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THE HINDU ANALYSIS

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Daily Current Affairs · Prelims + Mains

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Compiled by Sapna Chauhan

1

Core Sectors Grow at Five-Month High of 5%

GS 3 · Page 6

The Hindu · 21 July 2026

WHY IN NEWS

India's eight core industries grew **5% in June 2026**, the fastest in five months, in the **inaugural release of the new ICI series with base year 2022-23**, released by the Office of Economic Adviser (OEA), DPIIT.

- The **Index of Core Industries (ICI)** measures output of key infrastructure/basic industries; it feeds into the **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)**.
- The revised series shifts the **base year from 2011-12 to 2022-23** and updates sectoral weights and estimation methods.
- **Iron ore** has been added as a new sector, raising the count from **eight to nine** industries.
- Fastest growth came from **iron ore (+43.9%)** in June vs 19% in May — likely a **statistical base effect**, as the sector had contracted 16.4% a year earlier.
- **Electricity +9.8%, Cement +9.8%, Steel +4.6%, Coal +1.4%**. Coal (raw) snapped a three-month contraction streak.
- Hydrocarbon-linked sectors contracted: **Crude oil (-4.2%), Natural gas (-7.4%), Refinery products (-4.7%), Fertilisers (-3.3%)** — attributed to higher imports as global crude prices cooled.
- Only **Raw Coal** is retained; **Coal Middling and Washed Coal** are excluded to remove double counting (both are made from raw coal).

NEW ICI SERIES (BASE 2022-23) — SECTOR WEIGHTS

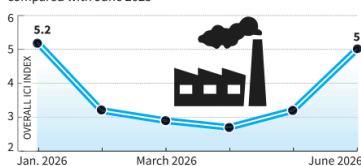
- **Electricity 30.93 · Refinery Products 22.57 · Steel 17.58** (three largest).
- Crude Oil 7.43 · Coal 5.60 · Iron Ore 4.905 · Cement 4.41 · Natural Gas 3.84 · Fertilisers 2.73.
- Overall Index = 100.00; the nine sectors have a **~40.3% weight in the IIP** (old series).

Source — The Hindu, Page 6

Core sectors grow at five-month high of 5%

Sharp uptick

The Index of Core Industries grew by 5% in June 2026 compared with June 2025



T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

India's core industrial sectors grew at 5% in June 2026, the fastest in five months, as per the inaugural release of the new and updated series of the Index of Core Industries (ICI).

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Monday released the new series of the ICI, with an updated base year of 2022-23 from the earlier 2011-12. Further, the updated index has an additional sector of iron ore added to it, taking the total number of sectors it covers to nine. The sectoral weights and methods of estimation have also been updated.

Within the index, the fastest growth was recorded by iron ore, which grew 43.9% in June 2026 against 19% in May.

This growth, however, was likely due to a statistical base effect, since the sector contracted 16.4% in June last year. Electricity, cement, steel, and coal grew 9.8%, 9.8%, 4.6% and 1.4% respectively.

The Index of Core Industries last grew faster in January 2026 when it hit a

growth of 5.2%, as per the new series. "Owing to intensive use of iron ore in the production process, and its contribution to industrial development, it has been included in the list of core industries as a new item in the revised series of ICI (base year 2022-23)," the Ministry said in a statement.

Nearly all the sectors relating to hydrocarbon energy and its products, such as crude oil (-4.2%), natural gas (-7.4%), refinery products (-4.7%), and fertilisers (-3.3%) contracted in June 2026.

"The entire crude oil related sectors – crude oil, gas, refinery products and fertilizers – witnessed negative growth in June which can be attributed to higher imports with global crude prices cooling off," Madan Sabnavis, chief economist at the Bank of Baroda said. "The export of refinery products had slowed down this month. In case of fertilizers, imports tended to increase."

The only energy sector to have witnessed growth was The coal sector which grew 1.4% in June 2025, snapping a three-month streak of contraction.

'Core sectors grow at five-month high of 5%' — The Hindu, 21 July 2026

STATIC / SYLLABUS LINKAGE

- **ICI** is compiled by the **Office of Economic Adviser, DPIIT (Ministry of Commerce & Industry)**, released monthly.
- **IIP** (compiled by NSO/MoSPI) has three sub-sectors: **Mining, Manufacturing, Electricity**; base year 2011-12 (revision under way).
- **Base-year revision** keeps indices aligned with the current structure of the economy; improves representativeness of the consumption/production basket.
- **Base effect**: distortion in a growth rate caused by an unusually high or low value in the comparison (base) period.

