



SAMARTHYA IAS · AHMEDABAD

DAILY UPSC COMPANION

# Samarthya Current Affairs

Prelims facts · Mains frameworks · Practice MCQs

**18** | September 2026  
FRIDAY

**10**  
TOPICS

**16**  
STORIES

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MCQS

*Your Complete UPSC Current Affairs Companion*

## 5 Things You Must Know

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## Internal Security and Counter-Terrorism Framework: UAPA Designation of Shahzad Bhatti Network



STORY 1 **The Hindu**

### MHA Designates Shahzad Bhatti Network as Terrorist Group Under UAPA

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs issued an official notification declaring the Shahzad Bhatti Network as a terrorist organization under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act.

Operating remotely from the United Arab Emirates, leader Shahzad Bhatti evolved from organized gangster activities into facilitating violent cross-border terrorist operations targeting India.

National security agencies linked the syndicate to over 200 counter-terror detentions executed across multiple Indian states during coordinated operations ahead of Independence Day.

The MHA assessment emphasized that the outfit's activities pose grave threats to India's democratic structure, internal security stability, and communal harmony.

The UAPA designation grants law enforcement agencies enhanced legal capabilities to confiscate proceeds of crime, intercept communications, and prosecute domestic network operatives.

### UPSC RELEVANCE

Examines statutory powers under UAPA for declaring transnational criminal syndicates as terrorist entities and addressing cross-border security threats.

### PRELIMS FACTS

- The Union Ministry of Home Affairs notifies terrorist organizations under Schedule I of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.
- The 2019 amendment to UAPA empowered the Central Government to designate both individuals and organizations as terrorists.
- Transnational syndicates operating from foreign jurisdictions can be designated under UAPA to facilitate asset freezing and Interpol red notices.

## MAINS FRAMEWORK

**Intro:** The designation of the Shahzad Bhatti Network under UAPA highlights the increasing operational convergence between cross-border organized crime syndicates and state-sponsored proxy terror networks.

### DIMENSIONS

- **Statutory Powers and Asset Freezing:** Empowers national agencies to freeze domestic financial assets, conduct preemptive arrests, and initiate international extradition proceedings.
- **Cyber Recruitment and Hybrid Threats:** Exploitation of social media platforms by foreign handlers to radicalize local youth and execute targeted violent disruptions.
- **Transnational Legal Challenges:** Operational reliance on foreign safe havens necessitates robust bilateral legal assistance treaties and FATF compliance enforcement.

**Way forward:** Strengthen real-time financial intelligence units, mandate proactive social media monitoring, and expand bilateral extradition agreements with Gulf Cooperation Council nations.

### PYQ LINK

UPSC Mains 2022 evaluated the growing nexus between transnational organized crime and internal security threats alongside statutory provisions under UAPA.

### KEY TERMS

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act

Organized Crime-Terror Nexus

Ministry of Home Affairs

Cross-Border Terrorism

Financial Action Task Force

### ACTS & ARTICLES

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967

Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002

Section 15 of UAPA (Definition of Terrorist Act)

02

GS PAPER II - POLITY & GOVERNANCE

## Federalism and Constitutional Governance: Statehood Demands and Election Commission Mandates



## J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Advocates Statehood Restoration

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah publicly reiterated his government's formal request for the immediate restoration of full statehood status to the region.

Speaking in Srinagar, Chief Minister Abdullah emphasized that solemn commitments regarding statehood were officially presented before Parliament and the Supreme Court of India.

The Chief Minister also backed central regulatory directives on Unified Payments Interface fees, affirming that consumer transactions must remain exempt from merchant processing surcharges.

The statehood demand highlights public expectations for political empowerment and executive autonomy following the democratic election of the legislative assembly.

Restoring full statehood remains vital for reinforcing asymmetric federal principles and ensuring constitutional parity for Jammu and Kashmir within the Indian polity.



## ECI Bars Both Trinamool Factions from Symbol Usage for West Bengal Bypolls

The Election Commission of India promulgated an interim order restraining both rival factions of the Trinamool Congress from using the official party name and symbol.

The regulatory restriction applies directly to upcoming Assembly byelections scheduled across West Bengal, including key constituencies such as Nandigram and Rejinagar.

The ECI instructed both competing groups to choose alternative party names and select free symbols from the approved list for upcoming nominations.

The temporary freeze aims to prevent voter confusion while the quasi-judicial body formally adjudicates long-term claims of organizational majority.

The order demonstrates statutory enforcement under the Election Symbols Reservation and Allotment Order of 1968 to preserve impartial electoral procedures during internal disputes.

