



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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Friday

9 topics

15 stories

Your Complete UPSC Current Affairs Companion

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5 Things You Must Know

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Duty-Free Raw Sugar Imports & Domestic Price Stabilization



STORY 1 **The Hindu**

Government Permits Duty-Free Import of 10 Lakh Tonnes Raw Sugar

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade allowed duty-free import of 10 lakh tonnes of raw sugar under Tariff Rate Quota until October 31, 2026, to stabilize domestic availability.

The notification issued from New Delhi responds to soaring domestic ex-mill sugar prices caused by depleted opening stock reserves leading into the upcoming 2026-27 crushing season.

Under the new mandate, bulk industrial consumers utilizing over 10 tonnes of sugar monthly are subjected to mandatory stockholding limits to curtail speculative hoarding.

This import relaxation comes alongside India's ongoing restriction banning refined sugar exports until September 30 to prioritize home market supply and curb food inflation.

Understanding trade policy instruments like TRQs and stock limits provides crucial insights into economic governance, food security management, and agricultural market regulations for CSE Mains.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Examines supply-side intervention mechanisms, Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) management, and balancing farm-gate prices with consumer inflation.

PRELIMS FACTS

- The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) allowed duty-free import of 10 lakh tonnes of raw sugar under Tariff Rate Quota until October 31, 2026.
- Stockholding limits were imposed on commercial bulk consumers utilizing more than 10 tonnes of sugar monthly to prevent hoarding.
- Raw sugar imports under Tariff Rate Quota allow specified quantities of commodities at zero or concessional import duty rates.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: The Central Government authorized duty-free imports of 10 lakh tonnes of raw sugar under the Tariff Rate Quota framework alongside strict stockholding limits on bulk consumers. This proactive market intervention addresses soaring ex-mill prices driven by lower opening domestic stocks ahead of the 2026-27 sugar season.

DIMENSIONS

- **Supply Chain Management:** Tariff Rate Quotas serve as flexible macroeconomic buffers to plug structural deficits without permanently dismantling domestic tariff protections.
- **Consumer Inflation Control:** Stockholding limits on bulk consumers (>10 tonnes/month) curb speculative hoarding in the food processing industry.
- **Farm Economy Dynamics:** Duty-free raw imports cushion domestic refining capacity while shielding sugarcane farmers from sudden price crashes through temporal import limits.

Way forward: Shift from reactive trade restrictions to long-term crop diversification, precise stock monitoring via digital portals, and formulaic TRQ triggers tied to domestic price thresholds.

PYQ LINK

Examines government interventions in agricultural trade policy and market regulatory measures to manage essential commodity price volatility.

KEY TERMS

Tariff Rate Quota

Directorate General of Foreign Trade

Stockholding Limits

Ex-mill Rates

Agricultural Price Stabilization

ACTS & ARTICLES

Essential Commodities Act, 1955

Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992

Sugar Control Order, 1966

02

GS-3: INTERNAL SECURITY & CYBER SECURITY

Cyber Fraud Rackets and Exploitation of Mule Bank Accounts



Mumbai Police Bust Racket Supplying Mule Accounts for Cyber Fraud

Mumbai Police arrested three inter-state agents outside Sandhurst Road railway station for operating an organized syndicate supplying mule bank account kits for cyber fraud.

Investigators traced transactions totaling ₹25.45 crore across 17 retrieved bank accounts operated over a brief two-month duration by agents hailing from Madhya Pradesh.

The perpetrators lured financially vulnerable individuals with small cash rewards to open bank accounts, confiscating their debit cards, passbooks, chequebooks, and linked SIM cards.

Dongri police registered cases under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Sections 318(4), 317, and 3(5) alongside IT Act Sections 66(c) and 66(d) for identity theft and impersonation.

Examining organized cybercrime networks and digital financial fraud mechanisms offers actionable context for answering internal security and digital governance questions in GS Paper 3.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Analyzes the mechanics of financial cybercrimes, organized mule bank account syndicates, and statutory enforcement under BNS and IT Act.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Mule bank accounts are created by fraud syndicates using credentials of vulnerable individuals to channel illicit funds generated from cyber fraud.
- Investigations into mule account operations apply Sections 318(4) and 317 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) alongside Sections 66(c) and 66(d) of IT Act, 2000.
- Inter-state cyber fraud networks leverage illicit gaming, cricket betting, and casino promotions to acquire passbooks, debit cards, and SIM kits.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: The busting of an inter-state syndicate supplying 17 mule bank accounts facilitating ₹25.45 crore in illicit transactions highlights the expanding structural sophistication of cyber fraud networks in India. Cybercriminals exploit financially vulnerable citizens to systematically drain money through fraudulent digital banking channels.

