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# THE HINDU ANALYSIS

6 June 2026

*Curated from The Hindu — UPSC Prelims & Mains Focus*

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GS 2

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GS 2

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MCQ

# 1 India Needs Innovative Strategies to Eliminate TB

GS 2 · Health / Governance

The Hindu, Pg 10

## WHY IN NEWS

More than a century after the first tuberculosis vaccine was introduced, the world still struggles to control one of its oldest diseases. **TB continues to kill more people annually than any other infectious disease** — surpassing even COVID-19 at its peak — yet there is still no effective vaccine for adolescents and adults.

## Understanding the Disease Pathway

- Once exposed to **Mycobacterium tuberculosis**, individuals may get infected and remain **asymptomatic** for years; others develop **subclinical disease** with minimal or no symptoms while harbouring infection.
- A subset progresses to **active TB**, manifesting as **Pulmonary TB (PTB)** — the infectious form that drives transmission — or **Extrapulmonary TB (EPTB)**, which affects organs beyond the lungs and is harder to diagnose, more debilitating and sometimes fatal.
- This diversity makes a single “one-shot” vaccine for all forms of TB unrealistic; most previous trials focused only on preventing pulmonary TB.

## Scale of the Burden

- In many low- and middle-income countries, TB incidence ranges between **200 and 300 per 100,000** population.
- Reducing this to **10–20 per 100,000** — the threshold for elimination — needs sustained effort and enormous public health investment.
- India carries **one of the world’s highest TB burdens**; the challenge here is systemic.

### ★ THE THREE LAYERS OF A SMARTER TB STRATEGY

- **Better detection:** advances in diagnostics, including tools to identify subclinical TB, help flag at-risk individuals earlier.
- **Preventive therapy:** ensuring those with latent infection receive treatment before progressing to active disease.
- **Vaccination** (the most complex): since access to diagnostics and preventive therapy remains uneven, vaccination is an especially critical pillar.

## PreVenTB Trial — A Meaningful Signal

- Findings from the **BMJ**-published PreVenTB trial, conducted by the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** across 18 sites and involving more than **12,700 household contacts**, evaluated two indigenous vaccines.
- It tested **VPM1002** (developed by SIIPL) and **Immuvac** (developed by Cadila) in a real-world, high-risk population aged six years and above.
- The trial reported efficacy of **50.4% (VPM1002)** and **60% (Immuvac)** against extrapulmonary TB; protection was meaningful in children and in those developing latent infection on follow-up.
- It is the first trial to date to study efficacy against EPTB — the “hidden burden” of the epidemic that is harder to diagnose and often missed.

## Why Nutrition Matters

- Reduced efficacy was seen in individuals with **low body mass index (BMI)**, underscoring the need for **nutritional support** for vaccines to work optimally.
- Efficacy exceeded **60%** in school-age children and adolescents — pointing to a possible **booster-dose** prevention strategy for a group currently without a structured TB vaccination programme.

### ★ CORE TB FACTS — PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Prevention:** the **Bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG)** vaccine is given to infants.
- **Transmission:** spreads through air when an infected person coughs, sneezes or spits.
- **Treatment:** standard course lasts **4–6 months**; incomplete treatment leads to drug-resistant TB.
- **MDR-TB:** resistant to **isoniazid and rifampicin**; treatable only with costlier alternatives.
- **VPM1002** is a single-dose vaccine on a **modified BCG platform** — operationally simpler and scalable.

### MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Tuberculosis remains a major public health challenge despite significant advances in diagnosis and treatment. Examine the socio-economic and health system factors responsible for the persistence of tuberculosis in India. Discuss the measures required to achieve the goal of TB elimination. (15 Marks, 250 Words)

GS Paper II · Health & Governance

## 2 Incomplete Truce — Israel–Lebanon Ceasefire

GS 2 · International Relations

The Hindu, Pg 10

### WHY IN NEWS

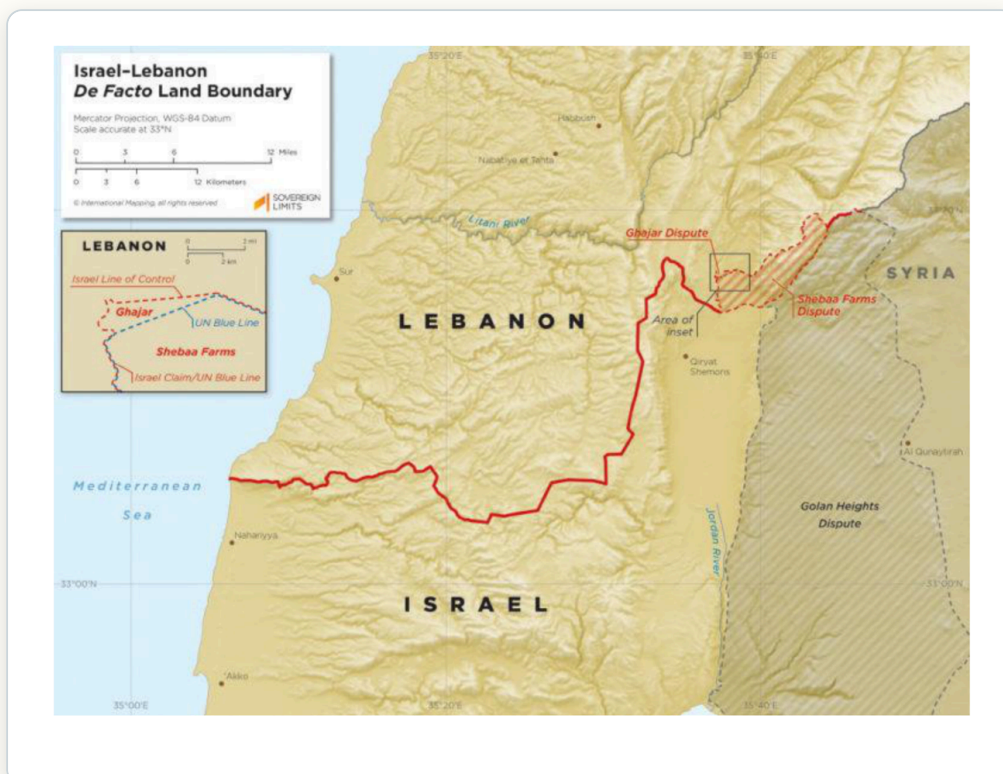
An editorial argues that **Israel has to pull back troops from Lebanon** for peace to take hold. The new ceasefire could help remove a major obstacle to U.S. President Donald Trump’s efforts to secure a preliminary agreement with Iran to end the war.

### The Context

- Iran had **suspended talks with the U.S.** in protest against Israel’s escalating war in Lebanon.
- When a ceasefire was announced in April, Israel was said to be “prevented” from attacking, but Tel Aviv continued air strikes and expanded ground operations in southern Lebanon.
- Israel has made its **deepest incursions into southern Lebanon since its 2000 withdrawal** and is not discussing any withdrawal plan.

### Why the Truce Remains Fragile

- The fighting is between **Israel and Hezbollah**; the Lebanese government is not a party to the conflict and Hezbollah does not report to the Lebanese army.
- The agreement requires Hezbollah to **unilaterally cease attacks** but does not ask Israel to make concessions.
- Hezbollah says it will stop fighting only if Israel withdraws from southern Lebanon.
- For a lasting truce, the editorial argues, Israel must end its occupation of the south and pull back its troops, and Washington should secure firm commitments from Israel.



Israel–Lebanon de facto land boundary, showing the Blue Line and disputed zones (Ghajar, Shebaa Farms). Source: The Hindu.

