

26 June 2025

UPSC Prelims Exam based on Current Affairs Analysis- 26 June 2025

1. India and China Announce Breakthrough in 28th Round of Corps Commander Talks; Agreement on Depsang Plains Disengagement

Source: The Hindu

News: In a significant diplomatic breakthrough, India and China have reached a mutual agreement on a phased disengagement and de-escalation plan for the Depsang Plains, a major friction point in Eastern Ladakh. The announcement came via a joint statement released by the Ministry of External Affairs following the conclusion of the 28th round of Corps Commander-level talks held at the Chushul-Moldo border meeting point.

Analysis

- According to sources, the agreement outlines a time-bound, multi-step process.
- It includes the withdrawal of forward-deployed troops and armoured columns from the bottleneck area near the Y-junction, followed by the establishment of a temporary "no-patrol zone" to prevent accidental flare-ups.
- This will be verified through a joint mechanism involving physical verification and unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) surveillance.
- The External Affairs Minister, in a press briefing, hailed the development as a "positive step towards restoring peace and tranquility" along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), which is essential for the normalization of bilateral relations.
- However, strategic experts urge caution, emphasizing the need for meticulous verification on the ground, as past disengagements have been slow and fraught with challenges.
- The next phase of talks will reportedly focus on resolving the remaining issues at Demchok and creating a broader framework for de-escalation across the entire sector.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper II: International Relations - India and its neighborhood- relations. Bilateral, regional, and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

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2. Supreme Court Upholds Delimitation Commission's Mandate; Paves Way for Post-Census Readjustment of Constituencies

Source: Indian Express

News: The Supreme Court of India, in a landmark judgment today, upheld the constitutional validity of the framework for the next Delimitation Commission, which is to be constituted after the first census post-2026. A five-judge Constitution Bench, headed by the Chief Justice of India, dismissed a batch of petitions that challenged the freeze on delimitation until 2026, arguing it violated the principle of 'one person, one vote' due to vast population disparities between constituencies.

Analysis

- The Court ruled that the constitutional amendment (84th Amendment Act, 2001) that froze the delimitation based on the 1971 census was a temporary measure to encourage population control measures in states and was within the constituent powers of the Parliament.
- The bench directed the Union Government to ensure the postponed decadal Census is conducted expeditiously to provide the foundational data for the Delimitation Commission.
- This judgment is politically significant as it sets the stage for a massive readjustment of Lok Sabha and State Assembly seats, which could alter the political landscape, particularly increasing the number of seats in the northern states.
- It also directly impacts the implementation of the Women's Reservation Act (Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam), which is contingent upon the completion of the delimitation exercise.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper II: Polity and Governance - Indian Constitution—historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions. Parliament and State Legislatures—structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges, and issues arising out of these.

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3. RBI Report Flags Inflationary Risks from Erratic Monsoon; Holds Repo Rate Steady

Source: Economic Times

News: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in its bi-monthly monetary policy statement, decided to keep the repo rate unchanged at 6.25%, citing persistent inflationary pressures fueled by an erratic monsoon and rising global commodity prices. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted 5-1 to maintain the status quo and reiterated its stance of "withdrawal of accommodation" to ensure inflation progressively aligns with the 4% target.

Analysis

- A detailed report released by the RBI highlighted significant concerns over food inflation. It noted that the spatial and temporal distribution of the Southwest Monsoon has been uneven, impacting the sowing of key Kharif crops like rice, pulses, and oilseeds.
- This has led to a spike in vegetable prices and poses an upside risk to the inflation outlook. Governor Shaktikanta Das, in his statement, emphasized that while core inflation has moderated, the volatility in food prices warrants a cautious approach.
- The RBI slightly revised its CPI inflation projection for FY2025-26 upwards to 4.8% from 4.5%. The central bank's decision signals a prolonged period of high interest rates, which may slightly dampen credit growth and investment sentiment, but is deemed necessary to anchor inflationary expectations and ensure macroeconomic stability.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper III: Indian Economy - Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development, and employment. Inflation. Government Budgeting.

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4. ISRO Announces Final Launch Window for Gaganyaan-1; First Indian Crew to Fly in Q2 2026

Source: PIB (Press Information Bureau)

News: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) today officially announced the final launch window for Gaganyaan-1, India's maiden human spaceflight mission. In a press conference at the ISRO headquarters in Bengaluru, Chairman S. Somanath confirmed that the first crewed mission, carrying three Indian astronauts (Gaganauts), is scheduled for launch in the second quarter of 2026 from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota.