DIMENSIONS

- **Modus Operandi:** Agents lure financially distressed individuals with minimal financial incentives to hand over passbooks, debit cards, chequebooks, and associated SIM cards.
- **Regulatory Gaps:** Inadequate real-time monitoring of rapid transaction spikes across newly opened retail bank accounts enables rapid money laundering.
- **Legal & Enforcement Response:** Dual application of BNS criminal fraud sections and IT Act cyber impersonation provisions enhances legal deterrence against mule recruiters.

Way forward: Implement AI-driven anomaly detection in core banking systems for new accounts, enforce strict KYC re-verification, and establish inter-state police cyber intelligence sharing hubs.

PYQ LINK

Analyzes cyber security threats to national financial infrastructure and statutory measures needed to counter organized digital fraud syndicates.

KEY TERMS

Mule Bank Accounts

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita

Information Technology Act

Financial Cybercrime

Digital Banking Security

ACTS & ARTICLES

Information Technology Act, 2000 (Sections 66C & 66D)

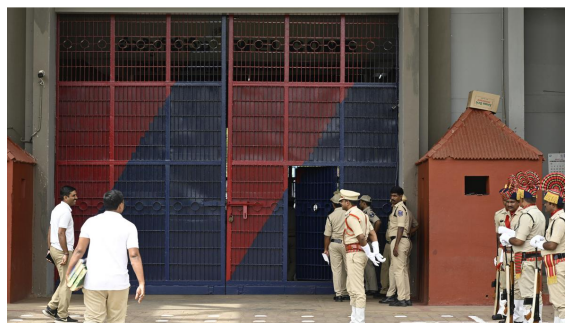
Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (Sections 317 & 318(4))

Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002

03

GS-2: GOVERNANCE & CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Prison Incubation Networks & Post-Incarceration Recidivism



STORY 1 The Hindu

Telangana Police Uncover Criminal Rackets Incubated Behind Bars

Telangana law enforcement agencies uncovered multiple property offense rackets where habitual criminals forged partnerships during prior incarcerations in Cherlapalli Central Prison.

Investigators in Siddipet tracked a white sedan vehicle theft to habitual offender Pendyala Sudarshan, who recruited accomplices previously met while serving jail sentences.

Police reports reveal that prisons meant for offender reform are increasingly functioning as networking hubs for sharing technical know-how in vehicle thefts and diversion frauds.

The findings highlight systemic weaknesses in inmate classification, rehabilitation programs, and post-release surveillance within state correctional administration frameworks.

This case illustrates key challenges in penal governance, criminal justice reforms, and social rehabilitation mechanisms relevant to GS Paper 2 civil service questions.



STORY 2 Times of India

Former Pakistan PM Imran Khan Shifted to Hospital Following Supreme Court Order

Imprisoned former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan was transferred late Thursday from Adiala prison to Shifa International Hospital in Islamabad for medical examination.

The transfer followed a directive from Pakistan's Supreme Court addressing long-standing healthcare concerns regarding worsening vision in Khan's right eye during his incarceration.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Tariq Fazal Chaudhry confirmed government compliance with apex court directives while seeking clarification on broader applicability of prison medical relief.

Khan's legal team and family have requested extended hospital admission, citing fundamental rights to specialized medical care during custodial detention.

The intervention illustrates international judicial standards on prisoner rights, executive detention compliance, and humanitarian safeguards in neighboring democratic jurisdictions.

STORY 3 Google News

Apex Court Mandates Medical Relief and Hospital Transfer for Imran Khan

Pakistan's apex court ordered immediate medical transfer of opposition leader Imran Khan from prison custody to a specialized tertiary hospital facility in Islamabad.

The judicial directive addressed severe healthcare delays, establishing that legal custody does not negate fundamental rights to adequate medical treatment for detainees.

Authorities shifted Khan under tight security following months of petitions regarding inadequate clinical facilities within the Adiala prison complex.

The development spotlights ongoing friction between judicial constitutional enforcement and state executive administration regarding high-profile political prisoners.

Analyzing international rule-of-law precedents and constitutional guarantees for prisoner health offers pertinent comparative material for GS Paper 2 governance essays.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Evaluates structural gaps in correctional facilities, criminal networking inside prisons, and judicial oversight over executive prosecutions.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Telangana police investigations reveal that correctional facilities frequently act as contact hubs where habitual offenders forge post-release criminal partnerships.
- The Bombay High Court imposed ₹50,000 costs on the Anti-Corruption Bureau for seeking appeal condonation after an unexcused delay of 650 days.
- State Departments of Law and Judiciary are constitutionally required to evaluate prosecution merits independently of executive law enforcement pressure.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: Recent law enforcement revelations from Telangana showing prison-incubated criminal partnerships, alongside the Bombay High Court penalizing an anti-corruption agency for 650 days of procedural appeal delay, spotlight twin crises in India's penal system: correctional failure and executive prosecutorial lethargy.