### UPSC RELEVANCE

Analyzes constitutional mechanics under Article 3 for statehood restoration and statutory powers of the ECI under the Symbol Order during party splits.

## PRELIMS FACTS

- Article 3 empowers Parliament to form new States, alter boundaries, or diminish the area of any existing State by ordinary legislative procedures.
- Paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols Order, 1968 grants the ECI exclusive authority to adjudicate symbol disputes among rival political factions.
- Interim freeze orders issued by the ECI prevent competing factions from utilizing the registered party name and reserved election symbol.

## MAINS FRAMEWORK

**Intro:** Recent developments in Jammu & Kashmir and West Bengal reflect ongoing structural dynamics in central administrative authority, state autonomy, and election management mechanisms.

### DIMENSIONS

- **Constitutional Promise of Statehood:** Restoring full statehood to Union Territories with elected assemblies reaffirms federal trust and democratic accountability.
- **Electoral Neutrality in Factional Disputes:** Statutory principles guiding ECI adjudications protect voter clarity and maintain level playing fields during splits.
- **Cooperative Federal Relations:** Mitigating friction between central administrative mandates and state-level political representation is essential for administrative stability.

**Way forward:** Pass parliamentary legislation to fulfill commitments on statehood restoration in J&K and ensure time-bound, transparent dispute resolution processes by the Election Commission.

### PYQ LINK

UPSC Mains 2021 examined the constitutional mechanisms for statutory reorganization of states and the election administration responsibilities of the ECI.

### KEY TERMS

Article 3 of Constitution

Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order 1968

Representation of the People Act 1951

Asymmetric Federalism

Interim Symbol Freeze

### ACTS & ARTICLES

Article 3 of Constitution of India

Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019

Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968

03

GS PAPER II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & DIASPORA

## Global Migration Dynamics and Student Visa Policies: Immigration Overhauls in Developed Nations



#### STORY 1 **Times of India**

### **Australia Tightens Student and Backpacker Visa Rules to Curb Migration**

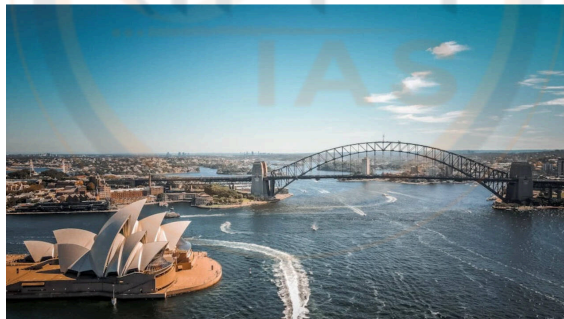
The Australian government unveiled major visa reforms barring international students from bringing partners and children as accompanying dependents during their academic programs.

Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke announced that international students can renew student visas only if they demonstrate advancement up the educational qualification scale.

The policy overhaul aims to reduce annual net migration significantly to manage national housing shortages and public infrastructure pressures across major metropolitan areas.

Australian officials emphasized that the regulatory changes are essential structural measures to uphold academic integrity within the international higher education sector.

The new restrictions significantly alter post-study employment prospects and family reunification options for foreign students pursuing higher education in Australia.



#### STORY 2 **Times of India**

### **Australian Visa Overhaul Restricts Dependent Visas and Course Switching**

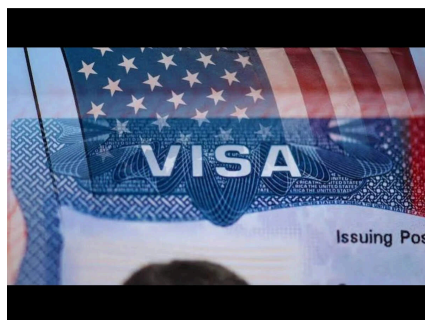
Australia implemented strict new visa directives impacting Indian applicants, explicitly banning course-switching strategies known as 'visa hopping' among temporary visa holders.

The updated regulations establish that new international students will no longer be permitted to attach spouses or children to their student visas.

The Department of Home Affairs aims to lower net overseas migration to 225,000 by 2027-28 from 292,000 recorded in the year ending March 2026.

While direct university enrolment quotas were untouched, the restrictions eliminate secondary long-term stay pathways previously utilized by foreign graduates.

Educational consultants advise prospective Indian students to undertake comprehensive career planning and financial evaluation before applying for Australian study permits.