Analysis

- This announcement follows a series of successful uncrewed test flights and system validations over the past year, including the crucial integrated air-drop test and pad abort test.
- The chosen astronaut-designates have completed their extensive training, both in Russia and at the Astronaut Training Facility in Bengaluru.
- The mission will involve launching the crew into a 400 km orbit for a three-day mission, after which they will safely return to Earth, splashing down in the Arabian Sea.
- The Chairman stated, "This mission is not just about sending humans to space; it is about establishing a sustainable and affordable human spaceflight program, inspiring the youth, and fostering technological advancements in areas like life support, avionics, and materials science."
- The successful execution of Gaganyaan will make India the fourth nation in the world to independently send humans to space.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper III: Science and Technology - Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology. Awareness in the fields of Space.

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5. National E-Markets for Agriculture (NE-MA) Initiative Crosses 5,000 FPOs; Digital Integration Boosts Farmer Incomes

Source: Hindustan Times

News: The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare today announced a major milestone for its flagship National E-Markets for Agriculture (NE-MA) initiative, which has successfully integrated over 5,000 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) onto its digital platform. Launched in 2023, the NE-MA platform aims to build on the e-NAM framework by creating a unified digital ecosystem for FPOs to access better markets, inputs, and credit facilities.

Analysis

- According to a ministry report, the integrated FPOs have reported an average increase of 15-20% in price realization for their produce by bypassing multiple intermediaries and selling directly to bulk buyers, processors, and exporters across the country.
- The platform utilizes AI-based logistics and supply chain solutions to optimize transportation and reduce post-harvest losses. It also provides FPOs with real-time market intelligence, weather forecasts, and advisories on crop management.
- Union Minister for Agriculture stated that the government's goal is to connect all 10,000 registered FPOs to the platform by 2027.
- The success of NE-MA showcases the transformative potential of digital technology in empowering small and marginal farmers and making Indian agriculture more remunerative and resilient.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper III: Economy - e-technology in the aid of farmers. Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices; Public Distribution System- objectives, functioning, limitations, revamping; issues of buffer stocks and food security; Technology missions.

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6. Government Launches Phase-II of 'Jal Jeevan Mission-Urban' with Focus on Wastewater Management and Circular Economy

Source: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

News: The Government of India has launched the second phase of the 'Jal Jeevan Mission-Urban' (JJM-U), aiming to achieve universal coverage of water supply through functional taps in all statutory towns, while introducing a renewed focus on wastewater management and promoting a circular economy in water usage. The Cabinet today approved an outlay of ₹3.5 lakh crore for the mission's second phase, which will run until 2030.

Analysis

- While Phase I focused on providing piped water connections, Phase II will prioritize achieving 'water-secure' cities.
- A key component is the mandatory establishment of sewage and septage management systems in all 500 AMRUT cities.
- The mission mandates the treatment of wastewater to specified standards and promotes its reuse for non-potable purposes like industrial use and horticulture, thereby reducing the dependency on fresh water sources.
- It will also work on rejuvenating urban water bodies and implementing aquifer management plans.
- Through technology-based monitoring and community participation, JJM-U Phase-II aims to not only address the challenge of urban water scarcity but also contribute to environmental sustainability and public health, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation).

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper II: Governance - Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

GS Paper III: Environment - Conservation, environmental pollution, and degradation.

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7. NITI Aayog's Performance Review of PLI Schemes Recommends Course Correction in Textiles and Food Processing Sectors

Source: Economic Times

News: A mid-term performance review of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes by NITI Aayog has lauded their success in sectors like mobile manufacturing and pharmaceuticals, but has recommended significant course corrections for the textiles and food processing sectors. The report, submitted to the Prime Minister's Office, highlighted that while the PLI scheme has attracted substantial investment and boosted exports in electronics, the uptake and outcomes in labour-intensive sectors have been below expectations.