2

Monsoon Session & the Working of Parliament

GS 2 · Page 13

The Hindu · 21 July 2026

WHY IN NEWS

The **Monsoon Session** of Parliament opened to a stormy start, with the Lok Sabha adjourned repeatedly amid Opposition protests over the alleged **NEET paper leak** and **Ram Temple donation** issues. This is a hook to revise Parliamentary procedure.

- The House was **adjourned six times** and then for the day; only business transacted was a Bill by the Law Minister to **replace an Ordinance raising the number of Supreme Court judges from 34 to 38**.
- **Summoning (Art. 85)**: the President summons each House; power effectively rests with the **Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs**, formalised in the President's name.
- The gap between two sessions **cannot exceed six months** — so Parliament must meet **at least twice a year**. India has no fixed parliamentary calendar; by convention it meets in **three sessions** (Budget, Monsoon, Winter).
- **Adjournment**: suspends work for a specified time (hours/days/weeks); presiding officer's power. **Adjournment sine die**: terminates a sitting without naming the next date.
- **Prorogation**: ends a session (by the President); the gap till reassembly is the **Recess**. It does **not** dissolve the House.
- **Dissolution** ends the life of the Lok Sabha; the **Rajya Sabha is permanent and never dissolves**.

QUORUM (ARTICLE 100)

- **Quorum = one-tenth** of the total membership of each House required to conduct a sitting.
- **Lok Sabha**: at least **55 members**; **Rajya Sabha**: at least **25 members**.

Source — The Hindu, Page 13

Monsoon Session off to a stormy start amid Opposition protests

Opposition MPs raise NEET paper leak, Ram Temple donation theft issues; Lok Sabha adjourned after repeated disruptions; MPs of Congress, SP and Trinamool troop into the Well of the House; DMK raises Mekedatu issue, skips Cong.-led meeting

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The proceedings in the Lok Sabha were disrupted on the first day of the Monsoon Session of Parliament on Monday as Opposition parties raised various issues, primarily the alleged National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) paper leak and Ram Temple donation theft.

The disruption over the NEET issue came amid attempts by protesters, led by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), to break barricades to march to Parliament, demanding the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the alleged paper leak and CBSE exam irregularities.

The House was adjourned six times since it met in the morning, and was later adjourned for the day at 3 p.m. The only business transacted was the introduction of a Bill by Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal to replace an Ordinance which in-



Turbulent start: Lok Sabha proceedings under way on the first day of the Monsoon Session of Parliament, in New Delhi on Monday. SANSAD TV

creased the number of Supreme Court judges from 34 to 38.

The changed political alignments following the recent Assembly election were also visible during the proceedings.

As soon as the Lok Sabha assembled, Opposition MPs raised slogans, with the Congress, the Samajwadi Party and the Trinamool Congress members protesting over alleged NEET paper leaks and the

donation embezzlement at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. However, the Trinamool MPs who trooped into the Well of the House did not include the 20 rebel MPs who now claim to be a part of the National Citizens Party of India (NCPI).

The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), which has parted ways with the Congress after the latter switched sides and allied with the newly elected

TVK government in Tamil Nadu, too entered the Well. But the party members raised slogans over the Karnataka government's proposal to build a dam at Mekedatu across the Cauvery river rather than the issues flagged by the Congress.

The split between the Congress and the DMK appeared clear inside the Lok Sabha, although DMK MP T. R. Baalu continued to occupy his earlier seat next to

Congress MP K.C. Venugopal, with Speaker Om Birla yet to approve the party's request for separate seating. The DMK skipped the customary strategy meeting of Opposition parties convened by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge at his Parliament office on Monday morning.

Sources told *The Hindu* that DMK chief M.K. Stalin made it clear that the party's Lok Sabha members should not associate themselves with issues raised by the Congress on the floor of the House.

Repeated adjournments Mr. Birla, who began the proceedings with obituary references to six former MPs, first adjourned the House till noon as Opposition MPs raised slogans during the Question Hour.

Earlier, at 2 p.m., BJP MP Jagdambika Pal, who was officiating as the Speaker, said there was adequate quorum to conduct business, but some Opposition MPs alleged they were being prevented from entering the House.