DIMENSIONS

- **Penal Reform Deficit:** Incarceration without effective rehabilitation or inmate segregation transforms prisons like Cherlapalli into networking centers for property offenders.
- **Institutional Accountability:** Judicial refusal to condone unexplained appeal delays emphasizes that state departments must function without institutional inertia.
- **Judicial Efficiency:** Unwarranted executive appeals against acquittals clog appellate dockets and violate the rule of law regarding finality of judgments.

Way forward: Implement modern prison management codes segregating habitual offenders, digitize prosecution workflow timelines, and enforce strict accountability on state legal departments.

PYQ LINK

Evaluates executive performance in penal management, jail administration reforms, and judicial standards concerning procedural delays in criminal appeals.

KEY TERMS

Recidivism Prison Reforms Correctional Jurisprudence Condonation of Delay
Department of Law and Judiciary

ACTS & ARTICLES

Article 21 of the Constitution of India Prisons Act, 1894 & Model Prisons Act, 2023
Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 Limitation Act, 1963 (Section 5)



STORY 1 **The Hindu**

Union Government Approves 11.18 Lakh PMAY-G Houses for Bihar

Union Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced the sanction of 11,18,937 permanent pucca houses for eligible rural families across Bihar under PMAY-Gramin.

The Central Government committed a financial outlay of ₹13,427 crore alongside distributing formal sanction letters and initial instalment transfers to newly selected beneficiaries.

The announcement coincided with a state-level 'Grih Pravesh' ceremony in Patna celebrating 2.35 lakh completed PMAY-G housing units for financial year 2026-27.

Key welfare commitments emphasize empowering rural women through joint house ownership and driving inclusive economic growth through targeted rural infrastructure investment.

Analyzing PMAY-G execution strategies provides vital insights into rural development, federal poverty alleviation schemes, and public social sector delivery for Mains Paper 2.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Examines federal welfare financing, target-driven rural housing asset creation, and convergence in social safety net implementation.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) aims to provide pucca houses with basic amenities to eligible rural households.
- The Central Government sanctioned ₹13,427 crore for constructing 11.18 lakh permanent houses in Bihar under PMAY-G.
- Over 2.35 lakh rural houses completed under PMAY-G in Bihar participated in synchronized 'Grih Pravesh' ceremonies during FY 2026-27.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: The sanctioning of over 11.18 lakh permanent houses in Bihar under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), supported by a ₹13,427 crore budget, marks a major expansion in social welfare delivery. Combined with 2.35 lakh completed 'Grih Pravesh' units, the initiative highlights structured fiscal outlay driving rural quality of life.

DIMENSIONS

- **Socio-Economic Inclusion:** Transitioning rural poor families from kutcha structures to pucca housing enhances health, dignity, and security.

- **Fiscal Governance:** Massive capital transfers (₹13,427 crore) stimulate local rural construction economies, unskilled employment, and material supply chains.
- **Scheme Convergence:** PMAY-G integrates drinking water (Jal Jeevan Mission), sanitation (Swachh Bharat), and clean fuel (Ujjwala) into housing delivery.

Way forward: Strengthen geo-tagging verifications, address raw material inflation, prioritize landless beneficiaries, and ensure timely direct benefit transfers to eliminate intermediary leakages.

PYQ LINK

Evaluates social housing welfare schemes as tools for poverty alleviation and inclusive rural economic empowerment.

KEY TERMS

PMAY-G

Pucca House Sanction

Grih Pravesh

Rural Asset Creation

Fiscal Federalism

ACTS & ARTICLES

Article 21 (Right to Livelihood and Dignified Life)

Article 47 (Directive Principles on Standard of Living)

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin Guidelines

05

GS-3: ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION & PUBLIC HEALTH

Industrial Air Pollution & Urban Health Hazards



STORY 1 The Hindu

Industrial Coal Dust Pollutes Visakhapatnam Residential Areas

Residents of One Town and Gajuwaka areas in Visakhapatnam are experiencing severe respiratory distress due to persistent black dust from nearby port and industrial operations.

Widespread industrial emissions, uncontained coal and iron ore transportation, and heavy vehicular movements continuously deposit toxic dust on homes and streets.