STORY 3 **Times of India**

### US ICE Detains F-1 Student Following OPT Application Denial

US Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents arrested an F-1 visa holder in Atlanta following an administrative denial of her Optional Practical Training application.

The student was taken into custody despite having no criminal background, no prior deportation order, and remaining within a university-recognized 60-day grace period.

An immigration attorney had submitted a formal legal challenge against the OPT denial prior to the unexpected detention by federal officers.

The incident occurred while the US Department of Homeland Security considers structural revisions to post-graduation grace period frameworks for foreign students.

The case highlights increasing procedural risks and administrative enforcement vulnerabilities faced by foreign graduates navigating complex United States immigration regulations.

#### UPSC RELEVANCE

Evaluates the diplomatic, economic, and educational consequences of tightening visa regulations in Western nations on the Indian diaspora and foreign students.

#### PRELIMS FACTS

- Australia's migration strategy targets lowering annual net overseas migration to 225,000 by 2027-28 from 292,000 in early 2026.
- Optional Practical Training (OPT) enables F-1 student visa holders in the United States to secure temporary employment related to their field of study.
- Course switching or 'visa hopping' refers to temporary visa holders extending stay by enrolling continuously in lower-tier qualification courses.

#### MAINS FRAMEWORK

**Intro:** Structural policy shifts in major destination nations targeting student visas and dependent rights directly alter global mobility patterns and higher education investments for Indian youth.

#### DIMENSIONS

- **Socio-Economic Strain on Foreign Students:** Ban on accompanying family members and restrictions on course transfers raise financial costs and emotional stress.
- **Impact on Bilateral Educational Agreements:** Restrictive immigration measures challenge the spirit of bilateral mobility and trade frameworks like the India-Australia ECTA.
- **Enforcement and Legal Protections:** Sudden detentions during administrative grace periods emphasize the need for enhanced consular protection and legal awareness.

**Way forward:** Strengthen bilateral diplomatic dialogues to secure transitional protections for existing students and build high-quality domestic educational capacity.

#### PYQ LINK

UPSC Mains 2023 evaluated how changes in immigration laws and work visa policies across Western nations impact the welfare of the Indian skilled diaspora.

#### KEY TERMS

Temporary Graduate Visa

Optional Practical Training

Net Overseas Migration

Visa Hopping

Skilled Migration Pathways

#### ACTS & ARTICLES

Migration Act 1958 (Australia)

US Immigration and Nationality Act

Bilateral Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreements

04

GS PAPER II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

## Geopolitics and Global Security Architecture: NATO Eastern Flank Defenses and Russia Conflict



#### STORY 1

The Hindu

### Poland Warns of Planned Russian Hybrid Drone Attacks on NATO Territory

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk alerted Parliament that Russia is preparing hybrid strikes using drones or missiles against European nations supporting Ukraine.

Prime Minister Tusk warned that Moscow intends to dismiss incoming projectile incidents as technical accidents to erode collective response motivation among NATO allies.

The statement followed a near-miss incident where European political leaders narrowly escaped a drone strike while traveling near the Polish-Ukrainian border.

Polish authorities cautioned that drone incursions pose real risks of infrastructure destruction on NATO's eastern flank, calling for heightened allied radar surveillance.

The warning illustrates evolving gray-zone conflict methods where hostile actions are structured to stay just below statutory thresholds for collective military defense.

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**STORY 2** Times of India

## US Moves Toward Establishing Permanent Army Base in Poland

US President Donald Trump reported notable progress toward constructing a permanent American Army base in Poland following high-level bilateral consultations.

President Trump praised Polish President Karol Nawrocki's strategic leadership, indicating that specific location plans for the facility would be announced shortly.

Poland has persistently advocated for a permanent US military garrison on its territory to deter potential cross-border military escalation since 2022.

Establishing a permanent base marks a shift from temporary troop rotations, anchoring long-term United States military engagement on Europe's eastern perimeter.

The development comes amid broader reassessments of transatlantic burden-sharing and NATO forward defense capabilities in Eastern Europe.

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**STORY 3** Times of India

## Russia Begins First Parliamentary Elections Since Ukraine Conflict

Voting commenced across Russia for three-day parliamentary elections determining all 450 seats in the State Duma, the lower house of Parliament.

This election represents the first nationwide legislative polling conducted since Moscow launched its full-scale military invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Voting initiated in Far Eastern territories like Kamchatka and Chukotka, with the ruling United Russia party expected to maintain its legislative majority.

President Vladimir Putin urged citizens to vote, presenting electoral participation as a public demonstration of national unity and armed forces support.