'Monsoon Session off to a stormy start amid Opposition protests' — *The Hindu*, 21 July 2026

ADJOURNMENT VS PROROGATION VS DISSOLUTION

- **Adjournment** — suspends a sitting; work resumes later; by presiding officer.
- **Prorogation** — ends a session; pending business does **not** lapse; by the President.
- **Dissolution** — ends the life of the House; most pending Bills **lapse**; only for Lok Sabha.

RELATED CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

- **Art. 85** — sessions, prorogation and dissolution. **Art. 87** — special address by the President.
- **Art. 100** — voting, quorum. **Art. 108** — joint sitting of both Houses.

3

India Approves First Dengue Vaccine (QDENGGA)

GS 2 · Page 14

The Hindu · 21 July 2026

WHY IN NEWS

The **Drug Controller General of India (DCGI)** granted market authorisation to Takeda's **QDENGGA (TAK-003)** — India's **first approved dengue vaccine**, for persons aged **4 to 60 years**.

- **QDENGGA** is a **live-attenuated tetravalent** vaccine protecting against all four dengue serotypes; given as a **two-dose regimen, three months apart**.
- It can be administered **irrespective of prior dengue infection** and needs **no pre-vaccination screening**.
- Efficacy: **80.2%** against virologically confirmed dengue (12 months after the 2nd dose) and **90.4%** against dengue-related hospitalisation (at 18 months).
- Approval backed by a global programme of **19 Phase I/II/III trials, 28,000+ participants**; the pivotal Phase III enrolled 20,000+ across eight endemic countries.
- India accounts for nearly **one-third of the global dengue burden**; reported cases have risen nearly **11-fold in two decades** (actual burden likely higher).
- QDENGGA is already approved in **43 countries** across Asia, Latin America and Europe (32M+ doses distributed).

DENGUE — DISEASE FACTS

- Caused by the **dengue virus (genus Flavivirus)**; four serotypes **DEN-1 to DEN-4**.
- Vector: female **Aedes aegypti** mosquito (also transmits chikungunya, yellow fever, Zika).
- Symptoms: sudden high fever, severe headache, retro-orbital pain, bone/joint/muscle pain.
- **No specific antiviral**; diagnosis by blood test. WHO: **~39 crore infections/year**, 9.6 crore symptomatic.

Source — The Hindu, Page 14

India approves first dengue vaccine for persons aged 4-60

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has granted market authorisation to Takeda Biopharmaceuticals India's QDENG (TAK-003), making it the first dengue vaccine to be approved in the country, according to a press release from the company.

The vaccine has been approved for the prevention of dengue in individuals aged four to 60. QDENG is a live-attenuated tetravalent vaccine designed to provide protection against all four dengue virus serotypes and is administered as a two-dose regimen, with doses given three months apart.

According to the company, the vaccine can be administered irrespective of whether an individual has had a previous dengue infection, and does not require pre-vaccination screening.

The approval comes as dengue continues to pose a



India accounts for one-third of the global dengue burden.

significant public health challenge in India, where reported cases have increased nearly 11-fold over the past two decades. India accounts for nearly one-third of the global dengue burden, although modelling studies suggest the actual number of infections is substantially higher than reported.

Clinical trials

The approval is based on Takeda's global clinical development programme comprising 19 Phase I, II and III clinical trials involv-

ing over 28,000 participants in dengue-endemic and non-endemic regions.

The company's pivotal Phase III trial enrolled more than 20,000 participants across eight dengue-endemic countries.

According to Takeda, the vaccine demonstrated an efficacy of 80.2% against virologically confirmed dengue 12 months after the second dose, and 90.4% efficacy against dengue-related hospitalisation at 18 months.

The approval in India was also supported by a Phase III clinical trial conducted among participants aged 4 to 60 years. The company said the study found the vaccine to be safe, well tolerated and immunogenic in children, adolescents and adults.

Takeda said QDENG has been approved in 43 countries across Asia, Latin America and Europe, with more than 32 million doses distributed through public and private immunisation programmes.

'India approves first dengue vaccine for persons aged 4-60' — The Hindu, 21 July 2026

STATIC / SYLLABUS LINKAGE

- **DCGI** heads the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)** under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare — the national drug regulator.
- **Live-attenuated vaccine:** uses a weakened form of the pathogen that stimulates immunity without causing disease (e.g., MMR, OPV, BCG).
- **Tetravalent:** targets all four serotypes — important because a secondary infection by a different serotype raises the risk of severe dengue (ADE).