Families report mounting medical expenses and mandatory use of home air purifiers to combat chronic respiratory ailments affecting children and elderly residents.

Community demands call for immediate regulatory intervention by pollution control boards to mandate covered storage facilities and continuous water-sprinkling barriers.

This environmental issue highlights crucial UPSC themes regarding urban air quality management, industrial regulatory compliance, and public health safeguards.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Assesses point-source industrial emissions, port activity pollution, particulate matter impacts, and statutory environmental compliance.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Fugitive dust from open-air coal and iron ore handling at maritime ports significantly increases localized ambient PM10 and PM2.5 levels.
- Prolonged exposure to toxic industrial dust triggers chronic respiratory illnesses including obstructive pulmonary disorders in residential communities.
- The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 empowers State Pollution Control Boards to enforce mandatory dust suppression systems on industrial units.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: Severe coal and iron ore dust pollution choking Visakhapatnam's historic One Town area underscores the environmental justice challenge posed by urban port expansion near residential zones. Chronic exposure to black industrial dust is driving a surge in respiratory illnesses among vulnerable citizens.

DIMENSIONS

- **Public Health Crisis:** Daily inhalation of micro-particulate coal emissions severely damages lung function in children and elderly populations.
- **Regulatory Failure:** Inadequate enforcement of dust enclosure nets, water sprinkling systems, and covered conveyor belts by port authorities.
- **Socio-Economic Inequality:** Old city residents face unequal environmental hazards compared to commercial zones, requiring targeted remedial intervention.

Way forward: Mandate fully enclosed mechanical bulk material handling systems at coastal ports, institute buffer zone green belts, and enforce real-time fence-line air monitoring.

PYQ LINK

Discusses urban air quality deterioration caused by industrial and port logistics operations and measures required to safeguard public health.

KEY TERMS

Particulate Matter

Port Pollution

Industrial Emissions

Air Quality Index

Environmental Protection Act

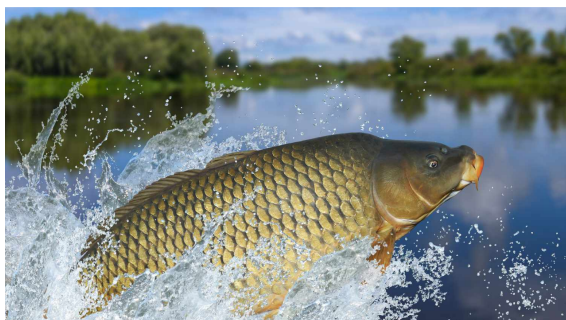
ACTS & ARTICLES

Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981

Environment (Protection) Act, 1986

Article 21 (Right to Clean Environment)

Invasive Species Eradication & Freshwater Restoration



STORY 1 Times of India

Tasmania Eradicates Invasive European Carp From Two Major Lakes

The Tasmanian Inland Fisheries Service officially declared European carp functionally eradicated from Lake Sorell and Lake Crescent after a relentless 28-year campaign.

Fisheries personnel captured and removed 49,301 invasive carp (41,504 from Sorell and 7,797 from Crescent) following their illegal introduction detected in 1995.

Eliminating the invasive bottom-feeding species restored lake water clarity, allowed submerged marsh vegetation to regenerate, and prompted a rebound in wild brown trout.

This achievement refutes long-standing scientific beliefs that eradicating established invasive fish from large, open freshwater ecosystems was practically impossible.

The victory highlights key concepts in invasive species management, aquatic ecosystem resilience, and biodiversity conservation relevant to GS Paper 3.



STORY 2 Times of India

Utah Ecosystem Restoration Rebuilds Strawberry Reservoir Fishery

In August 1990, Utah wildlife managers executed the world's largest chemical fish-removal project using rotenone to clean the polluted food web of Strawberry Reservoir.

The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources successfully wiped out over 99 percent of the reservoir's total fish biomass to eradicate dominant non-native trash fish.

By systematically clearing invasive species, biologists reset the aquatic food web, successfully building a healthy cold-water fishery yielding over 715,000 angler catches annually.

Rotenone treatment remains a benchmark case study showing how radical ecological interventions can restore collapsing freshwater ecosystems.

Analyzing biological control techniques and invasive species eradication frameworks provides technical grounding for ecology topics in UPSC Mains.



STORY 3 **Times of India**

North American River Otter Spotted in Bronx River After Century

A North American river otter was confirmed on camera trap imagery in the Bronx River, marking the species' first documented presence in a century.

Wildlife Conservation Society researchers captured the sighting during long-term biological monitoring along urban river corridors in New York City.