### ★ THE “BLUE LINE” — PRELIMS POINTERS

- The border between Israel and Lebanon, known as the “**Blue Line**”, was set by the **United Nations in 2000** after Israel withdrew its military from southern Lebanon.
- It is **not an official international border** but a demarcation line.
- Originally, it was the boundary established by **Britain and France in the 1920s** between Lebanon, Syria and Palestine.
- Key disputed areas along the frontier include **Ghajar**, the **Shebaa Farms** and the **Golan Heights**.

### Linkage to the Iran Track

- Before the Lebanon crisis flared up, the U.S. and Iran were negotiating a **memorandum of understanding** to reopen the **Strait of Hormuz** and remove the U.S. blockade of Iranian ports.
- This would set the stage for negotiations on **Iran’s nuclear programme**.
- The ceasefire is welcome but remains fragile and incomplete, leaving the conflict’s key problems unaddressed.

### PRELIMS POINTER

Remember: The **Blue Line** is a UN-drawn withdrawal line (2000), NOT an international border. The **Strait of Hormuz** connects the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman — a critical global oil chokepoint.

### 3 Pressure to Limit India–Russia Ties Will Hurt Global Stability: Putin

GS 2 · International Relations

The Hindu, Pg 12

#### WHY IN NEWS

Russian President **Vladimir Putin** said Western pressure on PM Narendra Modi to scale back India’s engagement with Russia will **harm global stability**. He called India a “reliable” strategic partner and said its growth was an outcome of hard work under Mr. Modi’s leadership.

#### Key Statements

- Pressure on India — the world’s most populous country — is **detrimental for international and bilateral relations**, “no matter where it comes from”.
- The remarks came amid Western unease over India–Russia relations and the oil trade during the Ukraine war. The **U.S. has asked India to stop importing Russian crude** and had slapped punitive tariffs.
- Putin said New Delhi will **prioritise its national interests**, and India’s engagement with the U.S. does not affect its strategic ties with Russia.

#### On India–China and Pakistan

- Putin, set to visit India in September for the **BRICS summit**, said Moscow will not interfere in the “delicate” India–China relationship; interfering “is not a good idea”.
- He characterised Russia’s ties with India and China as having **evolved organically** — growing synergy with New Delhi does not come at Beijing’s expense, and the China bond is not compromised either.
- He said he does **not believe Pakistan was under the control of China**, while acknowledging the intricacies of the India–Pakistan border.

#### ★ SU-57 OFFER — KEY FACT

- Putin offered Russia’s **fifth-generation stealth aircraft Su-57** to India, suggesting the combat jet could be **jointly built in India**.
- He said it could become a joint Russia–India product with **“no restrictions whatsoever”** on technology; the Indian side responded with caution (“well, let’s see”).

## Pillars of the India–Russia Partnership

- **Defence:** Russia remains a major source of military hardware (S-400, fighter jets, submarines); the Su-57 offer signals a push toward co-development and “Make in India” in defence.
- **Energy:** discounted Russian crude has become significant for India’s energy security, despite Western tariff pressure.
- **Multilateral cooperation:** the two coordinate through **BRICS**, the **SCO** and the G20; the Tianjin SCO image of Modi, Putin and Xi underscored this.
- **Strategic autonomy:** India balances deepening U.S. ties (QUAD, technology) with a time-tested Russia relationship — the essence of multi-alignment.

### MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Despite growing strategic convergence between India and Western countries, relations with Russia continue to remain a key pillar of India’s foreign policy. Examine the significance of India–Russia relations in the areas of defence, energy, and multilateral cooperation. Also discuss the challenges affecting the partnership in the changing global geopolitical landscape. (15 Marks, 250 Words)

GS Paper II · International Relations

## 4 MPC Retains Repo Rate, Lowers Growth Forecast

GS 3 · Economy / Monetary Policy

The Hindu, Pg 15

### WHY IN NEWS

The **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** of the RBI voted **unanimously to keep the policy repo rate unchanged at 5.25%** under the Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF), continuing with its **neutral stance**. Real GDP growth for FY27 was lowered by 0.3% to **6.6%**, and CPI inflation projected at **5.1%**.

