



## Daily Current Affairs

**GEO IAS**

SOURCES



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## Important News Articles

### GS I

#### 1. In Goa's capital, a historical artefact is discovered inside a dug-up pavement- The Indian Express

**Relevance:** Indian Culture - Salient aspects of Art Forms, Literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times.

**News:**

- Workers digging up a pavement in **Panaji**, stumbled upon a carved **stone slab** estimated to date back several hundred years, when Goa was under **Portuguese rule**.

**Key Highlights:**

- This has led to a theory that the carving is that of a "Paulist" — missionaries from the Society of Jesus who worked to spread **Catholicism** in the Portuguese Empire's Asian colonies.
- Jesuit missionaries came to Goa in the 16th century. "They were followers of St Paul who built the College of **St Paul in Old Goa**, and hence the term 'Paulists'.
- The Paulists were earlier in Old Goa and later came to the Tiswadi area, where they built many churches.

#### Prelims Takeaway

- Portuguese Rule
- Goa Liberation

### GS II

#### 2. Article 31C: Why the SC is deciding if a fundamental right still exists in a case about private property- The Indian Express

**Relevance:** Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and Issues arising out of their Design and Implementation

**News:**

- While hearing a case to decide whether the government can acquire and redistribute private property.
- A nine-judge Bench of the Supreme Court led by the Chief Justice of India decided to take up the issue, whether Article 31C still exists.

**Key Highlights:**

- As per Article 31C, the **directive principles (Articles 39(b) and 39(c))** cannot be challenged by invoking the right to equality (Article 14) or the rights under Article 19.
- Article 31C was introduced by The Constitution (**Twenty-fifth Amendment Act, 1971**).
- The 25th amendment was challenged in the seminal **Kesavananda Bharati case (1973)** in which **13 judges** bench held that the Constitution has a "basic structure" that cannot be altered, even by a constitutional amendment.
- In 1976, Parliament enacted The 42nd Constitution Amendment Act, which expanded the protection under Article 31C clause 4 to "all or any of the principles laid down in Part IV of the Constitution",
- As a result, every single directive principle (Articles 36-51) was protected from challenges under Articles 14 and 19 of the Constitution.
- In 1980, in **Minerva Mills v. Union of India**, the SC struck down clauses 4 and 5 of the 42nd amendment.
- The five-judge Bench held that Parliament's power to amend the Constitution was limited, and it could not grant itself "unlimited" and "absolute" powers of amendment.

#### Prelims Takeaway

- DPSP
- Right to Property

### 3. ECI brings out protocol on symbol loading units as mandated by the Supreme Court- The Hindu

**Relevance:** Separation of Powers between various organs Dispute Redressal Mechanisms and Institutions.

#### Prelims Takeaway

- ECI
- SLU

#### News:

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) brought out a **detailed protocol** for the handling and storage of **Symbol Loading Units (SLU)** in compliance with the Supreme Court's order
- The apex court had issued directions to **seal and store SLUs in a container**, along with the electronic voting machines (EVMs), for at least 45 days after the declaration of results.

#### Key Highlights:

- The SLU uploads the name and symbol of the candidates contesting a particular seat on Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) or paper trail machines.
- The SLUs had till now been handed over to local poll officials by engineers of the Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) or the ECI before voting.
- A day after the poll, the SLUs were returned to the engineers of the two public sector undertakings that manufacture the ballot unit, the control unit, and the VVPAT, along with the SLUs.
- The ECI had directed all Chief Electoral Officers to create the necessary infrastructure for the handling and storage of the SLUs in EVMs in accordance with the new protocols being implemented.

## GS III

### 4. ISRO finds proof of enhanced possibility of water ice in polar craters of the moon - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Awareness in the fields of Space

#### Prelims Takeaway

- ISRO
- Craters of moon

#### News:

- Indian space scientists have found out in a recent study 'the enhanced possibility of water ice occurrence in the polar craters of the moon.'