The polling takes place against a backdrop of prolonged economic sanctions, strict legal limits on opposition political activity, and foreign drone strikes.

### UPSC RELEVANCE

Examines strategic realignments along NATO's eastern perimeter, hybrid gray-zone aggression, and diplomatic developments stemming from the European conflict.

### PRELIMS FACTS

- Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty specifies that an armed attack against one NATO member is considered an attack against all members.
- The State Duma serves as the 450-member elected lower chamber of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation.
- NATO's eastern flank covers member states bordering Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine, including Poland, Lithuania, Romania, and Estonia.

### MAINS FRAMEWORK

**Intro:** Escalating security warnings in Poland alongside proposed permanent military installations highlight the expanding containment architecture along Europe's eastern frontier.

#### DIMENSIONS

- **Hybrid Threats and Plausible Deniability:** Low-intensity drone incursions framed as accidental tests NATO's collective response thresholds without triggering Article 5.
- **Permanent vs. Rotational Posture:** Transitioning from rotational troop presence to permanent military bases alters long-term European deterrence dynamics.
- **Domestic Political Consolidation in Conflict:** Conducting parliamentary elections during ongoing military operations consolidates state control amidst sanctions.

**Way forward:** Strengthen integrated air defense networks along eastern borders, establish legal clarity for gray-zone threats, and promote conflict de-escalation channels.

### PYQ LINK

UPSC Mains 2022 evaluated the geopolitical consequences of NATO's eastward expansion and security recalibrations in Eastern Europe.

### KEY TERMS

NATO Article 5

Collective Defense

Hybrid Warfare

State Duma

Forward Defense Posture

05

GS PAPER III - SCIENCE &amp; TECHNOLOGY / HEALTH

## Public Health Security and Epidemic Prevention: Ebola Threat in Central Africa

STORY 1 Google News

### Ebola Outbreak Remains Serious Threat in Democratic Republic of Congo

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention reported that the ongoing Ebola virus outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo remains a serious public health concern.

Health authorities emphasized that active transmission risks persist in rural provinces, requiring reinforced medical monitoring and swift contact tracing.

Continental health bodies are deploying specialized response teams and emergency medical supplies to assist local health facilities treating infected patients.

Public health experts cautioned that regional population mobility and limited healthcare infrastructure exacerbate risks of cross-border viral transmission.

The situation underscores the necessity of sustained international health funding and community-based preventative education to contain dangerous zoonotic pathogens.

#### UPSC RELEVANCE

Examines global epidemic response systems, Zoonotic disease containment, and international health regulations coordinated by continental health agencies.

#### PRELIMS FACTS

- Ebola Virus Disease is a severe, often fatal illness in humans transmitted from wild animals and spread through human-to-human transmission.
- The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) is the public health agency of the African Union established to support health initiatives.
- Fruit bats of the Pteropodidae family are considered natural hosts of the Ebola virus.

#### MAINS FRAMEWORK

**Intro:** Persistent viral outbreaks in Central Africa underscore the urgent necessity of robust epidemiological surveillance and regional public health infrastructure.

##### DIMENSIONS

- **Zoonotic Surveillance and Early Detection:** Monitoring animal-human interfaces prevents viral spillover events in vulnerable ecological zones.

- **Health System Resilience in Conflict Zones:** Civil instability complicates vaccine deployment, medical quarantine, and contact tracing operations.
- **Global Health Governance:** Coordination between the WHO and Africa CDC ensures rapid medical supply allocation and border health screening.

**Way forward:** Strengthen local community health networks, fund rapid diagnostic vaccine stockpiles, and integrate One Health frameworks into environmental management.

#### PYQ LINK

UPSC Mains 2020 evaluated global public health management frameworks and measures required to prevent the spread of infectious zoonotic diseases.

#### KEY TERMS

Ebola Virus Disease

Zoonotic Spillover

Africa CDC

Public Health Emergency

Contact Tracing

#### ACTS & ARTICLES

International Health Regulations (2005)

African Union Africa CDC Statute

National Vector Borne Disease Control Program Guidelines

06

GS PAPER II - GOVERNANCE & HUMAN RIGHTS

## Governance, Human Rights and Resource Exploitation: Custodial Deaths and Illegal Mining



#### STORY 1 The Hindu

### Custodial Deaths of Illegal Mining Suspects Trigger Investigation in Nigeria

At least 33 individuals arrested on suspicion of illegal mining died while held in the custody of Nigerian security agencies in Niger state.

