

17 Sep 2025

UPSC Prelims Exam Based on Current Affairs Analysis – 17 Sept 2025

1. Centre Launches Fourth Phase of 'Mission Shakti'

Context: The Ministry of Women and Child Development has initiated the fourth phase of 'Mission Shakti,' a comprehensive scheme aimed at ensuring the safety, security, and empowerment of women. This phase introduces new components focusing on the digital literacy of women in rural areas and the establishment of one-stop centers in every district for women in distress. The government has allocated an enhanced budget to strengthen the institutional framework supporting women.

Significance: 'Mission Shakti' is a crucial initiative for achieving gender equality and women-led development, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 5. The focus on digital literacy is particularly significant in the contemporary context, as it can empower women economically and socially. The expansion of one-stop centers will provide critical support to women facing violence and other forms of distress.

Analysis: This scheme is a significant step towards addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by women in India. However, the success of 'Mission Shakti' will depend on effective implementation and monitoring. It is essential to ensure that the benefits of the scheme reach the most marginalized women. The integration of technology can play a vital role in enhancing the reach and effectiveness of the program.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper II: Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States, and the performance of these schemes.

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2. Supreme Court Issues Directives on Prison Reforms

Context: The Supreme Court of India has issued a series of directives to the central and state governments to address the issue of overcrowding and poor conditions in prisons. The court has mandated the establishment of a high-powered committee in each state to oversee the implementation of prison reforms. The directives also include provisions for the timely release of undertrial prisoners and the improvement of healthcare facilities within correctional institutions.

Significance: This judgment is a landmark step towards upholding the fundamental rights of prisoners. Overcrowding in prisons is a serious issue that leads to human rights violations and hampers the process of reformation. The court's intervention is expected to bring about much-needed changes in the functioning of the criminal justice system.

Analysis: While the Supreme Court's directives are commendable, their effective implementation will require a concerted effort from both the executive and the judiciary. The high-powered committees must be empowered to take decisive action. There is also a need for a paradigm shift in the approach towards prisoners, with a greater emphasis on rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper II: Structure, organization, and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary.

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3. Government Unveils New National Policy on Artificial Intelligence

Context: The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has unveiled a new National Policy on Artificial Intelligence (AI). The policy aims to position India as a global leader in AI by fostering research and development, promoting the adoption of AI in various sectors, and addressing the ethical concerns associated with the technology. The policy also outlines a framework for public-private partnerships to drive innovation in AI.

Significance: This policy is a crucial step in harnessing the transformative potential of AI for economic growth and social development. By providing a clear roadmap for the development and deployment of AI, the government aims to create a vibrant ecosystem for AI innovation in the country. The focus on ethical considerations is essential to ensure that AI is used responsibly.

Analysis: The National Policy on AI is a forward-looking document that has the potential to shape the future of technology in India. However, the success of the policy will depend on its effective implementation. It is important to create a skilled workforce that can develop and deploy AI solutions. The government also needs to address the challenges related to data privacy and security.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper III: Science and Technology- developments and their applications and effects in everyday life.

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4. Cabinet Approves Increase in MSP for Rabi Crops

Context: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved an increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for all mandated Rabi crops for the marketing season 2025-26. The increase is aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to farmers for their produce and encouraging crop diversification. The government has stated that the increase in MSP is in line with the recommendations of the Swaminathan Commission.

Significance: The increase in MSP is a significant step towards enhancing the income of farmers and ensuring food security. It will incentivize farmers to cultivate Rabi crops and help in stabilizing agricultural markets. The decision is also politically significant, as it comes ahead of assembly elections in several states.

Analysis: While the hike in MSP is a welcome move, it is not a panacea for the problems plaguing the agricultural sector. The government needs to address the structural issues, such as the lack of storage facilities and the dominance of middlemen. There is also a need to promote sustainable agricultural practices to ensure long-term food security.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper III: Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices.

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5. India Successfully Test-Fires Agni-VI Missile

Context: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully test-fired the Agni-VI, a long-range surface-to-surface ballistic missile. The missile has a strike range of over 8,000 kilometers and is capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. The successful test is a major milestone in India's strategic deterrence capabilities.

Significance: The Agni-VI missile will significantly enhance India's nuclear triad and its ability to deter potential adversaries. The missile's long range will allow India to strike targets deep inside enemy territory. The successful test is a testament to the country's growing prowess in missile technology.

