



SAMARTHYA IAS · AHMEDABAD

DAILY UPSC COMPANION

Samarthya Current Affairs

Prelims facts · Mains frameworks · Practice MCQs

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Your Complete UPSC Current Affairs Companion

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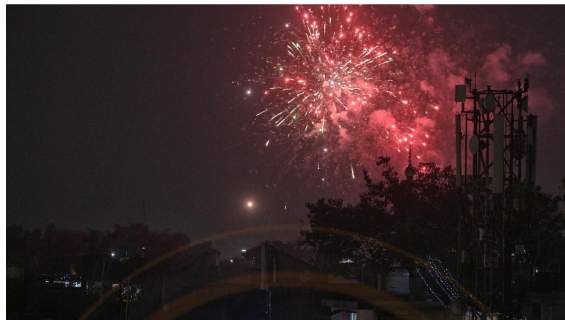
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Supreme Court Guidance on Firecracker Restrictions and Public Health Balance

WHY IN NEWS

On October 12, 2026, a Supreme Court bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant emphasized a balanced approach between public health and religious sentiments regarding firecracker restrictions in the National Capital Region.



STORY 1 **The Hindu**

Supreme Court Calls for Balance Between Public Health and Religious Firecracker Use

The Supreme Court highlighted the need to balance public health concerns with religious sentiments while considering restrictions on firecrackers in the national capital and neighboring regions.

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi issued the observations while hearing a case with amicus curiae Aparajita Singh in New Delhi.

The three-judge Bench favored a conditional relaxation on next-generation joined green crackers while urging public education to voluntarily reject harmful cracker varieties.

Firecracker bans in the Delhi-NCR region face recurring enforcement challenges during winter months, prompting judicial evaluation of environmentally sustainable alternatives like CSIR-NEERI green crackers.

Article 21 guarantees the right to clean air and health, which courts balance against the freedom to practice religion under Article 25 of the Constitution.

UPSC RELEVANCE

This topic tests judicial balancing between fundamental rights under Article 21 (Right to Clean Environment) and Article 25 (Freedom of Religion), alongside environmental regulation of air pollution.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Green crackers are developed by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research - National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (CSIR-NEERI) to curb air pollution.
- Article 25 of the Indian Constitution guarantees the freedom of conscience and free profession, practice, and propagation of religion, subject to public order, morality, and health.
- Hearing on firecracker restrictions in Delhi-NCR was conducted by a three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: The Supreme Court's emphasis on balancing public health with religious practices reflects the constitutional mandate to harmonize individual rights with community welfare.

DIMENSIONS

- **Environmental & Health Imperial Imperatives:** Air quality degradation in Delhi-NCR during winter severely compromises public health and violates Article 21.
- **Socio-Religious Considerations:** Judicial restrictions on traditional festivities require sensitive communication and public buy-in to prevent friction.
- **Enforcement and Governance Deficit:** Bans without effective ground enforcement or scalable alternatives like certified green crackers prove ineffective.

Way forward: Focus on institutionalizing CSIR-certified green cracker technology, enforcing strict supply-chain checks, and promoting community awareness rather than blanket unenforceable bans.

KEY DEFINITIONS

- **Green Crackers:** Environmentally friendly fireworks developed by CSIR-NEERI that produce reduced particulate matter and sulfur dioxide emissions compared to traditional crackers.
- **Amicus Curiae:** An impartial advisor appointed by a court to assist in a case by providing expert legal opinion or facts.

PYQ LINK

UPSC 2021 GS-3 asked about atmospheric pollution in Delhi-NCR and the effectiveness of judicial interventions.

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Examine the constitutional considerations involved when courts balance fundamental rights under Article 21 and Article 25 while regulating environmental pollution during festivals. (150 words)

ANSWER OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

The Indian judiciary frequently navigates the intersection between environmental protection under Article 21 and freedom of religion under Article 25.

BODY

1. RIGHT TO CLEAN HEALTH:

The Supreme Court has affirmed that the right to live in a healthy environment is an integral component of the fundamental Right to Life under Article 21.

2. LIMITS ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM:

Article 25 explicitly subjects religious practices to public order, morality, and public health, establishing that health concerns take precedence.

3. PROPORTIONALITY PRINCIPLE:

The three-judge Bench headed by CJI Surya Kant highlighted adopting conditional relaxations for green crackers rather than unenforceable complete bans.