#### Highlights:

- The study suggests that the **amount of subsurface ice in the first couple of metres is about five to eight times larger in comparison to the surface in both poles.**
- Drilling on the moon to sample or excavate that ice will be primordial for future missions and long-term human presence.
  - Furthermore, the study also suggests that the **extent of water ice in the northern polar region is twice that in the southern polar region.**
- The study confirms the hypothesis that the primary source of sub-surface water ice in the lunar poles is out-gassing during volcanism in the Imbrian period.
  - The results also conclude that the **distribution of water ice is likely governed by mare volcanism and preferential impact cratering.**
- Accurate knowledge of the distribution and depth of water ice occurrence in the lunar poles, is crucial for constraining the uncertainties in selecting future landing and sampling sites for missions aimed at exploring and characterising lunar volatiles.
  - **This study is crucial for supporting ISRO's future in-situ volatile exploration plans on the moon.**

## 5. April's gross GST takings power past ₹2.1 lakh cr. in new record- The Hindu

**Relevance:** Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment.

**News:**

- High tax collections with 12.4% growth over previous highest tally due to strong momentum in the economy.
- April's GST revenues are usually the highest, as taxpayers meet compliance deadlines before the end of the financial year.

**Highlights:**

- Year-end compliances lifted India's gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenues past a record ₹2.1 lakh crore in April, reflecting a **12.4% growth** over the previous highest tally of ₹1.87 lakh crore in the same month last year.

**Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs**

- Part of Department of Revenue under the Ministry of Finance, Government of India.
- It deals with the tasks of formulation of policy concerning levy and collection of Customs, Central Excise duties, Central Goods & Services Tax and IGST.

### Prelims Takeaway

- GST
- CBIC

## 6. April temperatures in east and south India posted record highs; heatwaves to prevail - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Important Geophysical Phenomena

**News:** April temperatures were the highest over eastern and northeastern India and the second highest over south India since 1901.

**Highlights:**

- These record-breaking temperatures were due to the **combined effect of a prevailing El Nino and a weather system called an anticyclone**
  - This phenomenon **blocked moisture-laden sea breeze** from the Bay of Bengal, which in the past years has brought rainfall and eased temperatures.
- Many states saw **heatwaves**, India's 36 meteorological subdivisions cumulatively see 71 heatwave days on average during April. This time they saw **118 the third highest since 2010**.
- In contrast, northwestern India did not see any heatwave day on account of regular incursions of "**western disturbances**".

### Prelims Takeaway

- El Nino
- Anticyclone
- Western disturbance

## 7. 'India one of key geographies affected by phishing attacks' - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Cyber Security

**News:**

- India is one of the countries affected by phishing attacks, as reported by Verizon Business

**Highlights:**

- Employees often **click on malicious links or attachments** that appear to be from legitimate sources
  - **This leads to severe financial losses.**
- However, there was a silver lining as far as India was concerned as reporting practices have improved.
  - **20% of users now identifying and reporting phishing during simulation tests.**
- The company also said in its 2024 Data Breach Investigations Report that espionage attacks dominate Asia Pacific region's cybersecurity landscape, including that of India.
  - **Some 25% of Asia Pacific cyberattacks are motivated by espionage**, significantly greater than Europe and North America, respectively

### Prelims Takeaway

- Phishing

## Editorials, Gists and Explainers

### 8. What is the role of hydropower in a world facing increasing drought? - Indian Express

**Relevance:** Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

**Context:**

- Recent droughts in Colombia and Ecuador have severely hampered energy supplied by hydropower.
- The low-carbon renewable is viable in an increasingly hot and dry world

**Key highlights**

- Reliable, cheap and low carbon – since coming into use over a hundred years ago, hydropower has become a vital clean energy source, today providing more electricity than all other renewables combined.
- But recent power shortages in Ecuador and Colombia have highlighted its vulnerability in the face of climate change.