Official statements blamed a sudden disease outbreak, but surviving detainees reported that 65 prisoners were crammed into an unventilated cell causing asphyxiation.

The arrests were conducted during security crackdowns aimed at curbing unregulated gold and mineral extraction across vulnerable rural regions.

Bodies of the deceased detainees were transferred to regional medical facilities for formal forensic examinations to establish the exact cause of death.

Human rights organizations called for immediate independent investigations into detention conditions, cell overcrowding, and law enforcement accountability.

### UPSC RELEVANCE

Examines human rights protections in detention facilities, regulatory enforcement against illicit mineral extraction, and custodial justice standards.

### PRELIMS FACTS

- Custodial deaths require mandatory judicial inquiry under standard international and national criminal procedure protocols.
- Illegal mining degrades eco-sensitive zones and often correlates with informal labor exploitation and hazardous work environments.
- Overcrowding in detention centers violates fundamental standards of human dignity and basic health rights.

### MAINS FRAMEWORK

**Intro:** The tragic loss of life among suspects in security custody brings international focus to prison overcrowding, regulatory enforcement failures, and human rights safeguards.

#### DIMENSIONS

- **Custodial Management and Human Rights:** Failure to provide adequate ventilation, medical care, and humane space violates basic international human rights conventions.
- **Socio-Economic Drivers of Illicit Mining:** Rural poverty and informal resource extraction demand structural economic alternatives alongside law enforcement.
- **Institutional Accountability:** Independent forensic inquiries and judicial accountability are imperative to prevent systemic law enforcement abuses.

**Way forward:** Implement strict prison capacity caps, mandate independent medical inspections of detention centers, and formalize artisanal mining regulation.

### PYQ LINK

UPSC Mains 2021 discussed custodial violence, police accountability mechanisms, and statutory requirements for protecting fundamental rights in detention.

### KEY TERMS

Custodial Deaths

Illegal Mining

Human Rights Violations

Overcrowding in Prisons

Environmental Governance

### ACTS & ARTICLES

Article 21 of Indian Constitution (Right to Life)

UN Standard Minimum Rules for Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules)

Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act

## Civil Liberties, Freedom of Movement and Public Protests: Legal Restraints on Activism



### STORY 1 **The Hindu**

#### **Bombay HC Seeks Reply on Petition Against Removing Tipu Sultan Portrait**

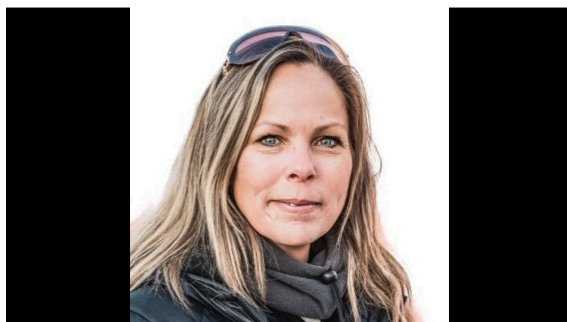
The Bombay High Court asked the Maharashtra government for a formal response to a petition filed by Malegaon Deputy Mayor Shaan e Hind Nihal Ahmed.

The plea challenges police notices instructing the removal of a Tipu Sultan portrait installed inside the Deputy Mayor's official municipal office.

A Bench comprising Chief Justice Mahesh Chandra Tripathi and Justice Advait Sethna heard the petition and granted time to state authorities to file their reply.

The petitioner argued that portraits of several national leaders were displayed alongside Tipu Sultan, maintaining historic respect without violating public order.

The case illustrates judicial review over executive police communications interfering with administrative office decorum and historical representation.



### STORY 2 **Times of India**

#### **Canadian Court Denies Travel Request for Activist Tamara Lich**

An Ontario court rejected a legal application from Canadian activist Tamara Lich seeking permission to travel internationally while serving a conditional sentence.

Lich became prominent as a lead organizer of the 2022 Canadian 'Freedom Convoy' protests that blockaded Ottawa streets against pandemic mandates.

The judicial decision mandates continued adherence to travel restrictions imposed under her conditional sentence following criminal trial convictions.

The ruling reinforces judicial precedents governing post-conviction travel constraints and law enforcement compliance for high-profile protest organizers.

The development demonstrates how international judicial systems handle conditional sentence terms and travel liberty petitions for prominent activists.

### UPSC RELEVANCE

Analyzes legal principles governing public protests, post-conviction travel restrictions, and judicial review over administrative and police orders.