4

Reclaiming Footpaths: Walkability as a Right

GS 2 · Page 8

The Hindu · 21 July 2026

WHY IN NEWS

In **Maniyar Iliyaz @ Shaik Riyaz vs P. Ayyappan (2026)**, the Supreme Court held that **walking on demarcated footpaths is a fundamental constitutional right** under **Article 19(1)(d)** and **Article 21**, directing States/UTs to frame policies for their provision and maintenance.

- The Court framed safe footpaths as a **public health intervention, a road safety measure, and a democratic test** of whether cities are built for people or machines.
- **Health context:** WHO's India Physical Activity Profile 2024 finds **49.4% of adults** (57.2% of women) and **74% of adolescents (11-17)** do not meet recommended activity levels.
- WHO recommends at least **150 minutes of moderate activity/week**; walkability enables low-cost, no-equipment physical activity for the largest number of citizens.
- The **built environment**, not just willpower, drives sedentary living; footpaths are 'preventive medicine laid in stone'.
- **Road safety:** the MoRTH 'Road Accidents in India 2024' report found **pedestrians and two-wheeler riders together = ~67% of road fatalities**, with 1.28 lakh deaths among these vulnerable groups.
- Policy asks: continuous, shaded, barrier-free footpaths; ward-level footpath maps; traffic calming near schools; penalties for encroachment; a national active-mobility mission.

CONSTITUTIONAL ANCHORS

- **Art. 19(1)(d)** — right to move freely throughout India.
- **Art. 21** — right to life & personal liberty (read to include health, dignity and a safe environment).
- Directs the 'right to safe footpaths' as a positive obligation on States/UTs.

Reclaiming footpaths, taking cities back from cars

Few sights are more ordinary in an Indian city than a pedestrian being pushed off a footpath and onto the road. A mother, holding a school bag in one hand and a child in the other, walks around a parked car. An elderly man tests a broken footpath before stepping down onto the road. A wheelchair user gives up before the journey has even begun. A vendor, debris, an open drain, a two-wheeler, and a signboard together form what is still, with bureaucratic optimism, called a pavement. The citizen is then forced to walk on a road designed as though only vehicles possess rights.

Upholding walkability

In June 2026, the Supreme Court of India gave constitutional language to this daily indignity, in *Maniyar Ilyaz @ Shaik Riyaz vs P. Ayyappan* (2026). It held that walking on demarcated footpaths is a fundamental constitutional right, protected under Article 19(1)(d) and Article 21 of the Constitution. It observed that pedestrians have a right to safe footpaths and footways, and directed States and Union Territories to frame policies and guidelines for their provision and maintenance. This is not a minor municipal instruction. It is a public health intervention, a road safety measure, and a democratic test of whether Indian cities are built for people or merely for machines.

The timing could not be more urgent. India is becoming less active precisely when it needs movement the most. Health risk factors and diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, fatty liver disease, and obesity are rising rapidly, as reported by every newly available population health dataset.

Walking and increased physical activity are among the low- and no-cost interventions that can halt and reverse this rise in metabolic diseases. Yet, the World Health Organization (WHO)'s India Physical Activity Profile 2024 estimates that 49.4% of Indian adults do not meet the recommended levels of physical activity; among women, the figure is 57.2%. Among children and adolescents aged 11 to 17 years, it is 74%. WHO recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week for adults. For most citizens, this does not mean gym memberships or elite fitness routines. It means having the ability to walk safely to a bus stop, school, market, clinic, metro station, or park.

These are not failures of willpower alone; rather, they are exacerbated by the built environment. A city that makes walking difficult quietly prescribes sedentary living. Footpaths, therefore, are not decorative strips of cement



Chandrakant Lahariya

Practising specialist in 'preventive and cardiometabolic medicine' with nearly 18 years of work experience with the World Health Organization and the United Nations system

Safe, accessible footpaths are a test of governance, revealing whether India's cities truly serve their people

added after roads have been designed. They are preventive medicine laid in stone. A usable pavement allows children to walk to school, office-goers to use public transport, older adults to remain mobile, and women to move safely. Walking improves blood pressure, insulin sensitivity, weight control, mood, sleep, and joint function. It is the simplest health habit available to the largest number of citizens. Yet, we in India have made it difficult and dangerous. Many Indians would prefer to use cars and scooters less if cities offered safe, continuous, shaded footpaths.