4. IMPLEMENTATION DEFICIT:

Unenforceable regulatory orders risk undermining judicial authority and fail to curb seasonal spike in atmospheric particulate matter.

CONCLUSION

Achieving an optimal balance requires scientific technological innovation like certified green crackers coupled with sustained public education and collaborative compliance.

KEY TERMS

Green Crackers

Article 21

Article 25

Public Health

Amicus Curiae

ACTS & ARTICLES

Article 21: Protection of life and personal liberty

Article 25: Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice, and propagation of religion

Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981

02

GS-3 • ECONOMY

Centre to Review GST Procedural Reforms and Compliance Framework

WHY IN NEWS

On October 12, 2026, the Union government announced a plan to review the implementation of Goods and Services Tax procedural reforms with states within three months ahead of the April 2027 rollout.

Story so far:

- **11 October 2026** Next-Generation GST Process Reforms and Administrative Streamlining

Centre and States to Review GST Reforms to Simplify Compliance Ahead of 2027 Rollout

The Union government announced a joint quarterly review with states to evaluate GST procedural reforms and address operational bottlenecks before full implementation.

Top finance officials deliberated in New Delhi following recommendations made during the 57th GST Council meeting to streamline indirect tax administration.

The review targets completing all legislative amendments and executive orders well before the proposed implementation date of 1 April 2027.

Key recommendations include removing GST officers' powers of arrest, accelerating tax refunds, and widening Input Tax Credit eligibility for registered businesses.

Article 279A creates the GST Council as a constitutional body empowered to make recommendations on indirect tax structure, exemptions, and compliance rules.

UPSC RELEVANCE

This topic relates to federal fiscal governance, indirect tax simplification, ease of doing business, and the constitutional functioning of the GST Council.

PRELIMS FACTS

- The 57th GST Council meeting recommended measures to speed up tax refunds and expand Input Tax Credit eligibility.
- The Union government set a target implementation date of April 1, 2027, for rolling out comprehensive GST procedural reforms.
- Article 279A of the Constitution governs the establishment, composition, and decision-making framework of the GST Council.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: Simplicity and predictability in indirect tax administration are essential for fostering economic growth and strengthening cooperative fiscal federalism in India.

DIMENSIONS

- **Ease of Doing Business:** Eliminating harsh punitive powers like executive arrest powers reduces compliance harassment for legitimate businesses.
- **Fiscal Administration:** Expanding Input Tax Credit and automating tax refunds reduces working capital lock-up for trade and industry.
- **Cooperative Federalism:** Periodic review meetings between the Centre and states ensure harmonized implementation across jurisdictions.

Way forward: Expedite statutory amendments, strengthen digital tax administration infrastructure, and maintain continuous consultation with industry stakeholders.

KEY DEFINITIONS

- **Input Tax Credit (ITC):** The tax credit a business receives for the GST paid on purchases used in manufacturing or delivering goods and services, preventing cascading taxation.
- **GST Council:** A joint constitutional forum of the Centre and States established under Article 279A to decide on matters relating to Goods and Services Tax.

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Critically analyse the recent procedural reforms recommended by the GST Council. How do these measures contribute to improving ease of doing business and cooperative fiscal federalism? (250 words)

ANSWER OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

The decision to review and implement procedural GST reforms ahead of April 1, 2027, signifies an evolving maturity in India's indirect tax regime.

BODY

1. MITIGATING COMPLIANCE HARASSMENT:

The proposed removal of GST officers' powers of arrest directly addresses industry concerns regarding arbitrary enforcement actions.

2. UNLOCKING WORKING CAPITAL:

Speeding up tax refunds and widening Input Tax Credit (ITC) eligibility ensures liquidity for small and medium enterprises.

3. STRENGTHENING COOPERATIVE FEDERALISM:

A joint three-month review framework between Centre and states fosters administrative alignment across tax jurisdictions.

4. CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION:

Achieving uniform legislative changes across state legislatures before the April 2027 target requires continuous consensus-building.

CONCLUSION

Strengthening procedural simplicity while ensuring tax integrity will optimize GST revenue collections and boost economic efficiency.