### PRELIMS FACTS

- Freedom of movement and assembly are subject to reasonable restrictions imposed on grounds of public order, sovereignty, and integrity.
- High Courts exercise judicial review over executive administrative directives under Article 226 of the Constitution.
- Conditional sentence orders frequently restrict international travel for individuals convicted of public disturbance offenses.

### MAINS FRAMEWORK

**Intro:** Judicial review of police directives in municipal offices and international bail travel bans reflect the ongoing legal debate over state authority, public symbols, and civil liberty bounds.

#### DIMENSIONS

- **Judicial Scrutiny of Executive Orders:** Assessing whether executive directives banning specific historical portraits satisfy legal tests of administrative propriety.
- **Proportionality in Judicial Restraints:** Judicial enforcement of travel bans during sentences balances individual freedom against judicial compliance.
- **Symbolic Expression in Public Offices:** Balancing political expression in administrative spaces with municipal decorum and secular public order.

**Way forward:** Ensure executive orders adhere strictly to statutory authorization and maintain proportional legal limits on post-conviction travel rights.

### PYQ LINK

UPSC Mains 2021 analyzed judicial balances between state authority, public order restrictions, and constitutional freedoms under Article 19.

### KEY TERMS

Freedom of Assembly

Reasonable Restrictions

Judicial Review

Conditional Sentencing

Public Order

### ACTS & ARTICLES

Article 19 of Indian Constitution

Article 226 of Indian Constitution

08

GS PAPER III - AGRICULTURE &amp; FOOD SECURITY

## Sustainable Food Systems and Community Resilience: Youth-Led Waste Diversion



STORY 1 Times of India

### Youth Initiative Rescues 300,000 Pounds of Food Waste in Virginia

A student-led initiative named 'Nourishin Ninjas' successfully rescued over 300,000 pounds of quality surplus food from ending up in municipal landfills.

Founded by Virginia teenager Dhevesh Mahes, the volunteer effort evolved from a small dessert fundraiser into a structured regional food diversion organization.

The youth team works alongside Anna Sudha Community Kitchens to deliver rescued produce, bakery items, and meals directly to low-income families.

The organization raised nearly \$52,000 to fund cold-storage and transportation logistics, earning national recognition from volunteer award platforms.

The project highlights how civil society food recovery models can simultaneously address municipal waste management challenges and urban food insecurity.

#### UPSC RELEVANCE

Evaluates civil society interventions, food loss reduction models, and Sustainable Development Goal targets for urban food security.

#### PRELIMS FACTS

- SDG Target 12.3 aims to halve per capita global food waste at retail and consumer levels by 2030.
- Decomposing food waste in municipal landfills generates significant quantities of methane, a potent short-lived climate pollutant.
- Community food recovery networks divert edible commercial food surplus directly to vulnerable populations.

## MAINS FRAMEWORK

**Intro:** Grassroots youth initiatives focused on food rescue demonstrate scalable decentralized models to eliminate landfill food waste and tackle urban hunger.

### DIMENSIONS

- **Environmental Landfill Diversion:** Diverting organic waste prevents anaerobic decomposition and lowers localized urban greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Social Food Safety Nets:** Partnering with community kitchens bridges structural gaps between commercial retail food surplus and underserved families.
- **Youth Mobilization and Philanthropic Logistics:** Decentralized volunteer logistics complement formal government food security schemes efficiently.

**Way forward:** Incentivize commercial food donations through statutory protections, support cold-chain logistics for NGOs, and incorporate waste segregation into municipal planning.

### PYQ LINK

UPSC Mains 2022 highlighted supply chain inefficiencies, food wastage management, and community interventions necessary to ensure long-term food security.

### KEY TERMS

Food Waste Diversion

SDG Target 12.3

Community Kitchens

Methane Mitigation

Civil Society Models

### ACTS & ARTICLES

SDG Target 12.3

National Food Security Act, 2013

FSSAI Food Recovery Regulations

09

GS PAPER II - GOVERNMENT POLICIES & INTERVENTIONS

## Industrial Growth and Welfare Schemes: Implementation of PM Vishwakarma Scheme



### STORY 1 The Hindu

#### West Bengal Launches PM Vishwakarma Scheme on Annapurna Divas

The West Bengal government officially launched the central PM Vishwakarma Scheme across the state, celebrating the occasion as 'Annapurna Divas'.

This marks the first formal administrative implementation of the flagship Union government artisan welfare scheme by the West Bengal state executive.

State officials announced expanded housing coverage under the PM Awas Yojana, targeting 50 lakh identified beneficiaries across rural and urban districts.

The program provides collateral-free credit, modern toolkits, and skill training incentives to traditional artisans and informal craftspeople throughout the state.