**Climate change: an increasing concern for the industry**

- Hydropower functions by harnessing the movement of water flowing through a turbine, which generates electricity as it spins.
- Droughts and sudden floods which can also damage dams made more frequent and severe by climate change, are therefore an “increasing concern” for hydropower
- While hydropower remains the world’s largest renewable source of electricity and had been increasing by 70% over the last two decades
- China, the world’s largest hydroelectricity generator, accounted for three quarters of the global decline.

**Over-reliance increases climate vulnerability**

- The solution for these countries is to diversify their power sources by incorporating other renewable technologies - such as wind and solar - into their energy mix,
- Innovations around placing floating solar panels on the water’s surface in hydropower plants - as countries such China and Brazil are exploring - have significant potential

**The road to net-zero**

- Hydropower capacity needs to double by 2050 if the world is to stay on track for limiting global temperature increases to 1.5C, according to the International Renewable Energy Agency.

**Hydropower’s stabilizing role**

- While climate change is going to increase the risks for hydropower, better management of water within a basin and how plants are integrated with other renewables can improve resilience to drought,

### 9. How Middle East conflict can affect Indian economy -The Hindu

**Relevance:** Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India’s interests, Indian diaspora.

**Context:**

- Since the Covid-19 pandemic receded, the global arena has been beset by a series of geopolitical issues.
- Even as the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Hamas conflicts continue, the recent tensions between Israel and Iran have become a new source of concern and uncertainty for the region and the rest of the world.

**Macroeconomic Stability Impact Analysis:**

- While the situation remains fluid at present, a further step up in tensions could have macroeconomic implications through various channels, such as sentiment, financial flows, and commodity prices.
- **Costly Oil:** As the world’s third-largest consumer of crude oil, India heavily relies on imports for over 85% of its needs.
- Any disruption in the oil supply chain could lead to a significant increase in inflationary pressures.
- **Affected Industries:** Sectors such as automobiles, transportation, aviation, paints, tires, cement, and chemicals would bear the brunt of such disruptions.
- **Risk of Blocked Routes:** Although India doesn’t directly import crude from Iran due to US sanctions, there’s a concern that Iran might block the Straits of Hormuz, a vital route for Middle Eastern oil transport.
- **Increased Transport Costs:** Rising oil prices not only risk inflating consumer prices but also drive up transportation expenses, impacting the overall prices of goods and services.
- **Inflation Evaluation:** While fluctuations in crude oil prices affect the Wholesale Price Index more than the Consumer Price Index, both are influenced to some extent.
- **Impact on Growth:** Prolonged high oil prices could dampen GDP growth by reducing consumption and squeezing corporate margins.
- **Current Account Deficit and Financial Flows:** Even a slight uptick in oil prices could worsen the current account deficit and affect foreign investments and remittances, highlighting the connection between geopolitical events and India’s economic fundamentals.

**Growing India-Middle East Relations:**

- **IMEC Initiative:** India is actively engaging with the Middle East through projects like the India-Middle East-Europe economic corridor.
- **Rise of Gulf Industries:** With Gulf economies diversifying away from oil, India becomes an attractive market for emerging industries in the region.
- Gulf investments in Indian agriculture contribute to the region’s food security.
- **Non-Oil Trade Boost:** The UAE-India Joint Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement has significantly boosted non-oil trade between the two countries.
- **India’s Global Economic Role:** Western powers are supporting India’s deepening ties with the Middle East through initiatives like IMEC, Quad, and I2U2.

**Concluding Remarks:**

- The tensions between Israel and Iran test India's strategic acumen and resilience in navigating geopolitical challenges.
- By adopting a pragmatic approach, India can mitigate immediate risks and seize long-term growth opportunities.

## 10. In an uncertain world, India's trade push - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Indian Economy

**News:** Pickup in global trade, free-trade agreements should spur India's exports. However, uneven global growth and geopolitical tensions need monitoring.