KEY TERMS

GST Council

Input Tax Credit

Fiscal Federalism

Procedural Reforms

Article 279A

ACTS & ARTICLES

Article 279A: Goods and Services Tax Council

Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) Act, 2017

Legal Framework of Preventive Detention and Right to Public Assembly

WHY IN NEWS

Following mass detentions during protests in Delhi and Bengaluru in October 2026, the Supreme Court instructed authorities to ensure free traffic movement while evaluating spacious alternative protest sites.

Story so far:

- **29 September 2026** Constitutional Right to Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Dynamics



STORY 1 **The Hindu**

Supreme Court Suggests Relocating Designated Protest Sites from Central Delhi

The Supreme Court recorded that central Delhi's Jantar Mantar is too cramped for demonstrations and urged the government to identify a spacious alternative.

A bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant issued the order on October 9, 2026, preceding the de-notification of Jantar Mantar.

The court's four-page order emphasized that protest locations must provide basic public amenities including medical assistance, washrooms, and clean drinking water facilities.

Article 19(1)(b) guarantees citizens the right to assemble peaceably and without arms, subject to reasonable restrictions under Article 19(3) in public interest.



Protests over Electoral Revision Trigger Legal Scrutiny of Mass Preventive Detentions

Law enforcement agencies executed preventive detentions of political leaders, journalists, and activists attempting to demonstrate in the national capital.

The Delhi Police executed detentions across Connaught Place, Barakhamba Road, and residential areas prior to scheduled rallies regarding electoral revision processes.

More than 5,000 individuals were detained across three consecutive days from October 10 to October 12, 2026, during the nationwide security crackdown.

Demonstrators were demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls.

Preventive detention safeguards are constitutional provisions under Article 22, complemented by procedural safeguards under Section 170 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.

UPSC RELEVANCE

This topic tests understanding of fundamental rights under Article 19(1)(b), reasonable restrictions, safeguards against arbitrary preventive detention under Article 22, and BNSS provisions.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Article 19(1)(b) guarantees the right to assemble peaceably and without arms, restricted under Article 19(3) on grounds of public order and sovereignty.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: The balance between public safety and the democratic right to peaceful protest requires careful adherence to constitutional safeguards and procedural fairness.

DIMENSIONS

- Democratic Right to Dissent:** Peaceful protest is a core aspect of democratic governance protected under Article 19(1)(a) and 19(1)(b).
- State Duty to Maintain Order:** Security agencies utilize preventive detention laws to maintain public order and prevent urban disruption.
- Procedural Safeguards:** Executive action must comply strictly with Article 22 constitutional guarantees and judicial guidelines on preventive arrests.

Way forward: Designate well-equipped, accessible alternative protest venues while enforcing strict compliance with human rights guidelines during police detentions.

KEY DEFINITIONS

- **Preventive Detention:** The detention of a person without trial and conviction by a court, intended to prevent them from committing a future offense or disrupting public order.
- **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023:** The procedural law governing criminal administration in India, which replaced the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973 on July 1, 2024.

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Discuss the constitutional safeguards available against arbitrary preventive detention in India. How can the executive balance public order requirements with citizens' right to peaceful assembly? (250 words)

ANSWER OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

Preventive detention represents an executive power designed to prevent public disorder, but its exercise must comply strictly with constitutional parameters.

BODY

1. CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES:

Article 22 provides safeguards against arbitrary detention, requiring grounds of arrest to be communicated and limiting detention without Advisory Board approval.

2. STATUTORY PROVISIONS:

Section 170 of the BNSS, 2023 allows preventive arrest only when a cognizable offense cannot be otherwise prevented.

3. JUDICIAL SCRUTINY ON PROTESTS:

In October 2026, the Supreme Court emphasized that preventive detentions of over 5,000 protesters must not infringe on smooth public movement or civil liberties.

4. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RIGHTS:

The Supreme Court's four-page order on October 9 suggested establishing spacious protest venues with basic amenities to allow orderly assembly.

CONCLUSION

Adhering to legal standards and designating proper public spaces guarantees that state security mandates do not suppress fundamental democratic freedoms.

KEY TERMS

Preventive Detention

Article 19(1)(b)

Article 22

BNSS Section 170

Public Order

ACTS & ARTICLES

Article 19(1)(b): Right to assemble peaceably without arms

Article 22: Protection against arrest and detention in certain cases

Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023 (Section 170)

Southwest Monsoon Deficits and Institutional Framework for Drought Relief

WHY IN NEWS

Following a severe southwest monsoon rainfall deficit in 2026, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh declared hundreds of sub-districts as drought-hit and sought central assistance from the NDRF.