The road safety argument is equally compelling. The Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (Transport Research Wing) 'Road Accidents in India 2024' report found that two-wheeler riders and pedestrians together accounted for nearly 67% of road fatalities, with 1.28 lakh deaths among these vulnerable groups. The National Crime Records Bureau's 2024 data place the number at more than 1.1 lakh and the share at at least 60%. The exact totals differ across official sources, but the message is unambiguous: pedestrians and two-wheeler riders remain India's most vulnerable road users. Every time a footpath disappears, the road becomes a contest between flesh and metal.

Orderly shared streets

The solution cannot be episodic anti-encroachment drives, in which a few carts and cars are removed before the same disorder returns the following week. Nor can it be a punitive war on street vendors, who are workers with legal protections and legitimate economic claims. The answer lies in planned allocation: footpaths for walking, vending zones for vendors, parking spaces for vehicles, utility corridors for public infrastructure, and meaningful penalties for violations. A humane city organises the street so that livelihoods and mobility can coexist without endangering lives.

Citizens, too, have a role, though not the only one. First, walk deliberately: begin with 10 to 15 minutes after two major meals, or build towards 30 minutes at a fixed time each day. Second, convert short errands into walking errands; distances under one kilometre should not automatically require a scooter or car. Third, combine walking with public transport by using the metro, bus, or shared mobility for part of the commute. Fourth, make walking social: families, resident welfare associations, and workplaces can create walking groups and car-free morning routines. Fifth, reclaim walking as a health check. If breathlessness, knee pain, fear of falling, or

unsafe streets prevent walking, treat that as a signal to seek medical advice, improve strength, or demand civic correction. Most importantly, the recent Supreme Court decision has given citizens and resident welfare associations an opportunity to demand their right to walk on encroachment-free footpaths.

Yet, citizens cannot easily walk their way out of poor urban planning. Civic bodies and governments must act with seriousness. Every road project should include continuous, shaded, well-lit, and barrier-free footpaths, along with safe crossings. Footpaths must be wide enough for two people or a wheelchair, with ramps and clear passageways near bus stops. Encroachment control should be continuous, transparent, and fair. Parking on footpaths must invite stringent action, with penalties that change behaviour. Street design should prioritise schools, hospitals, bus stops, markets, and metro stations, where pedestrian volumes are high. Tree cover, benches, public toilets, and lighting are not embellishments; they determine whether women, children, persons with disabilities, and older people can walk.

Policy action

India also needs a national active-mobility mission linking urban development, transport, health, and education. Cities and urban planning should be assessed not by the length of flyovers built, but by the number of safe walking kilometres created. Municipal commissioners should publish ward-level footpath maps and annual audits of encroachment-free footpaths. School zones should have traffic calming measures and protected crossings. Employers should encourage active commuting. Doctors should prescribe walking advice to nudge behaviour, but governments must provide the pavements on which those prescriptions can be followed.

The Supreme Court has moved the footpath from the margins of municipal housekeeping to the centre of constitutional rights. The next task is to move it from judgment to habit, budget, design, and enforcement. A country battling diabetes, hypertension, obesity, stress, and road deaths cannot treat walking as an afterthought. India does not merely need more roads; it needs more rights of way for ordinary citizens. The footpath is where public health, dignity, and democracy meet. We need to take our cities back from cars. We need to rebuild our cities for people. The proportion of encroachment-free footpaths should become a barometer of whether elected governments value citizens' fundamental rights in every ward and on every major road.

'Reclaiming footpaths, taking cities back from cars' — The Hindu, 21 July 2026

STATIC / SYLLABUS LINKAGE

- Links to **SDG 3** (Good Health), **SDG 11** (Sustainable Cities), and the **NCD (non-communicable disease)** burden.
- **Active mobility** = walking + cycling; complements schemes like **Smart Cities Mission** and street-design/complete-streets guidelines.
- Judgment widens the scope of Art. 21 jurisprudence on **urban living conditions** and the 'right to the city'.