Analysis

- For the textile sector, the report points to challenges in meeting the high investment and turnover thresholds for incentives, especially for MSMEs, and suggests a recalibration of the scheme to promote smaller players and focus on specific synthetic fabric value chains.
- In food processing, procedural delays and a lack of backward linkages with farmers have been identified as key impediments.
- NITI Aayog has recommended simplifying the approval process, creating dedicated FPO-industry linkage programs, and providing greater support for branding and marketing of 'Made in India' food products globally.
- The report emphasizes that for the PLI scheme to achieve its dual objective of making India a global manufacturing hub and creating mass employment, a sector-specific, flexible approach is imperative.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper III: Indian Economy - Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy, and their effects on industrial growth.

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8. BRICS Summit Concludes in Cape Town; Members Agree on Framework for Common Digital Currency Prototype

Source: The Hindu

The 17th BRICS Summit concluded in Cape Town, South Africa, with the member nations—Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, and their newer members—announcing an agreement to develop a framework for a prototype of a BRICS-led common digital payment platform. The Cape Town Declaration emphasized the need for a more "just and equitable international financial architecture" and a move away from over-reliance on a single currency for international trade.

Analysis

- The proposed platform, often dubbed 'BRICS Pay', will not be a single currency but an integrated system allowing seamless cross-border transactions using the members' national currencies, potentially leveraging Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs).
- The New Development Bank (NDB) has been tasked with leading a technical working group to create the prototype's architecture, focusing on interoperability, security, and regulatory compliance.
- India's delegation stressed that the initiative is aimed at reducing transaction costs and settlement times for trade within the bloc, not at supplanting existing systems.
- While a fully functional platform is still years away, this agreement marks the most concrete step yet by the bloc to create an alternative to the SWIFT messaging system and reduce the dominance of the US dollar in their mutual trade.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper II: International Relations - Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests (BRICS).

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9. Centre's New 'Samagra Adivasi Swasthya Mission' Aims to Eliminate Sickle Cell Anemia by 2045, Two Years Ahead of Schedule

Source: PIB (Press Information Bureau)

News: The Union Cabinet today approved the launch of the 'Samagra Adivasi Swasthya Mission' (Comprehensive Tribal Health Mission), an ambitious program aimed at addressing the unique health challenges of tribal populations. A cornerstone of this mission is the goal to eliminate Sickle Cell Anemia from India by 2045, fast-tracking the original target of 2047. The mission will be implemented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Analysis

- The mission adopts a life-cycle approach, focusing on awareness, universal screening of over 7 crore people under 40 in tribal areas, and providing comprehensive care, including pre-marital and pre-conception counselling to prevent the birth of affected children.
- Leveraging the Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres, the mission will create a centralized digital registry of patients to ensure continuity of care and monitoring.
- Beyond sickle cell disease, the mission will also focus on combating malnutrition, tuberculosis, and malaria, which are disproportionately prevalent in tribal communities.
- It aims to integrate traditional healing practices with modern medicine and strengthen healthcare infrastructure in remote areas, ensuring last-mile delivery of health services.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper II: Social Justice - Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions, and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections. Issues relating to Health.

ADD.: 1/53 2nd floor, near Gurudwara, Lalita Park, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi, 110092

PH. NO.: 7388368910, +91 9717323955

 www.prashikshania.com

 prashikshaniaofficial@gmail.com

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10. Parliamentary Standing Committee on IT Calls for a New 'Digital India Act' to Address AI Ethics and Deepfake Challenges

Source: Indian Express

News: The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology, in its report tabled in Parliament today, has strongly recommended that the government expedite the process of enacting a new 'Digital India Act' to replace the aging Information Technology Act, 2000. The committee expressed grave concerns over the rapid proliferation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and deepfake technologies, stating that the current legal framework is "woefully inadequate" to address the associated harms, including misinformation, financial fraud, and threats to individual privacy and national security.

Analysis

- The report urges the government to incorporate a 'risk-based' regulatory approach for AI, where high-risk AI applications (such as in critical infrastructure or autonomous weaponry) are subjected to stringent audits, transparency, and accountability norms.
- It calls for specific provisions to criminalize the malicious creation and dissemination of deepfakes, while also creating a mechanism for easy identification and takedown of such content.
- The committee emphasized the need for a "whole-of-government" approach, involving a balance between fostering innovation and protecting citizens.
- This report adds significant pressure on the government to accelerate its consultations and introduce the much-anticipated Digital India Bill in the upcoming session of Parliament.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper III: Science and Technology - Awareness in the fields of IT, Computers, robotics.

GS Paper IV: Ethics, Integrity, and Aptitude - Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in human actions.