Story so far:

- **8 October 2026** Disaster Management and Agricultural Drought
- **22 September 2026** Agricultural Drought Management and Disaster Relief Frameworks
- **19 September 2026** Regional Rainfall Deficits, Drought Declaration, and Agricultural Relief



STORY 1 The Hindu

Severe Southwest Monsoon Deficit Triggers Drought Declarations in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh

Deficit southwest monsoon rainfall during June-September 2026 caused widespread crop failure, prompting Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh to declare extensive drought conditions.

State governments submitted impact evaluations to the Union Ministry of Agriculture to initiate inter-ministerial field assessments for central relief assistance.

Karnataka reported a 35% rainfall deficit declaring 217 of 240 taluks drought-hit and requesting ₹11,000 crore from NDRF, while Andhra Pradesh faced a 53% early shortfall across 388 mandals.

Strengthening El Niño conditions contributed to the poorest summer monsoon performance nationwide since 2015, severely damaging pulse, maize, cotton, and horticulture crops.

National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) funding is governed by Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, based on recommendations of Inter-Ministerial Central Teams.

UPSC RELEVANCE

This topic tests knowledge of climate drivers like El Niño, monsoon dynamics, disaster management frameworks under the DM Act 2005, and federal financial relief mechanisms.

PRELIMS FACTS

- In 2026, Karnataka suffered a 35% rainfall deficit, declaring 217 of 240 taluks as drought-hit.
- Andhra Pradesh recorded a 53% rainfall shortfall in June-August, declaring 388 of 688 mandals as drought-affected.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: Recurring drought cycles driven by climate anomalies like El Niño underscore the urgent need for robust disaster relief financing and climate-resilient agriculture.

DIMENSIONS

- **Agricultural Impact:** Deficit rain damages rainfed cash crops like red gram, maize, and cotton, jeopardizing rural incomes and food security.
- **Disaster Financing:** States rely on SDRF primary funds but require central NDRF interventions when severe deficits exceed state capacity.
- **Climate Vulnerability:** Declining monsoon reliability since 2015 demands long-term adaptation rather than ad-hoc post-disaster financial aid.

Way forward: Accelerate Inter-Ministerial Central Team assessments, enhance micro-irrigation infrastructure, and promote drought-resistant crop choices.

KEY DEFINITIONS

- **National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF):** A fund managed by the Central Government under Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, to meet expenses for emergency response and relief during severe disasters.
- **El Niño:** A climate pattern involving the abnormal warming of surface waters in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean, frequently suppressing the Indian southwest monsoon.

PYQ LINK

UPSC 2019 GS-3 asked about the institutional mechanism for disaster management and funding under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Examine the role of El Niño in causing monsoon deficits in southern India. Critically evaluate the existing statutory framework for drought declaration and NDRF assistance. (250 words)

ANSWER OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

The 2026 monsoon rainfall deficit in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh highlights the vulnerability of Indian agriculture to Pacific climate oscillations like El Niño.

BODY

1. CLIMATIC DRIVER:

Strengthening El Niño conditions directly altered atmospheric circulation, causing a 35% deficit in Karnataka and up to 53% early deficit in Andhra Pradesh.

2. STATUTORY DROUGHT FRAMEWORK:

Drought assessment combines hydrological data, crop moisture indices, and ground-truthing under the Manual for Drought Management.

3. FINANCIAL RELIEF MECHANISMS:

Karnataka petitioned for ₹11,000 crore from the NDRF under Section 46 of the DM Act, 2005, highlighting reliance on central relief.

4. PROCEDURAL DELAYS:

Inter-ministerial team visits and scientific verification often delay the disbursement of input subsidies, exacerbating farm distress.

CONCLUSION

Transitioning towards real-time satellite crop monitoring and expanding climate-smart irrigation will strengthen long-term drought resilience.

KEY TERMS

Southwest Monsoon

El Niño

NDRF

SDRF

Disaster Management Act 2005

ACTS & ARTICLES

Disaster Management Act, 2005 (Section 46)

National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP)

05

GS-2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Maritime Security Concerns in the Strait of Hormuz and Indian Seafarers Protection

WHY IN NEWS

On October 12, 2026, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval held talks with his Iranian counterpart Mohsin Rezaei following drone and projectile attacks on commercial vessels carrying Indian crew in the Strait of Hormuz.