5

Allowing Dissent: Criminal Law & Free Speech

GS 2 · Page 8

The Hindu · 21 July 2026

WHY IN NEWS

An editorial argues that **using criminal law to protect the reputation of rulers is condemnable**. In the first months of the TVK government in Tamil Nadu, **at least 10 people** faced police action for speaking against the Chief Minister or his colleagues.

- Cases invoked **defamation, the IT Act and cyber-crime provisions** against critics — and **suo motu** action by police targeting dissenters.
- The editorial warns this creates a **structural risk for democracy**: speech-related arrests reflect a wider pattern of authoritarianism when the state treats criticism as crime.
- **Core principle**: tolerance of dissent and upholding the rule of law are foundational to democracy; threats to these ‘undo the knit’ of a democracy.
- Political actors **across parties** have normalised using police and criminal law as a **reputational shield** once in power.
- Remedy: allegations against Ministers should follow the **natural course of civil suits or political contestation**, not criminal misinformation/defamation cases.
- The restriction of harmful, obscene or indecent content must be **balanced against the supremacy of free speech**.

FREE SPEECH — CONSTITUTIONAL FRAME

- **Art. 19(1)(a)** — freedom of speech and expression; subject to **reasonable restrictions** under Art. 19(2).
- **Shreya Singhal v. Union of India (2015)** struck down Sec. 66A of the IT Act as unconstitutionally vague.
- Criminal defamation upheld in **Subramanian Swamy v. Union of India (2016)**, but courts caution against its misuse to chill speech.

Source — The Hindu (Editorial), Page 8

Allowing dissent

Using criminal law to protect reputation
of rulers is condemnable

At the heart of democratic disposition is tolerance of dissent and upholding of the rule of law; threats to these can undo the knit of a democracy. In the first couple of months of the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK)'s rule in Tamil Nadu, at least 10 people have been subject to police action, on account of speaking against the Chief Minister or his cabinet colleagues. While the case of former Minister Anitha Radhakrishnan's arrest for criticising Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay gained the spotlight, there were several others who were arrested or faced police action over the course of this period. This includes James Raja of Tirunelveli; V. Vishnuprabhu and T. Manojkumar, residents of Coimbatore, for a Facebook post criticising the Chief Minister; and Thangamani of Karur. In the case of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)'s Gen Z wing leader A. Anbanantham, police searched his residence claiming that he made 'derogatory' posts regarding Mr. Vijay and his family. YouTuber Maridhas was arrested by the Chennai Cyber Crime police for his remarks against the Chief Minister and Industries Minister S. Keerthana. DMK MLA Markandayan was arrested in Thoothukudi over an alleged threat he made against the Chief Minister. Others arrested include Vinoth Suryakumar who commented on HR&CE Minister S. Ramesh and RJ Saran Jayaraman who was arrested by the police for content posted on Instagram targeting

'Allowing dissent' — The Hindu editorial, 21 July 2026

STATIC / SYLLABUS LINKAGE

- **Reasonable restrictions (Art. 19(2)):** sovereignty & integrity, security of state, public order, decency/morality, contempt of court, defamation, incitement to an offence.
- **suo motu:** action taken by an authority on its own initiative, without a formal complaint.
- Relevant to debates on **sedition, criminal defamation and IT Act** reform and the protection of political dissent.

6

Canada–India Defence Collaboration

GS 2 · Page 8

The Hindu · 21 July 2026

WHY IN NEWS

Writing for The Hindu, the **Canadian High Commissioner** outlines a reset in **Canada–India defence and technology ties**, following PM Carney and PM Modi’s agreement to launch a **Defence Dialogue**.

- Steps taken: **Defence Advisers accredited in Ottawa and Delhi**; a **Defence Dialogue** to align interests and capacities.
- Both navies have exercised together in **RIMPAC** and **Talisman Sabre**; an Indian National Defence College delegation visited Canada in June.
- Canada set up a **Defence Investment Agency** and a **Defence Industrial Strategy** to diversify supply chains and reduce single-country dependence.
- Canada is on track to spend **5% of GDP on defence by 2035**, having surpassed 2% in March 2026.
- **Complementarity**: Canada’s full-spectrum aerospace sector and R&D strength meet India’s scale, manufacturing capacity and third-largest domestic aviation market.
- **Critical minerals**: Canada holds reserves of 31 critical minerals (cobalt to helium); a **Critical Minerals Value Chain MoU** was signed during Carney’s Feb-Mar 2026 India visit.
- Space: Canada’s **RADARSAT** constellation can support India’s naval maritime-domain awareness.