Highlights:	India's exports:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the past few years, <b>global trade has been very volatile first on account of the Covid-19 pandemic and then due to geopolitical conflicts</b></li> <li>• As per data from the <b>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development</b> since the middle of 2022, the <b>value of global merchandise trade has shrunk continuously</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ In fact, in 2023, global merchandise exports fell by 4.6 per cent.</li> <li>◦ <b>The first quarter of 2024, although, saw some sequential improvement.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>India saw merchandise exports falling 4.7 per cent in 2023.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>However, this was better than developing Asia as a whole, which saw merchandise exports decline by 6.8 per cent.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• In 2023-24, India's merchandise exports were down 3.1 per cent from 2022-23.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ But the monthly data does suggest a pick up.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Besides an uncertain global environment, India has also had to deal with <b>lower international commodity prices</b>, which have reduced its export bill measured in dollars.</li> <li>• In 2023-24, the sharp decline in crude oil prices was a big contributor to the fall in India's overall merchandise export bill.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>With more than a 20 per cent share, oil is India's single largest export item</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Excluding petroleum and gems and jewellery exports, <b>core exports were up 1.4 per cent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ This indicates that India was able to ship a higher volume of goods.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The 24 per cent growth in electronics goods exports last year reflects surging exports of telecom instruments or mobile handsets, <b>spurred by the Production Linked Incentive scheme.</b></li> <li>• Other large core categories such as drugs and pharmaceuticals, engineering goods and agricultural goods also saw healthy export growth.</li> <li>• It is also noteworthy that despite the ban on non-basmati rice and wheat and some other curbs from time to time, overall agriculture and allied exports growth remained healthy.</li> <li>• In terms of the country of destination, oddly, goods exports to the US contracted in 2023-24.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ However, there has been an uptick over the past few months.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• On the other hand, <b>exports to the Euro region grew last year despite a sharp economic slowdown in the region.</b></li> <li>• <b>India's exports to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries also rose</b>, reflecting a further increase in exports to the UAE</li> </ul>

**Challenges:**

- **Exports of labour-intensive sectors** such as gems and jewellery, textile products, leather and leather products, marine products and plastics, declined last year.
- The **share of most of the labour-intensive categories** in the country's merchandise exports has come down drastically over the last decade.

## Quick Look

### 1. Antares

- Antares also called as Jyeshtha
- It is a red supergiant star located in the constellation of Scorpius.
- It is one of the brightest stars in the night sky and is often referred to as the "heart of the scorpion".
- It shines with a distinctive reddish hue, which is characteristic of red stars.

### 2. Quarks

- Quarks are fundamental particles and the basic building blocks of matter.
- They have fractional electric charges and are subject to the strong force
- Quarks can never exist in isolation.
- They can only be found in groups of more than two or three
- Such clumps of quarks or composite particles are called hadrons.
- Physicists have mostly studied quarks based on the behaviour of hadrons
- Protons and neutrons are common examples of quarks.

### 3. Vitrectomy

- It is a surgical procedure that removes the vitreous humour, a gel-like substance that fills the eye between the lens and the retina.
- This surgery is essential for treating a variety of eye conditions, particularly those that affect the retina and the clarity of vision.

### 4. Asset management companies (AMCs)

- Asset management company is a firm that invests the funds pooled from individual investors in securities with the objective of optimal return for investors in exchange for a fee.
- AMC maintains the diversity of portfolio by investing in both high-risk and low-risk securities such as stock, debt, real- estate, shares, bonds, pension funds, etc.
- Because they have a larger pool of resources than the individual investor could access on their own, AMCs provide investors with more diversification and investing options.
- AMCs are colloquially referred to as money managers or money management firms.

### 5. India's Universal Immunization Programme (UIP)

- India launched the EPI in 1978, which was later renamed as the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP) in 1985.
- To rapidly increase immunization coverage, To achieve self-sufficiency in vaccine are few its objective
- All beneficiaries' namely pregnant women and children can get themselves vaccinated at the nearest Government/Private health facility
  - Or at an immunization session site (Anganwadicentres/ other identified sites) near to their village/urban locality on fixed days.
- The UIP covers all sections of the society across the country with the same high quality vaccines.