The launch demonstrates executive convergence between central social welfare schemes and state administrative implementation channels.

### UPSC RELEVANCE

Examines social welfare delivery, artisan credit integration, and cooperative federal execution of central sector schemes.

### PRELIMS FACTS

- The PM Vishwakarma Scheme provides holistic credit and skill support to traditional artisans operating across 18 family-based trades.
- The scheme offers collateral-free enterprise loans up to ₹3 lakh at a subsidized interest rate of 5%.
- Beneficiaries receive a toolkit incentive of ₹15,000, basic and advanced skill training stipends, and digital transaction rewards.

### MAINS FRAMEWORK

**Intro:** The rollout of the PM Vishwakarma Scheme in West Bengal represents a pragmatic model of federal scheme execution supporting traditional informal craftspeople.

#### DIMENSIONS

- **Modernization of Traditional Crafts:** Upgrading traditional tools, offering quality certifications, and linking rural artisans directly to global supply chains.
- **Financial Inclusion without Collateral:** Eliminating dependence on informal moneylenders through institutional micro-credit guarantees.
- **Cooperative Executive Federalism:** Administrative cooperation between central policy architects and state execution machinery improves welfare targeting.

**Way forward:** Establish regional cluster hubs, simplify digital onboarding for rural artisans, and integrate local handicrafts with public procurement portals like GeM.

### PYQ LINK

UPSC Mains 2023 assessed government schemes supporting traditional informal sector workers, skill development, and micro-credit financial inclusion.

### KEY TERMS

PM Vishwakarma Scheme

Cooperative Federalism

Credit Guarantee

Informal Artisans

Skill Modernization

10

GS PAPER III - ECONOMY &amp; MANUFACTURING

## Manufacturing Readiness and Supply Chain Resilience: Global Economic Positioning

STORY 1 Google News

### PM Modi Highlights India's Preparedness for Global Manufacturing Challenges

Prime Minister Narendra Modi affirmed that India is fully prepared and reliable to meet emerging global manufacturing challenges and supply chain shifts.

Addressing industrial forums, the Prime Minister highlighted domestic policy reforms designed to build competitive, resilient, and transparent industrial ecosystems.

Flagship initiatives such as Production Linked Incentives and PM Gati Shakti were cited as key drivers enhancing domestic manufacturing productivity.

International investors increasingly view India as a preferred hub for electronics assembly, high-tech manufacturing, and capital investment.

The statement reinforces India's strategic push to expand its footprint in global value chains and drive sustainable industrial growth.

#### UPSC RELEVANCE

Analyzes India's strategic positioning in global supply chain realignments, industrial infrastructure schemes, and manufacturing competitiveness.

#### PRELIMS FACTS

- The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme provides financial incentives across 14 key manufacturing sectors to boost domestic production.
- PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan integrates 16 ministries to streamline multimodal logistics infrastructure for industrial corridors.
- Make in India focuses on 27 sectors to facilitate investment, foster innovation, enhance skill development, and protect intellectual property.

#### MAINS FRAMEWORK

**Intro:** Structural policy interventions and supply chain diversification position India as an attractive global manufacturing hub amid international market realignments.

#### DIMENSIONS

- **Supply Chain Re-alignment:** 'China Plus One' corporate strategies offer opportunities to capture global market share in electronics and capital goods.
- **Logistical and Infrastructure Reforms:** Reducing national logistics costs through integrated freight corridors and single-window industrial clearances.
- **Regulatory and Ease of Doing Business Enhancements:** Streamlining labor codes, rationalizing corporate compliance, and encouraging foreign direct investment.

**Way forward:** Boost industrial R&D spending, accelerate vocational skill development, and simplify land acquisition processes for industrial parks.

#### PYQ LINK

UPSC Mains 2023 evaluated industrial growth policies, manufacturing incentives, and national infrastructure master plans driving economic expansion.

#### KEY TERMS

Supply Chain Resilience

Make in India

Production Linked Incentive

PM Gati Shakti

Ease of Doing Business

#### ACTS & ARTICLES

National Logistics Policy 2022

Foreign Trade Policy 2023

PLI Scheme Guidelines



## Practice MCQs (UPSC Prelims)

Attempt these questions on your own first. The answer key is on the next page.