WHY IT MATTERS FOR INDIA

- Diversifies defence and critical-mineral **supply chains** away from single-country dependence.
- Advances **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** via co-development, subsystem manufacturing and sustainment.
- Signals a **thaw** after the recent low in bilateral ties, anchored in shared Indo-Pacific interests.

Source — The Hindu (Op-Ed), Page 8

Canada-India defence collaboration for a secure future

Canada is seeing an historic shift for our country – one that opens new opportunities for relations between Canada and India. Speaking at CANSEC 2026, Canada's leading defence, security and emerging technology event, on May 27, 2026, Prime Minister Mark Carney said: "The very nature of war is rapidly evolving, driven by the proliferation of drones, autonomous systems, and weapons in orbit. Conflicts could emerge closer to our borders than before, and new weapons are reducing the distance that separates us from them. The world has changed, and Canada must change with it. That is why, six weeks after forming the government, we announced our ambitious plan to rebuild, rearm, and reinvest in the Canadian Armed Forces."

This is at a time when the world is changing, and Canada-India defence collaboration can translate into a strategy for a secure future.

The good news is that we are already walking on this path. In 2025, Mr. Carney announced that Canada is on track to spend 5% of its GDP on defence by 2035. In March, we already surpassed 2% of the GDP, placing Canada among one of the 10 largest economies in the world.

As Mr. Carney said during his speech in January 2026 at the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting in Davos, there has been a rupture in the world order. Or as Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said, we are living through a decade of crisis.

Bilateral defence engagement

In this changing world, defence cooperation between Canada and India has become crucial and we have already taken steps to bolster it.

Most recently, we accredited Defence Advisers in both Ottawa and Delhi. Mr. Carney and Mr. Modi agreed to establish a Defence Dialogue to



Chris Cooter

High Commissioner
for Canada to India

Shared interests drive Canada and India toward a stronger strategic defence partnership

prioritise cooperation on shared interests and align capacities. Canadian and Indian navies participated in the Rim of the Pacific exercises and Talisman Sabre exercises. In June this year, a delegation from India's National Defence College visited Canada. This will allow Indian officers to have direct exchanges with military colleges and bases in Canada.

We have established a national Defence Investment Agency to streamline military procurement. We have also launched a defence Industrial Strategy to diversify supply chains so Canada does not rely on just one country. That is why we are calling on natural partners such as India to participate in co-development, subsystem manufacturing, and sustainment. We are investing in innovation, including through a half billion-dollar investment in next generation aerospace technologies, including a drone innovation hub.

Strategic technology cooperation

Canada's strengths in advanced technologies can complement India's scale, manufacturing capacity, and expanding industrial base. Canada is one of only a few countries with a full-spectrum aerospace sector, while India's domestic aviation industry is the third largest domestic market in the world. Canada is a research and development powerhouse, while India is focused on advancing innovation capacity and high-end manufacturing.

Canada and India are part of a small group of countries with advanced space capabilities. The importance of civilian space cooperation was highlighted in the joint statement between our two Prime Ministers. Canada's strengths in advanced components for satellite technology and space robotics can complement India's strengths in low-cost platforms. Canada's RADARSAT constellation system can have

application in meeting India's aim of advancing its naval capacity in the region. Critical minerals are the building block of defence technologies – another area where Canada and India can expand their partnership. Amid the crisis in West Asia, national security and economic security are inextricably linked. Here, a critical partnership between Canada and India can take shape.

Canada has vast geological reserves of 31 critical minerals from cobalt to helium. Canada holds the tenth largest reserves of rare earth elements; the third largest recoverable resources of uranium; and 5% of the world's tungsten reserves. Additionally, Canada is the second largest producer and exporter of uranium globally, with 24% of global production in 2024. Canada has embarked on a strategy to diversify its trusted partners. For India, there is a need for reliable partners such as Canada to reach its own economic and national security goals. The Canada-India memorandum of understanding on Critical Minerals Value Chain, signed during Mr. Carney's visit to India in February-March 2026, laid the groundwork for the integration of stable, resilient supply chains between the two countries.