Analysis: The development of the Agni-VI missile is a significant achievement for India's defense sector. However, it is also likely to trigger a new arms race in the region. India needs to continue to pursue a policy of credible minimum deterrence while also engaging in dialogue with its neighbors to reduce tensions.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper III: Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.

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6. India and the US Hold 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue

Context: The Foreign and Defence Ministers of India and the United States held the annual 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in Washington D.C. The dialogue focused on strengthening the strategic partnership between the two countries and enhancing cooperation in areas such as defense, counter-terrorism, and Indo-Pacific security. Both sides reiterated their commitment to a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific.

Significance: The 2+2 dialogue is a key mechanism for deepening the strategic partnership between India and the United States. The dialogue provides an opportunity for both countries to align their policies on key regional and global issues. The focus on the Indo-Pacific is particularly significant, as it reflects the growing convergence of interests between the two countries in the region.

Analysis: The India-US strategic partnership has been on an upward trajectory in recent years. The 2+2 dialogue is a testament to the growing trust and understanding between the two countries. However, there are also some challenges in the relationship, such as differences on trade and immigration. Both sides need to work together to address these challenges and further strengthen their partnership.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper II: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

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7. United Nations General Assembly Session Begins

Context: The 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has commenced in New York. The theme of this year's session is "A Watershed Moment: Transformative Solutions to Interlocking Challenges." World leaders will gather to discuss pressing global issues, including climate change, sustainable development, and international peace and security.

Significance: The UNGA is the main deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ of the United Nations. It provides a unique platform for multilateral discussion on the full spectrum of international issues covered by the UN Charter. The high-level debate will be a key opportunity for member states to address global challenges and forge common solutions.

Analysis: The 80th session of the UNGA comes at a time of significant global turmoil. The world is facing a number of interlocking crises, including the war in Ukraine, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the climate crisis. The UNGA will need to rise to the occasion and demonstrate its relevance by taking decisive action to address these challenges.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper II: Important International institutions, agencies, and fora- their structure, mandate.

8. Report Highlights Worsening Global Food Crisis

Context: A new report by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) has warned of a worsening global food crisis. The report states that the number of people facing acute food insecurity has reached a record high, driven by conflict, climate shocks, and economic downturns. The report calls for urgent action to avert a major humanitarian catastrophe.

Significance: The report is a stark reminder of the devastating impact of the global food crisis. Millions of people are on the brink of starvation, and the situation is likely to get worse in the coming months. The international community needs to act now to provide life-saving assistance to those in need.

Analysis: The global food crisis is a complex problem with no easy solutions. It will require a concerted effort from all stakeholders, including governments, international organizations, and civil society. We need to address the root causes of the crisis, such as conflict and climate change, and build more resilient food systems.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper III: Issues of buffer stocks and food security.

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9. Tensions Escalate in the South China Sea

Context: Tensions have once again escalated in the South China Sea after a Chinese coast guard vessel used a water cannon against a Philippine supply boat. The incident has drawn condemnation from the international community, with the United States reiterating its commitment to defending the Philippines. China has defended its actions, claiming that the Philippine vessel was trespassing in its territorial waters.

Significance: The incident is the latest in a series of confrontations between China and its neighbors in the South China Sea. China claims sovereignty over almost the entire sea, which is a vital waterway for global trade. The dispute has become a major flashpoint in the region, with the potential to escalate into a military conflict.

Analysis: The situation in the South China Sea is a complex and dangerous one. China's assertive actions are a challenge to the international rules-based order. The United States and its allies need to continue to uphold the principle of freedom of navigation and overflight in the region. At the same time, it is important to keep the channels of communication open with China to avoid a miscalculation.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper II: India and its neighborhood- relations.

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10. New Study Reveals Alarming Rate of Glacial Melt

Context: A new study published in the journal Nature has revealed that the world's glaciers are melting at an alarming rate. The study, which is based on satellite data, found that glaciers lost an average of 267 gigatonnes of ice per year between 2000 and 2019. The study warns that the melting of glaciers will have a devastating impact on water resources and sea levels.

Significance: The study is a wake-up call to the world. The melting of glaciers is a clear sign of the devastating impact of climate change. We need to take urgent action to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and transition to a clean energy future. Failure to do so will have catastrophic consequences for the planet.

Analysis: The melting of glaciers is a complex problem with no easy solutions. It will require a global effort to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. We also need to adapt to the impacts of climate change, such as rising sea levels and water scarcity. This will require significant investment in infrastructure and technology.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper I: Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, tsunamis, Volcanic activity, cyclones, etc., geographical features and their location- changes in critical geographical features (including water-bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna, and the effects of such changes.