## Prelims Track Question

**Q1. Consider the following Statements regarding Portuguese rule in India:**

1. The Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494 divided the newly discovered lands outside Europe between Portugal and Spain.
2. The Portuguese established their first permanent settlement in India at Diu in 1510.
3. The Portuguese established control over key ports such as Daman, Diu, and Cochin, facilitating their dominance in Indian maritime trade.

**How many of the above statements is/are Correct?**

- A. Only One
- B. Only Two
- C. All Three
- D. None

**Q2. Which of the following provisions is related to Article 31C of the Indian Constitution?**

- A. Special provisions for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes.
- B. Directive Principles of State Policy regarding equal pay for equal work.
- C. Laws made by the Parliament and the State Legislatures giving effect to certain directive principles.
- D. Reservation of seats in educational institutions and public employment for economically weaker sections.

**Q3. Which of the following statements regarding the Election Commission of India (ECI) is/are correct?**

1. The ECI is a constitutional body established under Article 324 of the Indian Constitution.
2. Originally the commission had 3 Election Commissioners including one chief Election Commissioner
3. It was established with the Constitution on 26th November 1949

**How many of the above statements are Correct?**

- A. Only One
- B. Only Two
- C. All Three
- D. None

**Q4. Consider the following statements regarding Lunar craters**

1. Lunar Craters are bowl-shaped landforms created by Volcanism and Cratering
2. South Pole-Aitken Basin is the largest crater on moon
3. There are a very small number of craters found on the lunar surface.

**How many of the above statement is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q5. Which of the following statements regarding the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) is/are correct?**

1. CBIC is responsible for classifying goods under the Harmonized System of Nomenclature (HSN) for customs
2. Established as a separate entity in 1953
3. CBIC is responsible for formulating policies concerning customs, central excise, goods and services tax (GST), and narcotics control.

**How many of the above statements are Correct?**

- A. Only One
- B. Only Two
- C. All Three
- D. None

**Q6. Consider the following statements regarding Western disturbance**

1. These are storms that originate in the Indian ocean
2. These bring rainfall in northwest India in the cold weather season.
3. Locally they are known as mawat.

**How many of the above statement is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q7. Consider the following Pairs**

1. Ransomware - revealing sensitive information
2. Phishing- encryption of files
3. Hacking- unauthorised access to computer systems

**How many of the above pairs are correctly matched:**

- A. Only one pair
- B. Only two pairs
- C. All three pairs
- D. None

**Q8. UAE and Ecuador was in news in context of:**

- A. Unusual rainfall and drought
- B. Military coup
- C. Nuclear war
- D. None Of the above

**Q9. West bank is bordered by which of the following**

1. Israel
2. Mediterranean sea
3. Jordan

**How many of the options given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q10. Consider the following statement regarding India's exports**

1. Oil is India's largest export item with more than a 20 per cent share
2. India's merchandise exports have been steadily increasing
3. Production Linked Incentive scheme has spurred growth in export of electronic goods

**How many of the above statement is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

## Prelims Track Answer

### Answer 1 Option B is Correct

#### Explanation:

- The Portuguese established their first permanent settlement in India at **Goa** in 1510 after capturing it from the Sultan of Bijapur. **Statement 2 is Incorrect**
- The Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494 divided the newly discovered lands outside Europe between Spain and Portugal, The division was more focused on territories in the Americas. **Statement 1 is correct**
- The Portuguese established control over key ports such as Daman, Diu, and Cochin, which played a crucial role in their dominance over Indian maritime trade during the period of their rule. **Statement 3 is correct**