### What is Monetary Policy?

- The use of central bank tools to influence **interest rates, money supply and credit conditions** to achieve broader macroeconomic goals.
- In India, the **RBI** is legally responsible for conducting monetary policy under the **RBI Act, 1934**.
- In **May 2016**, the RBI Act was amended to give legal backing to **flexible inflation targeting**; the inflation target is set by the Government in consultation with the RBI **once every five years**.

### The Gloomy Outlook Cited by MPC

- Elevated **energy prices** with global supply constraints are creating adverse spillovers on economic activity.
- Domestic demand remains resilient, but there are **incipient signs of moderation** in some sectors.
- Considerable risks arise from uncertainty over the **duration and intensity of the West Asia conflict**.
- The food outlook is uncertain due to a sub-normal south-west monsoon forecast and **El Niño** risks.

### ★ ATTRACTING FOREIGN CAPITAL

- RBI expanded the universe of 'specified securities' under the **Fully Accessible Route (FAR)** by including new issuances of 15-, 30- and 40-year G-secs.
- Removed limits on short-term investments and concentration under the FPI **General Route**; raised investment limits for **NRIs and OCIs** in stocks without SEBI registration.

### ★ CONSTITUTION OF THE MPC — PRELIMS POINTERS

- The MPC is constituted by the **Central Government** under **Section 45ZB** of the RBI Act; it replaced the earlier Technical Advisory Committee system.
- Its central role is to decide the **policy interest rate** required to meet the inflation target.
- **Total members: 6.**

#### RBI Members (3)

- **RBI Governor** — Chairperson.
- **Deputy Governor** in charge of monetary policy.
- One RBI official nominated by the RBI's **Central Board**.

#### Government Nominees (3)

- **3 external members** nominated by the Government of India.
- External members serve for a tenure of **4 years**.

#### Functioning

- The MPC must meet **at least 4 times a year**.
- **Quorum** is 4 members, and must include the Governor (or, in the Governor's absence, the Deputy Governor for monetary policy).
- Decisions are taken by **majority vote**; in case of a tie, the **Governor has a casting (second) vote**.

#### ✓ PRELIMS POINTER

Repo rate held at **5.25%**, stance **neutral**. MPC = 6 members (3 RBI + 3 Govt), under **Section 45ZB**. Inflation target set by Government in consultation with RBI, once every 5 years.

## 5 India's 100th Ramsar Site — Surha Tal

PRELIMS · Environment

UPSC Essentials

### WHY IN NEWS

On **World Environment Day**, PM Modi announced the addition of India's **100th Ramsar site** — the **Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary (Surha Tal)** in Ballia, Uttar Pradesh — to the list of Wetlands of International Importance.

### About the Site

- In **1991**, 'Surha Taal' was created by consolidating land from **45 villages** of Baansdih in Ballia, totalling **3,432.93 hectares**. In **2002**, it was renamed the "Jai Prakash Narain Bird Sanctuary".
- It is an **oxbow lake** and a critical wintering ground for birds on the **Central Asian Flyway**.

### India's 100th Ramsar Site: Protecting the "Kidneys of the Earth"

**100th Ramsar Site: Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary**  
 Located in Ballia, Uttar Pradesh, this oxbow lake is a critical wintering ground for birds on the Central Asian Flyway.

**Small Footprint, Massive Biodiversity Impact**  
 While covering only **6%** of Earth's land, wetlands provide habitat for **40%** of all plant and animal species.

**The "Kidneys of the Landscape"**  
 They act as natural sponges that filter pollutants, recharge groundwater, and store vast amounts of carbon.

**Defending Coastal Life with Bio-Shields**  
 Mangroves and wetlands protect **60%** of the global coastal population by mitigating storm surges and hurricanes.

**400 Million Hectares Lost Since 1970**  
 Driven by urbanization and pollution, we are losing these critical habitats faster than forests.

Wetlands provide \$39 trillion in annual benefits but are disappearing at a rate of 0.52% every year.