The return of apex semi-aquatic mammals signals substantial water quality improvements and ecological recovery in historically polluted urban river basins.

Urban river revitalizations demonstrate that long-term habitat rehabilitation can successfully restore native mammalian carnivore populations.

This urban conservation milestone offers real-world evidence of ecological restoration and bio-indicator monitoring relevant to GS Paper 3 Environment modules.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Examines ecological management of invasive alien species, bio-chemical eradication tools, and food web recovery in aquatic ecosystems.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Rotenone is a naturally derived piscicide used in fisheries management to eradicate invasive fish species by inhibiting cellular respiration.
- Tasmania achieved the world's first functional eradication of European carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) from large freshwater lakes after a 28-year effort removing 49,301 fish.
- Eradicating bottom-feeding invasive carp restores aquatic water clarity, submerged marsh vegetation, and native trout populations.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: The functional eradication of European carp from Tasmanian lakes after a 28-year campaign removing 49,301 fish, alongside historic ecological lessons from Utah's Strawberry Reservoir rotenone treatment, demonstrates that large-scale eradication of invasive alien species is achievable through sustained ecological management.

DIMENSIONS

- **Biodiversity Protection:** Removing invasive bottom-feeders prevents habitat destruction, sediment resuspension, and native species displacement.
- **Methodological Approaches:** Targeted physical removal (electrofishing and netting) versus chemical intervention (rotenone piscicide application).
- **Ecological & Economic Recovery:** Improved water clarity sparks rapid recovery of submerged aquatic flora, wild brown trout stocks, and eco-tourism.

Way forward: Develop strict biosecurity protocols to prevent illegal species introductions, deploy early detection DNA monitoring, and execute sustained long-term management plans.

PYQ LINK

Examines the ecological threat of invasive alien species to aquatic biodiversity and methods deployed for ecosystem restoration.

KEY TERMS

Invasive Alien Species

Rotenone

Ecosystem Restoration

Functional Eradication

Food Web Recovery

ACTS & ARTICLES

Convention on Biological Diversity (Article 8(h) on Invasive Species)

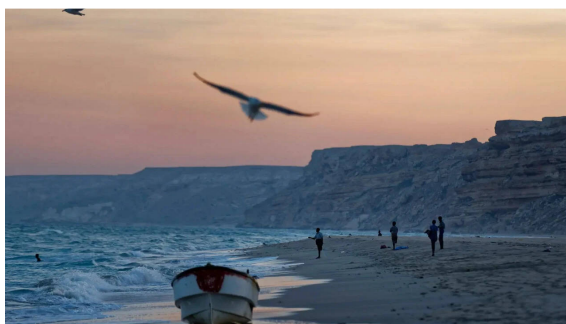
Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (Target 6)

Biological Diversity Act, 2002

07

GS-2: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & GS-3: SECURITY

Maritime Security and Piracy in the Horn of Africa



STORY 1 **Times of India**

Hijacked Cargo Ship Off Somalia Holds Six Indian Crew Members

Armed pirates hijacked the Cameroon-flagged cargo ship M/V LUTUF carrying Turkish military equipment off Somalia's Puntland coast, holding six Indian crew members captive.

The vessel was seized 3.5 nautical miles off Marraya in Puntland's Eyl district before being forcibly navigated towards the Nugaal coastline.

Owned by Polar Movement Shipping, the vessel's 10-member crew includes six Indians, one Turk, one Georgian, and two Serbian private security contractors.

Regional officials confirmed that eight pirates linked to a previous April maritime hijacking boarded the ship, prompting monitoring by Turkish naval units, drones, and helicopters.

This maritime security incident directly connects to UPSC syllabus topics regarding Indian Ocean geopolitics, maritime security statutes, and protecting overseas Indian citizens.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Examines Indian Ocean sea lanes of communication (SLOCs), anti-piracy operations, maritime security dynamics off the Horn of Africa, and diaspora protection.

PRELIMS FACTS

- The Gulf of Aden and the Puntland coast of Somalia represent high-risk maritime corridors vulnerable to armed piracy targeting commercial shipping.
- The vessel M/V LUTUF was hijacked 3.5 nautical miles off Marraya in Puntland's Eyl district while en route to Mogadishu.
- Under UNCLOS (UN Convention on the Law of the Sea), states possess universal jurisdiction to seize pirate ships on the high seas.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: The hijacking of the Cameroon-flagged cargo vessel M/V LUTUF off Somalia's Puntland coast with six Indian crew members on board underscores the resurging threat of maritime piracy along vital Indian Ocean sea lanes. Protecting Indian seafarers and global maritime supply corridors remains a priority for regional security.