### GS PAPER III - INTERNAL SECURITY

#### Internal Security and Counter-Terrorism Framework: UAPA Designation of Shahzad Bhatti Network

MHA Designates Shahzad Bhatti Network as Terrorist Group Under UAPA

**Q1. With reference to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967, consider the following statements: 1. The Central Government has statutory powers to designate both organizations and individuals as terrorists. 2. Entities designated as terrorist organizations are listed under Schedule I of the Act. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

### GS PAPER II - POLITY & GOVERNANCE

#### Federalism and Constitutional Governance: Statehood Demands and Election Commission Mandates

ECI Bars Both Trinamool Factions from Symbol Usage for West Bengal Bypolls

**Q2. Under which statutory framework does the Election Commission of India exercise quasi-judicial authority to resolve disputes among rival factions of a recognized political party regarding election symbols?**

- A. Representation of the People Act, 1950
- B. Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968
- C. Delimitation Act, 2002
- D. Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961

### GS PAPER II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & DIASPORA

#### Global Migration Dynamics and Student Visa Policies: Immigration Overhauls in Developed Nations

Australia Tightens Student and Backpacker Visa Rules to Curb Migration

**Q3. With reference to Australia's temporary visa reforms, consider the following statements: 1. International students are prohibited from attaching partners and children as accompanying dependents. 2. International students can renew student visas only if they move higher up the educational qualification scale. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

### GS PAPER II - GOVERNMENT POLICIES & INTERVENTIONS

## Industrial Growth and Welfare Schemes: Implementation of PM Vishwakarma Scheme

West Bengal Launches PM Vishwakarma Scheme on Annapurna Divas

**Q4. With reference to the PM Vishwakarma Scheme, consider the following statements: 1. It provides collateral-free enterprise development loans up to ₹3 lakh at a concessional interest rate of 5%. 2. It offers toolkit incentives, basic and advanced skill training stipends, and digital transaction rewards for traditional artisans. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

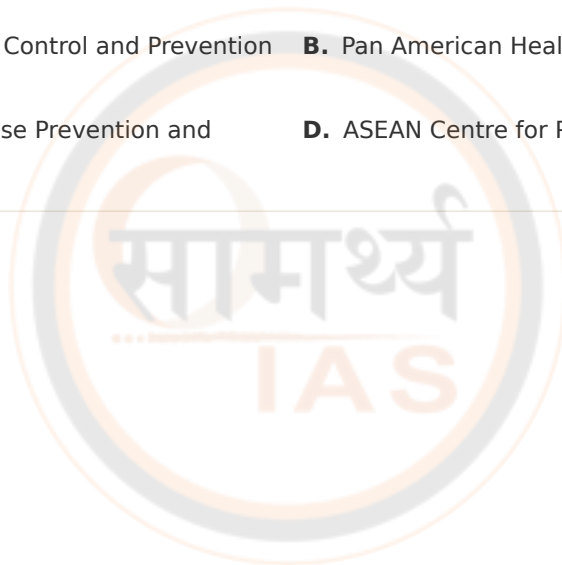
### GS PAPER III - SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY / HEALTH

## Public Health Security and Epidemic Prevention: Ebola Threat in Central Africa

Ebola Outbreak Remains Serious Threat in Democratic Republic of Congo

**Q5. Which specialized technical health agency of the African Union is responsible for coordinating disease surveillance and public health emergency responses across African member states?**

- A. Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC)
- B. Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)
- C. European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)
- D. ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies



## Answer Key — Practice MCQs

Quick reference and explanations for the practice questions on the previous page.

**Q1: C****Q2: B****Q3: C****Q4: C****Q5: A****Q1 Option C · Both 1 and 2**

Both statements are correct. Under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (amended in 2019), the Central Government is empowered to designate both organizations and individuals as terrorists. Terrorist organizations are formally listed under Schedule I of the Act.

**Q2 Option B · Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968**

Paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968 empowers the Election Commission of India to adjudicate disputes between splinter groups or rival factions of a recognized political party regarding party names and symbols.

**Q3 Option C · Both 1 and 2**

Both statements are correct as per the official policy announcement. Australia announced that international students will no longer be allowed to bring family members as dependents, and visa renewals will strictly require students to progress upwards on the educational qualification scale to prevent 'visa hopping'.

**Q4 Option C · Both 1 and 2**

Both statements are correct. The PM Vishwakarma Scheme offers collateral-free credit support up to ₹3 lakh (in tranches) at 5% interest, alongside skill training, a ₹15,000 toolkit incentive, and digital transaction rewards for traditional craftspeople across 18 family-based trades.

**Q5 Option A · Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC)**

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) is the autonomous public health agency of the African Union mandated to support disease surveillance, emergency response, and public health capacity building across African nations.