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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

THE HINDU ANALYSIS

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

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1 A Troubling Judgment — The SC's Endorsement of the SIR

GS 2 · Polity / Elections

Electoral Rolls

The Hindu, Pg 8 (P.D.T. Achary)

WHY IN NEWS

The Supreme Court's judgment of **May 27, 2026** on the **Special Intensive Revision (SIR)** of electoral rolls (in the Bihar context) has raised disturbing questions about the powers, role and conduct of the Election Commission of India (ECI) in preparing and revising electoral rolls.

Constitutional & Statutory Framework

- ▶ **Article 325:** One general electoral roll for every territorial constituency; no person ineligible solely on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex.
- ▶ **Article 326:** Lok Sabha & Assembly elections on the basis of **adult suffrage** — every citizen aged 18+ is entitled to be registered, unless disqualified by law.
- ▶ **Article 327:** Empowers Parliament to make laws on all aspects of elections, including the preparation of electoral rolls.
- ▶ **Article 324:** Confers on the ECI the power to prepare the rolls and conduct elections.
- ▶ Preparation/revision is governed by the **Representation of the People (RP) Act, 1950** and the **Registration of Electors Rules, 1960**.

THE CORE LEGAL QUESTION

- **Section 21(2), RP Act:** Roll revised before each general/by-election — under **Rule 25** this revision may be **summary or intensive**.
- **Section 21(3):** Allows a **special revision** of any constituency or part, at any time, after recording reasons.
- Author's argument: An **intensive** revision under Rule 25 flows from Section 21(2), not 21(3); a special revision just before a general election can only be **summary**, given the elaborate scheme an intensive revision demands.

The Citizenship Concern

- ▶ The judgment grants the ECI great freedom to decide which **documents prove citizenship** — but citizenship law is administered by the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**, not the ECI.
- ▶ The ECI announced a document list and asked voters to produce them — effectively **usurping the role of the MHA**.
- ▶ The Court conceded the ECI's authority on citizenship **for the purpose of inclusion/exclusion** from rolls, while leaving the larger question to the MHA.
- ▶ Consequence: the MHA may have to decide the cases of **millions of Indians** who could face disenfranchisement and disabilities arising from a denial of citizenship, albeit on a tentative basis.

2 The Oman CEPA — A New Gateway for India's Exports

GS 2 & 3 · IR / Economy

Trade Agreements

The Hindu, Pg 8 (Anant Goenka, FICCI)

WHY IN NEWS

The **India–Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** came into force on **June 1, 2026**, providing a modern framework to deepen trade, investment and economic cooperation between two of the oldest trading partners.

- ▶ India is among the **top suppliers** to Oman; bilateral trade grew from **\$8.94 bn (FY2023-24)** to **\$11.18 bn (FY2025-26)**.
- ▶ Follows India's pacts with the **UAE, Australia, EFTA, UK, New Zealand and the EU** — deepening presence in a region central to energy security & strategic interests.

MARKET ACCESS GAINS

- Oman offers **duty-free access on 98.08%** of tariff lines, covering **99.38% of India's exports** by value.
- Earlier, only **15.33%** of India's exports entered Oman at zero duty under the MFN regime.
- **Textiles/apparel:** India already holds 43% of Oman's woven and 31% of knitted apparel imports; removal of the 5% tariff strengthens competitiveness against China.
- **Chemicals:** India supplies ~39% of Oman's inorganic chemical imports; engineering goods also benefit.
- **Pharma (~10% share):** value lies in **regulatory facilitation** — Oman accepts EIC certificates and recognises NPOP (organic) & halal systems.

STRATEGIC LOCATION ADVANTAGE

- Oman sits at the crossroads of the **Gulf, Indian Ocean and East Africa**; ports at **Sohar, Duqm and Salalah** are emerging logistics hubs.
- Serves as a gateway to the wider **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** region and East African economies.
- SPS & TBT provisions and fast-track customs clearance for perishables reduce costs and improve export efficiency.

3 Strategic Afterthought — The Great Nicobar Project

GS 3 · Environment / Security

Infrastructure

The Hindu, Pg 8 (Editorial)

WHY IN NEWS

The ballooning **Great Nicobar Island development** — now estimated at **₹91,000 crore** — rests on a thin strategic record. The editorial urges the Centre to be transparent and release the High-Powered Committee report in full.

The Transparency Concern

- ▶ The Centre cites the “strategic” character of the **transshipment port at Galathea Bay** to withhold environmental-clearance information.
- ▶ Yet the **Public Investment Board (PIB)**, a Finance Ministry body, found in **August 2024** that the port “**lacked strategic objectives**”.
- ▶ The “strategic” label arrived later from the Ministry of Defence — an afterthought, retrofitted to a balance sheet.
- ▶ The **PPPAC refused ₹12,230 crore** in Viability Gap Funding, telling the Ports Ministry to find the money itself — an unusual rebuke.