DIMENSIONS

- **Security Threat:** Resurgence of organized pirate syndicates off the Horn of Africa disrupting vital trade routes and arms transit.
- **Geopolitical Interactions:** Involvement of international actors—including Turkish military escort drones and regional coast guards—highlights complex security coordination.
- **India's Maritime Role:** Demonstrates the urgent necessity for India's Navy and Coast Guard to act as a primary net security provider in the Western Indian Ocean.

Way forward: Strengthen naval patrol deployments under Vision SAGAR, enhance real-time maritime domain awareness through the Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), and enforce strict international anti-piracy protocols.

PYQ LINK

Evaluates security challenges in the Indian Ocean region and India's role as a net security provider in safeguarding critical sea routes.

KEY TERMS

Maritime Piracy

Horn of Africa

Exclusive Economic Zone

Puntland Coast

Sea Lanes of Communication

ACTS & ARTICLES

Maritime Anti-Piracy Act, 2022

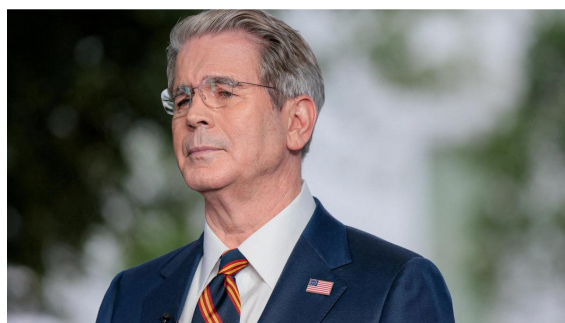
UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982

India's SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) Vision

08

GS-2: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & GLOBAL GEOPOLITICS

Sanctions Regimes & Global Oil Price Volatility



STORY 1 **The Hindu**

United States Announces Toughest Sanctions Campaign Against Iran

U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent announced that Washington will execute the toughest economic sanctions campaign in history against Iran to isolate its national economy.

The announcement triggered immediate global market reactions, pushing crude oil prices to a three-week high amid fears of supply disruptions in the Persian Gulf.

The Treasury Department explicitly warned international partners and China against supplying economic lifelines, threatening severe financial consequences for non-compliance.

U.S. officials stated the strategy aims to exert maximum financial leverage and force a complete collapse of Tehran's revenue streams as an alternative to extended military strikes.

Understanding unilateral economic sanctions and global energy supply dynamics is vital for answering GS Paper 2 International Relations questions on West Asia.

STORY 2 **Google News**

US Demands Global Cooperation to Isolate Iranian Economy

U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent urged China and international allies to cooperate fully with expanded trade penalties intended to isolate Iran financially.

Washington signaled a major shift toward aggressive economic measures to restrict Iranian crude sales and disrupt foreign currency reserves.

The administration warned that any sovereign state or commercial entity aiding Iran's foreign trade would face secondary financial isolation from U.S. banking markets.

Tehran denounced the punitive economic measures as illegal economic terrorism, asserting that unilateral threats violate international trade frameworks.

This development illustrates the mechanics of economic warfare, secondary sanctions, and trade diplomacy crucial for international relations analysis.



STORY 3 **The Hindu**

US Pressures Strategic Partners to Join Economic Campaign Against Iran

The United States issued formal warnings urging global allies and China to align with its campaign aimed at isolating the Iranian economy.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent declared on national media that economic pressure tactics aim to paralyze Tehran's state revenues.

The aggressive economic policy shift unfolds against domestic pressures and upcoming mid-term elections in the United States.

Iranian diplomatic representatives rejected the sanctions threat, labeling U.S. coercive economic actions as illegal economic terrorism destined to fail.

Analyzing extraterritorial sanctions regimes and global economic policy shifts provides key inputs for UPSC essays on international security and trade diplomacy.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Analyzes economic warfare, secondary sanctions, unilateral trade embargoes, and their cascading impacts on global energy security and supply chains.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Unilateral economic sanctions targeting major oil-producing nations directly trigger crude oil price spikes in international commodity markets.
- Secondary sanctions penalize third-country financial institutions and corporations conducting trade with sanctioned sovereign entities.
- The Strait of Hormuz serves as the world's most critical maritime oil transit chokepoint, handling roughly one-fifth of global petroleum consumption.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: The United States' announcement of a massive economic sanctions campaign against Iran, targeting its trade lifelines and pressuring third nations like China, marks a sharp intensification of economic warfare. These unilateral sanctions immediately pushed global crude oil prices to three-week highs, creating macroeconomic risks for import-dependent economies like India.