NSA Ajit Doval Discusses Gulf Maritime Security with Iran Following Tanker Attacks

India's National Security Advisor discussed maritime safety with Iranian leadership following targeted drone and missile attacks on merchant ships navigating strategic Gulf chokepoints.

NSA Ajit Doval spoke with Iranian NSA Mohsin Rezaei after two commercial vessels, MT Petro Dolphin and MT Valthera, were struck near the Strait of Hormuz.

A total of 23 crew members were aboard the two merchant vessels, with two Indian sailors reported missing following a drone strike on MT Petro Dolphin.

The attacks prompted regional naval warnings regarding merchant vessels disabling Automatic Identification Systems (AIS), threatening commercial sea lanes vital for international energy supplies.

Freedom of navigation and maritime security on high seas are international legal rights governed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982.

UPSC RELEVANCE

This topic touches on strategic maritime chokepoints, UNCLOS provisions, protection of the Indian diaspora/seafarers, and India's foreign policy balance in West Asia.

PRELIMS FACTS

- MT Petro Dolphin and MT Valthera carrying 23 crew members were attacked near the Strait of Hormuz on October 11, 2026.
- The Strait of Hormuz connects the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: Ensuring maritime safety in strategic chokepoints like the Strait of Hormuz is critical for safeguarding global energy supply chains and protecting Indian seafarers.

DIMENSIONS

- **Strategic and Energy Security:** Over 80% of India's crude imports transit West Asian sea lanes, making Gulf stability vital for domestic energy security.
- **Protection of Seafarers:** Thousands of Indian nationals serve in merchant shipping fleets globally, requiring active diplomatic engagement during conflict.
- **International Legal Compliance:** Attacks on commercial shipping violate UNCLOS principles guaranteeing freedom of navigation in international waters.

Way forward: Leverage diplomatic channels with Gulf partners, support multilateral maritime security frameworks, and maintain naval escort capabilities like Operation Sankalp.

KEY DEFINITIONS

- **Strait of Hormuz:** A strategically vital narrow waterway connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman, serving as a primary global transit passage for crude oil shipments.
- **Automatic Identification System (AIS):** An automated tracking system used on ships for identifying and locating vessels by electronically exchanging data with other nearby ships and coast stations.

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Examine the strategic importance of the Strait of Hormuz for India's energy security and maritime trade. How should India navigate emerging West Asian maritime threats? (250 words)

ANSWER OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

The Strait of Hormuz is a key global oil transit chokepoint, making stability in these waters directly linked to India's energy and maritime security.

BODY

1. STRATEGIC DEPENDENCY:

India relies heavily on crude oil imported from Gulf nations, almost all of which traverses the narrow Strait of Hormuz.

2. THREATS TO MERCHANT SHIPPING:

Attacks on MT Petro Dolphin and MT Valthera carrying 23 crew members highlight escalating security risks to Indian seafarers.

3. DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENT:

High-level dialogue between India's NSA Ajit Doval and Iranian authorities underscores the necessity of bilateral security consultations.

4. NAVAL PRESENCE AND OPERATIONS:

India's deployment of warships under Operation Sankalp provides safety assurances and re-establishes maritime confidence.

CONCLUSION

A combination of robust naval surveillance, diplomatic mediation, and adherence to UNCLOS principles will protect India's economic and human interests in the region.

KEY TERMS

Strait of Hormuz

UNCLOS

Automatic Identification System (AIS)

Maritime Security

Energy Security

ACTS & ARTICLES

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982

Merchant Shipping Act, 1958

Judicial Language Reforms and Accessibility of Higher Courts

WHY IN NEWS

On October 12, 2026, discussions surrounding judicial language accessibility highlighted Supreme Court administrative initiatives to translate court orders into regional languages rather than imposing a single official tongue.



STORY 1 **The Hindu**

Supreme Court Emphasizes Regional Language Translation for Broader Judicial Accessibility

The Supreme Court observed that judicial accessibility is being expanded through phased administrative translation of judgments into regional Indian languages.

A bench led by CJI Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V. Mohana addressed a PIL seeking Hindi as the primary court language on September 25, 2026.

The court noted that administrative measures using AI-driven translation tools like SUVAS are progressively making thousands of apex court judgments available in regional languages.

