processing of subsidy bills** and integration with financial systems, including **PFMS/e-Bill processes.**
3. Digitisation reduces manual intervention and improves the traceability of subsidy claims and payments.
4. **Random verification and analytical checks** are also being introduced for greater scrutiny of DBT-related bills and transactions.
5. These measures seek to make fertilizer subsidy administration more **efficient, transparent and auditable.**

Significance:

1. **Timely Availability:** Better monitoring can help identify emerging supply situations and improve fertilizer availability to farmers.
2. **Transparency:** Digital tracking from fertilizer movement to retail sale and subsidy processing strengthens supply-chain visibility.

3. **Targeted Management:** Linking fertilizer purchases with land, crop and farmer information enables monitoring in an agricultural context.
4. **Efficient Subsidies:** Electronic processing and verification can improve traceability and auditability of fertilizer subsidies.
5. **Data-driven Governance:** Integrated dashboards and analytics enable policymakers to understand where fertilizer is available, how it moves and how it is consumed.
6. **Digital Agriculture:** Integration of **iFMS, AgriStack, PoS, QR-based booking and VLTS illustrates** the growing use of digital infrastructure in managing critical agricultural inputs.

Source: PIB -

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=2304690&reg=48&lang=1