DIMENSIONS

- **Global Energy Markets:** US sanction threats exacerbate crude oil supply deficits, heightening energy price inflation and currency depreciation risks for import-reliant developing states.
- **Extraterritorial Sanctions:** Applying economic pressure on third nations (including China and strategic partners) challenges sovereign trade autonomy and multilateral rules.
- **Diplomatic Balancing for India:** Navigating compliance with US banking sanctions while safeguarding crude import costs, Chabahar Port commitments, and West Asian strategic relations.

Way forward: Diversify global crude sourcing, expand national Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR), promote local currency trade settlement mechanisms, and advocate multilateral trade dispute resolution.

PYQ LINK

Analyzes the impact of unilateral economic sanctions and West Asian geopolitical conflicts on India's energy security and foreign policy choices.

KEY TERMS

Economic Sanctions

Secondary Sanctions

Strait of Hormuz

Energy Security

Economic Warfare

ACTS & ARTICLES

UN Charter (Chapter VII on Economic Sanctions)

Foreign Trade Policy of India

International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA - US Context)

09

GS-2: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & HUMAN RIGHTS

Asylum Governance & Overseas Legal Integration Frameworks



United Kingdom Issues Legal Compliance Guidance Booklet for Asylum Seekers

The UK Home Office published an official legal guidance booklet titled 'Understanding Behaviours and Expectations in the UK' for newly arriving asylum seekers.

The administrative publication explicitly details national statutory laws governing sexual consent, domestic violence, child protection, and public harassment prohibition.

The guide clarifies that women in the UK maintain full legal rights to work, study, travel, and marry independently without requiring male approval.

It emphasizes strict territorial compliance with domestic penal laws, informing migrants that age of consent restrictions apply universally regardless of cultural origin.

Examining international asylum policies, legal orientation frameworks, and human rights administration provides relevant comparative analysis for GS Paper 2 IR topics.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Examines global migration policies, international refugee governance, legal integration measures for asylum seekers, and cross-border human rights issues.

PRELIMS FACTS

- The 1951 UN Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol define the rights of refugees and the legal obligations of host states.
- Host nations utilize official legal orientation frameworks to instruct asylum applicants on domestic penal codes, gender rights, and consent laws.
- Under statutory international law, asylum seekers are bound by the territorial penal laws of host states upon crossing sovereign boundaries.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: The United Kingdom Home Office's publication of explicit educational booklets and guidelines for asylum seekers detailing statutory compliance regarding gender rights, legal consent, and domestic protection laws highlights evolving administrative strategies in managing refugee integration.

DIMENSIONS

- **Legal Orientation:** Proactive dissemination of statutory codes helps bridge cultural-legal divides and prevents criminal transgressions among newly arrived migrants.
- **Human Rights & Gender Safeguards:** Explicitly communicating rights concerning gender equality, domestic autonomy, and child protection enforces universal human rights standards.
- **Sovereign Migration Rights:** Balancing international humanitarian commitments under refugee conventions with internal public order and statutory legal compliance.

Way forward: Standardize legal orientation protocols during initial asylum processing, invest in community integration programs, and ensure clear legal aid communication.

Examines global migration frameworks, refugee protection rights, and social integration policies adopted by destination nations.

KEY TERMS

Asylum Policy Refugee Convention Legal Integration Human Rights Governance Non-Discrimination

ACTS & ARTICLES

1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948

UK Immigration and Asylum Act

Practice MCQs (UPSC Prelims)

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

GS-3: INDIAN ECONOMY

Duty-Free Raw Sugar Imports & Domestic Price Stabilization

Government Permits Duty-Free Import of 10 Lakh Tonnes Raw Sugar

Q1. Regarding agricultural trade regulation and Tariff Rate Quotas (TRQ) in India, consider the following statements: 1. A Tariff Rate Quota allows a specified quantity of a commodity to be imported at reduced or zero custom duty rates. 2. In India, notifications amending raw sugar import policies under Tariff Rate Quotas are issued by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT). 3. Imposing stockholding limits on bulk industrial consumers is a regulatory tool used to prevent speculative market hoarding. 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 |

GS-3: CYBER SECURITY

Cyber Fraud Rackets and Exploitation of Mule Bank Accounts

Mumbai Police Bust Racket Supplying Mule Accounts for Cyber Fraud

Q2. With reference to cybercrime and financial fraud mechanisms in India, what does the term 'mule bank account' primarily refer to?