1970      NOW

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Wetlands — the "kidneys of the Earth": small footprint, massive biodiversity impact. Source: The Hindu / NotebookLM.

### ★ THE RAMSAR CONVENTION

- Adopted in **1971** in the city of **Ramsar, Iran**; came into force in **1975**. It was the **first intergovernmental agreement focused exclusively on a single ecosystem** — wetlands.
- Three pillars: conservation of wetlands of international importance, **wise use** of all wetlands, and international cooperation on shared systems and migratory species.
- **172 signatory countries**. India joined in **1982**, first designating **Chilika Lake (Odisha)** and **Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan)**.

## Why Wetlands Matter

- Though they cover only about **6% of Earth's land surface**, wetlands provide habitat and breeding grounds for nearly **40% of all plant and animal species**.
- Called the **"kidneys of the landscape"** for their ability to filter pollutants, purify water and maintain water quality.
- Act as **natural sponges**, absorbing excess rainfall and reducing flood risk; as **carbon sinks**, storing carbon in soil and biomass.
- Provide natural protection to nearly **60% of the global coastal population** by mitigating storm surges, hurricanes and tsunamis.

### ★ INDIA & THE WORLD — KEY NUMBERS

- India now has **100 Ramsar Sites** — the **third highest in the world**, after the **United Kingdom (176)** and **Mexico (144)**.
- **Tamil Nadu** leads India with **20 sites**, ahead of **Uttar Pradesh (13)**.
- World's first Ramsar Site: **Cobourg Peninsula, Australia (1974)**.
- **Bolivia** has the largest area under Ramsar protection.

### ★ DEFINITION NUANCE — OFTEN TESTED

- The Convention defines wetlands broadly — areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water (including marine water up to **6 m depth at low tide**).
- India's **Wetlands (Conservation & Management) Rules, 2017** **exclude** river channels, paddy fields, and human-made bodies for drinking water, aquaculture, salt production, recreation and irrigation.

### ✓ PRELIMS POINTER

100th site = **Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary (Surha Tal), Ballia, UP**. Ramsar Convention → 1971, Iran. India joined 1982 (Chilika + Keoladeo). TN has the most sites in India (20).





## Question 7

Groupings

The leaders of India, Russia and China were photographed together at a recent summit that grabbed global attention. This summit was held under which grouping?

- (a) G20 (b) BRICS  
(c) Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) (d) Quad

**Answer: (c) Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)**

The photo of Modi, Putin and Xi was from the **SCO Summit in Tianjin**. Putin is separately set to visit India in September for the BRICS summit — a common distractor.

## Question 8

Monetary Policy

With reference to the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) in India, consider the following statements:

1. It is constituted by the Reserve Bank of India under the RBI Act, 1934.
2. It consists of six members, of whom three are nominated by the Government of India.
3. In the event of a tie, the RBI Governor has a casting vote.

*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

**Answer: (b) 2 and 3 only**

The MPC is constituted by the **Central Government** under **Section 45ZB**, not by the RBI — so 1 is wrong. It has 6 members (3 RBI + 3 Govt), and the Governor holds a casting vote in a tie (2, 3 correct).

## Question 9

Inflation Targeting

Consider the following statements regarding India's flexible inflation targeting framework:

1. Legal backing for inflation targeting was provided by amending the RBI Act in 2016.
2. The inflation target is set by the RBI independently.
3. The MPC must meet at least four times a year.

*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

**Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only**

The inflation target is set by the **Government in consultation with the RBI**, once every five years — not by the RBI alone; so 2 is wrong. Statements 1 (2016 amendment) and 3 (minimum 4 meetings) are correct.



★ THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

*“A nation’s destiny is written as much in its classrooms as in its parliaments.”*

किसी राष्ट्र का भाग्य उसके संसद भवनों में जितना लिखा जाता है, उतना ही उसकी कक्षाओं में भी है।

*“Certainty limits growth, while doubt stimulates wisdom.”*