Litigants across diverse linguistic zones face severe information barriers due to English-only proceedings in High Courts and the Supreme Court.

Article 348(1) of the Constitution mandates that all proceedings in the Supreme Court and High Courts shall be in English until Parliament enacts laws otherwise.

UPSC RELEVANCE

This topic examines constitutional provisions under Article 348 governing language in higher courts, judicial access, linguistic diversity, and technological reforms in justice delivery.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Article 348(1)(a) mandates English as the language for all proceedings in the Supreme Court and every High Court unless Parliament alters it.
- Under Article 348(2), the Governor of a State may, with the prior consent of the President, authorize the use of Hindi or another official language in High Court proceedings.
- Public Interest Litigation seeking mandatory Hindi usage in the Supreme Court was heard on September 25, 2026, by a Bench headed by CJI Surya Kant.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: Enhancing judicial accessibility by providing legal orders in regional languages strengthens justice delivery without compromising constitutional uniformity.

DIMENSIONS

- **Constitutional Mandate:** Article 348 enforces English to maintain legal consistency across state jurisdictions and uniform legal jurisprudence.
- **Access to Justice:** Non-English speaking litigants struggle to understand court orders, creating dependence on legal intermediaries and escalating costs.
- **Technological Solutions:** Utilizing AI translation platforms enables multilingual dissemination of rulings without requiring complex constitutional amendments.

Way forward: Expand AI translation capacity, publish authoritative translations in regional languages, and encourage phased language reforms in state High Courts.

KEY DEFINITIONS

- **Article 348:** A constitutional provision specifying that proceedings in the Supreme Court and High Courts, as well as authoritative texts of Bills and Acts, shall be in English until Parliament provides otherwise by law.
- **SUVAS (Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software):** An AI-trained machine translation tool developed to translate legal documents and judgments from English into vernacular Indian languages.

PYQ LINK

UPSC 2019 GS-2 asked about access to justice as a fundamental right and measures to streamline judicial delivery.

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Examine the constitutional provisions governing the official language of higher courts in India. How can technology bridge the linguistic gap to enhance access to justice? (150 words)

ANSWER OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

Article 348 prescribes English for proceedings in the higher judiciary, but evolving judicial technology is bridging linguistic barriers for common litigants.

BODY

1. CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK:

Article 348(1) mandates English for Supreme Court and High Court proceedings to ensure precision and national legal integration.

2. LINGUISTIC DISCONNECT:

Exclusive reliance on English distances non-fluent citizens from judicial processes, affecting citizen comprehension of court decisions.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE INNOVATIONS:

The Supreme Court is leveraging AI platforms like SUVAS to translate thousands of rulings into official regional languages.

4. PHASED ADMINISTRATIVE APPROACH:

CJI Surya Kant observed that administrative translations offer a pragmatic path toward multilingual access without disrupting constitutional architecture.

CONCLUSION

Promoting multilingual judicial publishing via technology democratizes legal knowledge while maintaining constitutional continuity.

KEY TERMS

Article 348

Judicial Accessibility

SUVAS

Official Language

Public Interest Litigation

ACTS & ARTICLES

Article 348: Language to be used in the Supreme Court and in the High Courts

Official Languages Act, 1963 (Section 7)

EDITORIAL OF THE DAY

Addressing Southwest Monsoon Deficits and Federal Drought Relief Mechanisms —

The Hindu: Drought report: On southwest monsoon, drought in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh

The editorial analyzes severe rainfall deficits during the 2026 southwest monsoon in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, where drought affected 217 taluks and 388 mandals respectively. It advocates for urgent Union financial assistance from the National Disaster Response Fund alongside long-term adaptation to strengthening El Niño cycles.

KEY ARGUMENTS

- Severe rainfall deficits of 35% in Karnataka and up to 53% in Andhra Pradesh caused widespread damage to red gram, maize, cotton, and horticulture crops.
- Timely financial assistance from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) is essential to supplement state-level input subsidies and agricultural relief.
- Increasing frequency of El Niño-induced monsoon failures requires a structural transition toward climate-resilient water management and crop diversification.

THE OTHER SIDE

- Union financial allocations require strict verification of ground-truthing data and hydrological indicators before releasing central emergency funds.
- State governments must fully utilize their primary State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) before expecting additional NDRF disbursements.