ECOLOGICAL & TRIBAL COSTS

- The project (port, international airport, power plant, township) would clear vast tracts of **primary tropical rainforest**.
- Threatens nesting beaches of the **leatherback turtle** and the habitat of the endemic **Nicobar megapode**; scientists warn the loss is **irreversible**.
- **Tribal councils** say consent was secured without full disclosure; ancestral land and post-2004 tsunami resettlement promises must not be overridden.
- The objection is to **scale, secrecy and sequence** — not a refusal of all development.

THE STRATEGIC / INDO-PACIFIC RATIONALE

- India plans ~₹13,000 crore for a **dual-use airport & Naval Air Station**; four components — ICTP, greenfield airport, township, power plant.
- Located ~**40 km** from the **Six Degree Channel**, linking the Gulf of Aden and the Malacca Strait — among the world’s busiest sea routes.
- Aims to cut dependence on foreign transshipment ports and secure **Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOC)** in the Indian Ocean Region.

4

The Trust Deficit in India–Bangladesh Ties

GS 2 · India & Neighbourhood

Foreign Policy

The Hindu, Pg 9 (Kallol Bhattacharjee)

WHY IN NEWS

More than a hundred days into the **Tarique Rahman** government in Bangladesh, India–Bangladesh relations remain strained, marked by a persistent trust deficit despite early Indian outreach.

India’s Outreach (“Actions, not rhetoric”)

- ▶ **Dec 31, 2025:** EAM **S. Jaishankar** visited Dhaka to condole the passing of Rahman’s mother, former PM **Khaleda Zia**.
- ▶ **Feb 17:** Foreign Secretary **Vikram Misri** carried PM Modi’s invitation letter; LS Speaker **Om Birla** attended Rahman’s swearing-in.
- ▶ Dhaka argues India has not delivered tangible incentives — e.g., reversing transshipment curbs, restoring visas, easing market access.

POINTS OF FRICTION

- Dhaka expected **less rhetoric** on sensitive issues like illegal immigration and more focus on **visa restoration** and renewal of the **1996 Ganga Water Treaty**.
- The 30-year-old Ganga treaty is up for renewal; delay endangers the **Ganges–Kobadak irrigation project** and water supply to western & central Bangladesh.
- Election rhetoric in Assam & West Bengal on Bangladesh issues created “a sense of betrayal” in Dhaka.

BANGLADESH’S DILEMMA & THE CHINA TILT

- Sensing a stalled window with India, Rahman is considering visits to **Malaysia and China** in the last week of June.
- The China turn cannot hide that repairing ties with India is in mutual interest.
- Domestic strains since the Aug 2024 protests add pressure on the government.



India and its eastern neighbourhood — Bangladesh shares a long border with West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura & Mizoram.

5 SIPRI Yearbook 2026 — India's Nuclear & Arms Profile

GS 2 · IR / Security

Reports & Indices

The Hindu, Pg 12

WHY IN NEWS

The **SIPRI Yearbook 2026** reports that India modestly **expanded its nuclear arsenal in 2025** and continued developing new delivery systems, while highlighting the May 2025 India–Pakistan confrontation (Operation Sindoor).

India's Nuclear & Military Profile

- ▶ India's stockpile rose to **~190 warheads** by early 2026 (from ~180 in 2025).
- ▶ Modernisation increasingly focused on **longer-range weapons** capable of reaching targets across China, while addressing the Pakistan rivalry.
- ▶ **Operation Sindoor** (May 2025) termed an “unusually severe military crisis”; India struck Pakistani air/missile bases with likely nuclear-related roles, but both sides curbed escalation.
- ▶ India & Pakistan integrated **cyberoperations** into active military conflict for the first time.
- ▶ India is the **5th-largest military spender** (2025): **\$92.1 bn**, up 8.9% — behind the US, China, Russia and Germany.

GLOBAL ARMS & NUCLEAR PICTURE

- India = **2nd-largest arms importer** (2021–25), at 8.2% of global imports; top 5 importers (Ukraine, India, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Pakistan) = 35% of the total.
- Indian arms imports fell **4.0%** vs 2016–20 — partly due to growing domestic production; shift from Russia towards **France, Israel and the USA**.
- Top 5 exporters (USA, France, Russia, Germany, China) = 70% of exports; **US share 42%**; Russia fell to 6.8% (the only top-10 supplier to decline, -64%).
- All **9 nuclear-armed states** held an estimated **12,187 warheads** at the start of 2026; ~9,745 in military stockpiles for potential use.

ABOUT SIPRI

- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute — established **1966**, independent institute on conflict, armaments, arms control & disarmament.
- Measures arms transfers via the **Trend-Indicator Value (TIV)**, based on actual deliveries of major arms.