- | | |
|--|--|
| A. An account managed by offshore central banks to conduct official foreign exchange transactions. | B. A bank account created or acquired by fraudsters to receive and transfer illicitly obtained funds on behalf of cybercriminals. |
| C. A dormant bank account automatically frozen by the Reserve Bank of India due to non-compliance with KYC norms. | D. A specialized escrow account utilized exclusively for high-value government procurement tenders. |

GS-3: ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

Invasive Species Eradication & Freshwater Restoration

Tasmania Eradicates Invasive European Carp From Two Major Lakes

Q3. In the context of freshwater fisheries management and biological conservation, consider the following statements regarding invasive species management: 1. European carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) is considered an invasive bottom-feeding fish that can degrade water clarity and destroy submerged aquatic vegetation. 2. Rotenone is a naturally occurring chemical compound utilized as a piscicide to eradicate invasive fish populations during aquatic restoration projects. 3. Complete functional eradication of established invasive fish species from open freshwater lakes has been achieved in international conservation projects. 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 |

GS-2: SOCIAL JUSTICE & WELFARE SCHEMES**Targeted Rural Housing Delivery Under PMAY-Gramin**

Union Government Approves 11.18 Lakh PMAY-G Houses for Bihar

Q4. With reference to the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), consider the following statements: 1. The scheme aims to provide a pucca house with basic amenities to all eligible rural households living in kutcha or dilapidated houses. 2. Beneficiaries under PMAY-G are identified solely based on self-declaration forms without reference to SECC data. 3. The cost of house construction under PMAY-G is shared between the Centre and States in specified funding ratios. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

GS-3: MARITIME SECURITY**Maritime Security and Piracy in the Horn of Africa**

Hijacked Cargo Ship Off Somalia Holds Six Indian Crew Members

Q5. Consider the following geographical features and maritime locations: 1. Puntland Coast 2. Gulf of Aden 3. Strait of Hormuz Which of the above areas are directly situated off or adjacent to the coast of Somalia in the Horn of Africa region?

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

GS-2: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**Sanctions Regimes & Global Oil Price Volatility**

United States Announces Toughest Sanctions Campaign Against Iran

Q6. In international relations and global geopolitics, the term 'secondary sanctions' refers to measures that:

- A.** Impose import tariffs strictly on secondary agricultural commodities during diplomatic disputes.
- B.** Penalize third-country individuals, companies, or nations for conducting economic trade with a primary target country.
- C.** Apply military naval blockades against non-member countries of the United Nations Security Council.
- D.** Provide financial subsidies to secondary trade partners affected by global recessions.

Answer Key — Practice MCQs

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

Q1: D

Q2: B

Q3: D

Q4: B

Q5: A

Q6: B

Q1 Option D · 1, 2 and 3

All three statements are correct. Statement 1 accurately defines a TRQ mechanism. Statement 2 is correct as DGFT (under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry) issues notifications regarding import policy amendments for commodities like raw sugar. Statement 3 is correct as stockholding limits on commercial bulk consumers (using over 10 tonnes monthly) serve to curb speculative hoarding.

Q2

Option B · A bank account created or acquired by fraudsters to receive and transfer illicitly obtained funds on behalf of cybercriminals.

A 'mule bank account' is an account used by cybercriminals and agents to deposit, transfer, or launder money obtained through illegal activities (such as cyber fraud, online gaming scams, or betting rackets), often created by luring vulnerable individuals with financial incentives.

Q3 Option D · 1, 2 and 3

All three statements are correct. Cyprinus carpio is an invasive alien species known for uprooting native vegetation and increasing turbidity (Statement 1). Rotenone is a recognized piscicide applied in fisheries management, such as the famous treatment at Strawberry Reservoir in Utah (Statement 2). Tasmania achieved functional eradication of European carp from Lake Sorell and Lake Crescent (Statement 3).

Q4 Option B · 1 and 3 only

Statements 1 and 3 are correct. PMAY-G focuses on providing pucca housing with basic amenities to eligible rural families, financed through shared central and state fund allocation. Statement 2 is incorrect because selection relies on objective criteria from Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) data combined with Gram Sabha verification, not simple self-declaration.

Q5 Option A · 1 and 2 only

Puntland is an autonomous territory forming the northeastern tip of Somalia along the Horn of Africa, bordering the Gulf of Aden to the north and the Indian Ocean to the east (1 and 2 are correct). The Strait of Hormuz lies between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, separating Iran from the Arabian Peninsula, and is not adjacent to Somalia (3 is incorrect).

Q6

Option B · Penalize third-country individuals, companies, or nations for conducting economic trade with a primary target country.

Secondary sanctions target third parties (foreign entities, banks, or sovereign states) by threatening to cut off their access to the sanctioning country's own market or financial system if they do business with the primary sanctioned nation (e.g., U.S. warning foreign nations against buying oil from Iran).