Way forward: The Centre must expedite Inter-Ministerial Central Team evaluations to release NDRF funds while collaborating with states on climate-smart micro-irrigation and drought monitoring.

Use it in: GS-3: Disaster Management and Agricultural Resilience; Essay: Federalism in Disaster Response

Mains practice question: Evaluate the statutory and financial framework for drought management in India under the Disaster Management Act, 2005. How can Centre-State coordination be improved during climate anomalies? (250 words)

PRELIMS IN FOCUS

PLACE Pallikaranai Marshland

- It is a vital urban freshwater wetland situated in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- The State Wetlands Authority proposed an interim Zone of Influence covering 128.19 hectares across 36 survey numbers.

SCHEME One Website for One Local Body Scheme

- Initiated by the Keralam state government to digitize local self-government governance.
- Covers 941 grama panchayats, 152 block panchayats, 14 district panchayats, 87 municipalities, and 6 municipal corporations.

EVENT Upper Bhadra Project Water**Release**

- Experimental water release was conducted from the Chitradurga branch canal from September 6, 2026.
- Aims to supply irrigation water to drought-prone areas in Chitradurga and Tumakuru districts of Karnataka.

ORGANISATION Andhra Pradesh State**Information Commission**

- Earned national recognition by conducting nearly 95% of case hearings through online modes.
- Disposed of 7,034 cases between January and September 2026.

TERM Human Papillomavirus (HPV)**Vaccination Campaign**

- Special health drive targeting young girls aged up to 14 years to prevent cervical cancer.
- Achieved 51% target coverage in Kozhikode district by vaccinating 13,505 girls across 169 schools.



Practice MCQs (UPSC Prelims)

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

ENVIRONMENT

Supreme Court Guidance on Firecracker Restrictions and Public Health Balance

Supreme Court Calls for Balance Between Public Health and Religious Firecracker Use

Q1. With reference to the constitutional balance between environmental rights and religious practices in India, consider the following statements: 1. The right to a clean environment and public health is recognized as an integral part of Article 21. 2. Article 25 guarantees absolute freedom to practice religious rituals without any statutory or public health restrictions. 3. CSIR-NEERI is the primary institution responsible for developing certified green crackers in India. Which of the statements given above are correct?

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| A. 1 and 2 only | B. 1 and 3 only |
| C. 2 and 3 only | D. 1, 2 and 3 |

ECONOMY

Centre to Review GST Procedural Reforms and Compliance Framework

Centre and States to Review GST Reforms to Simplify Compliance Ahead of 2027 Rollout

Q2. Which of the following statements regarding the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council is/are correct? 1. It is a statutory body established under the Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017. 2. The Union Finance Minister serves as the ex-officio Chairperson of the GST Council. 3. Every decision of the Council is taken by a majority of not less than three-fourths of the weighted votes of members present and voting. Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| A. 1 and 2 only | B. 2 and 3 only |
| C. 1 and 3 only | D. 1, 2 and 3 |

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Legal Framework of Preventive Detention and Right to Public Assembly

Protests over Electoral Revision Trigger Legal Scrutiny of Mass Preventive Detentions

Q3. Consider the following statements regarding fundamental rights and legal provisions on assembly in India: 1. Article 19(1)(b) grants citizens the fundamental right to assemble with or without arms. 2. Preventive detention powers under criminal procedural laws allow police to detain individuals to prevent cognizable offenses. 3. The Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita

(BNSS), 2023 replaced the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973. Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

GEOGRAPHY & DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Southwest Monsoon Deficits and Institutional Framework for Drought Relief

Severe Southwest Monsoon Deficit Triggers Drought Declarations in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh

Q4. With reference to the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) in India, consider the following statements: 1. It is constituted under Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005. 2. It is placed in the Public Account of India under reserved funds not bearing interest. 3. Primary disaster relief at the state level is drawn immediately from NDRF before tapping the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF). Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Maritime Security Concerns in the Strait of Hormuz and Indian Seafarers Protection

NSA Ajit Doval Discusses Gulf Maritime Security with Iran Following Tanker Attacks

Q5. Consider the following geographical pairs: 1. Strait of Hormuz — Connects Persian Gulf to Gulf of Oman 2. Bab-el-Mandeb — Connects Red Sea to Gulf of Aden 3. Strait of Malacca — Connects Black Sea to Sea of Marmara Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Judicial Language Reforms and Accessibility of Higher Courts