6

The RIC (Russia–India–China) Troika Revival

GS 2 · International Groupings

Multipolarity

The Hindu, Pg 12 (PTI)

WHY IN NEWS

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson **Lin Jian** said China and India should hold the “right strategic perception” — that they are **cooperative partners, not rivals** — responding to Russian President Putin’s comments on Sino-India ties and the RIC framework.

- ▶ Lin Jian: the China-India border situation is generally **stable** with smooth communication; all three (India, China, Russia) are **emerging economies**.
- ▶ The RIC troika was first conceptualised by former Russian PM **Yevgeny Primakov** in the 1990s, as Russia sought its place after the USSR’s collapse.
- ▶ Institutionalised in the early 2000s; over **20 ministerial-level consultations** held since.
- ▶ Became largely inactive after the **2020 Galwan** India-China confrontation.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GROUPING

- Combined **GDP (PPP) ~\$53.9 trillion** — nearly a third of world output; population **3.1 billion** (~38% of humanity).
- Distinct strengths: China’s manufacturing, Russia’s energy, India’s services economy.
- Signals a shift toward a **multipolar order**, with Eurasian corridors and local currencies challenging US-dollar supremacy.

KEY DRIVERS BEHIND THE REVIVAL

- **US protectionism:** renewed tariffs and trade restrictions push joint counter-mechanisms.
- **Sanctions impact:** Western sanctions accelerate Moscow’s pivot to Asia.
- **Financial autonomy:** dollar “weaponisation” spurs non-Western payment systems.
- **Trade diversification** & demand for reform of the **UN, IMF and WTO**.

7 The e-Jagriti Platform — Digitising Consumer Justice

PRELIMS

Governance / e-Gov

The Hindu, Pg 12

WHY IN NEWS

e-Jagriti is an advanced, AI-enabled, paperless core portal designed to modernise, centralise and accelerate consumer-justice delivery across India by moving disputes into a fully virtual environment.

KEY FACTS AT A GLANCE

- **Nodal body:** Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of **Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution**.
- **Launched:** went live on **January 1, 2025**.
- **Nature:** removes the need for physical presence or manual paperwork in consumer-court disputes.

OBJECTIVES

- Eradicate the heavy **case backlogs** paralysing consumer commissions.
- Provide seamless, **cost-effective and fast** grievance redressal.
- Democratise access to justice — enabling any Indian citizen or **NRI** to hold businesses accountable from anywhere in the world.

MAINS PRACTICE · GS PAPER II / III (BILINGUAL)

Q. India–Oman economic relations have acquired strategic significance beyond bilateral trade, with Oman emerging as a potential gateway to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region and East African markets. Examine the opportunities and challenges in leveraging this partnership for enhancing India’s trade, connectivity and geopolitical interests.

प्रश्न: भारत–ओमान आर्थिक संबंध केवल द्विपक्षीय व्यापार तक सीमित नहीं हैं, बल्कि ओमान खाड़ी सहयोग परिषद (GCC) क्षेत्र तथा पूर्वी अफ्रीकी अर्थव्यवस्थाओं के प्रवेश-द्वार के रूप में उभर रहा है। भारत के व्यापार, संपर्कता (Connectivity) तथा भू-राजनीतिक हितों को सुदृढ़ करने के लिए इस साझेदारी के अवसरों एवं चुनौतियों का परीक्षण कीजिए।

15 Marks · 250 Words



Prelims Practice

MULTI-STATEMENT MCQs · BASED ON TODAY'S EDITION

Q01

SIPRI Yearbook 2026

With reference to the SIPRI Yearbook 2026, consider the following statements:

1. India's nuclear stockpile was estimated at around 190 warheads by early 2026.
2. India was the world's largest importer of major arms during 2021–25.
3. India was the fifth-largest military spender in 2025.

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

Stockpile rose to ~190 warheads; India was the 5th-largest military spender. It was the **2nd**-largest arms importer, not the largest (Ukraine topped the list). Hence 2 is wrong.

Q02

India-Oman CEPA

Consider the following statements regarding the India–Oman CEPA:

1. It came into force on June 1, 2026.
2. Oman has offered duty-free access on over 98% of its tariff lines.
3. It is India's first Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with any country.

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: (a) 1 and 2 only

The CEPA entered into force on 1 June 2026 with duty-free access on 98.08% of tariff lines. It is **not** India's first such pact (earlier: UAE, Australia, EFTA, UK). Hence 3 is wrong.

Q03

RIC Troika

With reference to the Russia–India–China (RIC) grouping, consider the following:

1. It was first conceptualised by former Russian PM Yevgeny Primakov in the 1990s.
2. It became largely inactive following the 2020 Galwan confrontation.
3. The three nations together account for nearly a third of world GDP (PPP).

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: (d) 1, 2 and 3

All three are correct — Primakov conceptualised RIC in the 1990s; the grouping went dormant after Galwan (2020); and the trio accounts for ~\$53.9 trillion (PPP), roughly a third of global output.