### Answer 2 Option C is Correct

#### Explanation:

- Article 31C of the Indian Constitution states that laws made by the Parliament and the State Legislatures for giving effect to the principles specified in Article 39(b) and Article 39(c) shall not be invalidated on the grounds of inconsistency with the fundamental rights guaranteed under Articles 14 (Right to Equality) and 19 (Protection of certain rights regarding freedom of speech, etc.). **Statement C is correct**

### Answer 3 Option A is Correct

#### Explanation:

- The ECI is a constitutional body established under Article 324 of the Indian Constitution. **Statement 1 is correct**
- Originally the commission had only one election commissioner but after the Election Commissioner Amendment Act 1989, it was made a multi-member body. **Statement 2 is Incorrect**
- It was established in accordance with the Constitution on 25th January 1950 (celebrated as National Voters' Day). The secretariat of the commission is in New Delhi. **Statement 3 is Incorrect**

### Answer 4 Option B is correct

#### Explanation:

- Lunar craters are bowl shaped depressions on the surface of the Moon, typically formed by volcanism and cratering. They range in size from small, simple craters to large, complex ones. **Statement 1 is correct.**
- South Pole–Aitken basin, is the largest crater of the moon. **Statement 2 is correct.**
- There are hundreds or thousands of moon craters ranging from less than a mile across to large ones. **Statement 3 is incorrect.**

### Answer 5 Option B is Correct

#### Explanation:

- CBIC is responsible for classifying goods under the Harmonized System of Nomenclature (HSN) for customs **Statement 1 is correct**
- Established under the Central Board of Revenue Act, 1963, An Act to provide for the constitution of separate Boards of Revenue for Direct Taxes and for Excise and Customs **Statement 2 is Incorrect**
- CBIC is responsible for formulating policies concerning customs, central excise, goods and services tax (GST), and narcotics control. **Statement 3 is correct**

### Answer 6 Option B is correct.

#### Explanation:

- Western Disturbance (WD) is a meteorological term used to describe an extratropical storm or weather system that originates in the Mediterranean region and moves eastwards, affecting weather patterns in regions of South Asia, particularly India. **Statement 1 is incorrect.**
- In India, Western Disturbances are primarily responsible for winter precipitation in regions such as northern and northwestern India. **Statement 2 is correct.**
- Western disturbance locally are known as Mawat and are beneficial for rabi crops. **Statement 3 is correct.**

**Answer 7 Option A is correct**

**Explanation:**

- Ransomware - cybercriminals deploy malicious software to encrypt files or lock users out of their systems, demanding payment (a ransom) for the decryption key. **Pair one is incorrect**
- Phishing- Cybercriminals use this technique to trick individuals into revealing sensitive information, such as usernames, passwords, or financial data, often through deceptive emails or messages. **Pair 2 is incorrect.**
- Hacking - This type of cyberattack involves the unauthorized access to computer systems or networks to exploit vulnerabilities or gain control over sensitive information. **Pair 3 is correct.**

**Answer 8 Option A is correct**

**Explanation:**

- Rain is unusual in the UAE, an arid, Arabian Peninsula nation, but occurs periodically during the cooler winter months. Many roads and other areas lack drainage given the lack of regular rainfall, causing flooding. 18 Apr 2024
- Recent droughts in Colombia and Ecuador have severely hampered energy supplied by hydropower. **Hence option A is correct**

**Answer 9 Option B is correct**

**Explanation**

- A landlocked territory near the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in the Levant region of West Asia, it is bordered by Jordan and the Dead Sea to the east and by Israel (via the Green Line) to the south, west, and north. The territory has been under Israeli occupation since 1967. **Hence option 1 and 3 is correct**

**Answer 10 Option B is correct.**

**Explanation:**

- With more than a 20 per cent share, oil is India's single largest export item. **Statement 1 is correct.**
- In 2023-24, India's merchandise exports were down 3.1 per cent from 2022-23. **Statement 2 is incorrect.**
- The 24 per cent growth in electronics goods exports last year reflects surging exports of telecom instruments or mobile handsets, spurred by the Production Linked Incentive scheme. **Statement 3 is correct.**



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