Supreme Court Emphasizes Regional Language Translation for Broader Judicial Accessibility

Q6. With reference to Article 348 of the Constitution of India, consider the following statements: 1. All proceedings in the Supreme Court and every High Court shall be conducted in English until Parliament provides otherwise. 2. The Governor of a State can authorize the use of Hindi in the High Court of that State without presidential consent. 3. The authoritative text of all Bills introduced in Parliament must be in English. Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Southwest Monsoon Deficits and Institutional Framework for Drought Relief

Severe Southwest Monsoon Deficit Triggers Drought Declarations in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh

Q7. During an El Niño phenomenon, which of the following atmospheric and oceanic conditions are generally observed? 1. Unusual warming of central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean surface waters. 2. Strengthening of trade winds along the equatorial Pacific. 3. Suppression of the Indian southwest monsoon rainfall. Select the correct answer using the code given below:

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 1 and 3 only

C. 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3



Answer Key — Practice MCQs

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

Q1: B

Q2: B

Q3: B

Q4: A

Q5: A

Q6: B

Q7: B

Q1 Option B · 1 and 3 only

Statement 1 is correct as the Supreme Court has expanded Article 21 to include clean air and health. Statement 2 is incorrect because Article 25 is explicitly subject to public order, morality, and public health. Statement 3 is correct as CSIR-NEERI developed eco-friendly green crackers.

Q2 Option B · 2 and 3 only

Statement 1 is incorrect because the GST Council is a constitutional body established under Article 279A, not merely a statutory body. Statements 2 and 3 are correct as per Article 279A provisions.

Q3 Option B · 2 and 3 only

Statement 1 is incorrect because Article 19(1)(b) specifies assembly peaceably and *without* arms. Statements 2 and 3 are correct as BNSS 2023 governs procedural law including preventive detention under Section 170.

Q4 Option A · 1 and 2 only

Statements 1 and 2 are correct. Statement 3 is incorrect because states must first utilize their State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF); NDRF is tapped only when severe disasters exceed SDRF allocations.

Q5 Option A · 1 and 2 only

Pairs 1 and 2 are correctly matched. Pair 3 is incorrectly matched because the Strait of Malacca connects the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea (the Bosphorus Strait connects the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara).

Q6 Option B · 1 and 3 only

Statements 1 and 3 are correct as per Article 348. Statement 2 is incorrect because Article 348(2) explicitly requires the prior consent of the President for the Governor to permit Hindi or another official language in High Court proceedings.

Q7 Option B · 1 and 3 only

Statements 1 and 3 are correct. Statement 2 is incorrect because El Niño is characterized by the *weakening* (not strengthening) of easterly trade winds in the equatorial Pacific.

TOPIC 02 · CENTRE TO REVIEW GST PROCEDURAL REFORMS AND COMPLIANCE FRAMEWORK

UPSC Prelims 11 Oct 2026

Consider the following statements regarding Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections and fast-track refunds in India:

1. Gross GST collections reached approximately ₹12.46 lakh crore during April-September 2026.
2. Under fast-track refund rules, 90% of low-risk claims on zero-rated supplies are automatically sanctioned within three working days.
3. Automatic refund releases continue unaffected even if an earlier refund claim faces a pending departmental appeal.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| A) 1 only | B) 1 and 2 only |
| C) 2 and 3 only | D) 1, 2 and 3 |

TOPIC 03 · LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF PREVENTIVE DETENTION AND RIGHT TO PUBLIC ASSEMBLY

UPSC Prelims 2023

Consider the following statements :

1. According to the Constitution of India, the Central Government has a duty to protect States from internal disturbances.
2. The Constitution of India exempts the States from providing legal counsel to a person being held for preventive detention.
3. According to the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002, confession of the accused before the police cannot be used as evidence.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| A) Only one | B) Only two |
| C) All three | D) None |

TOPIC 05 · MARITIME SECURITY CONCERNS IN THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ AND INDIAN SEAFARERS PROTECTION

UPSC Prelims 2026

Ships from which of the following countries have to cross the Strait of Hormuz to reach out to the Indian Ocean ?

1. Bahrain
2. Syria
3. Qatar
4. Egypt

Select the answer using the code given below :

A) 1 and 2

B) 1 and 3

C) 2 and 3

D) 3 and 4