Building on shared legacy

As we look forward, it is worth recalling our shared history and common sacrifice. Recently, I visited the Kirkee War Cemetery in Pune where members of the Royal Canadian Air Force killed during the Second World War were laid to rest. As I walked through the memorial site, I was reminded that our countries have stood shoulder to shoulder in the past, not just on the battlefield but for common causes and for the shared security of our countries. Let us continue that long-standing tradition as we reshape the defence cooperation between our two countries.

'Canada-India defence collaboration for a secure future' — The Hindu, 21 July 2026

STATIC / SYLLABUS LINKAGE

- **RIMPAC** (Rim of the Pacific) — world's largest international maritime exercise, hosted by the US Navy near Hawaii.
- **Talisman Sabre** — major biennial Australia-US-led multinational military exercise.
- **Critical minerals** — strategic inputs for clean energy, electronics and defence; India has a National Critical Mineral Mission and KABIL for overseas assets.

7

Defections & the Moral Sanctity of Democracy

GS 2 · Page 9

The Hindu · 21 July 2026

WHY IN NEWS

An opinion piece uses the splits in the **Trinamool Congress** and the **Shiv Sena (UBT)** to argue that political defections are eroding the **sanctity of the democratic mandate**.

- In a parliamentary democracy, citizens vote for an **idea, a manifesto and an alternative** — not merely an individual.
- When a representative crosses over after winning on another party's symbol, it is a **unilateral rewriting of the contract with the voter**; the mandate becomes private property.
- It exposes **perverse incentives**: leaders facing investigations often 'discover' ideological compatibility with the ruling party.
- The larger casualty is **democratic competition** — a credible Opposition is essential for scrutiny; without it, elections become contests for access to power, not ideas.
- The piece invokes **Aristotle** (public office must not become an instrument of private advantage), **Kautilya** (legitimacy rests on the people's confidence) and **Machiavelli** (destroying independent centres of influence weakens the state).
- The real victim of defection is not the party that loses a legislator but the **voter** — whose ballot is treated as a tradable asset.

ANTI-DEFECTION LAW — TENTH SCHEDULE

- Added by the **52nd Amendment (1985)**; grounds: voluntarily giving up membership or defying the party whip.
- The **91st Amendment (2003)** deleted the 'split' exemption — only a **merger of two-thirds** of members is now protected.
- The **Presiding Officer** decides on disqualification; subject to judicial review (**Kihoto Hollohan v. Zachillhu, 1992**).

Source — The Hindu (Opinion), Page 9

Defections affect moral sanctity of democracy

Winston Churchill once said that, "some men change parties for the sake of their principles; others change principles for the sake of their party". India, however, seems to have perfected a third category – politicians who abandon both party and principle for the sake of power.

The break-up of the Trinamool Congress and the Shiv Sena-UBT (Uddhav Bal Thackeray) are only the latest examples of a disturbing trend concerning elections. Leaders campaign bitterly, questioning each other's integrity and commitment to the nation, with voters asked to choose between sharply contrasting visions for India's future. Yet once the ballots are counted, many of those differences dissolve, and hitherto irreconcilable opponents become political partners. Principles give way to pragmatism, and power becomes the only enduring conviction.

The immediate consequences are political, with governments becoming stronger, and Opposition parties weaker. But the deeper casualty is something far more precious – the sanctity of the democratic mandate.

Far-reaching consequences

In a parliamentary democracy, citizens do not vote merely for individuals. They vote for an idea, a manifesto, and a political alternative. When an elected representative crosses over after winning on another party's symbol, it is not simply a change of affiliation; it is a unilateral rewriting of the contract entered into with the voter. The mandate, which belongs to the electorate, now becomes the private property of the elected representative.

It also exposes the perverse incentives increasingly operating within Indian politics. Politicians facing investigations or legal troubles often appear to discover ideological compatibility with the party in power. Equally striking is the troubling public perception



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that investigative intensity frequently diminishes after such realignments. Democracies rely not only on fairness, but also on public confidence that institutions operate without political favour. Once that confidence erodes, the damage extends far beyond any single party or government.

The larger casualty is democratic competition itself. Every democracy requires an elected government as well as an Opposition capable of scrutinising, questioning, and presenting a credible alternative. Without that balance, elections risk becoming contests over access to power, rather than contests of ideas.

Yet there is an even larger paradox. Prime Minister Narendra Modi continues to command the trust of a significant majority of Indian voters. Few leaders in independent India's history have enjoyed such sustained popular support. The Bharatiya Janata Party has repeatedly demonstrated that it can win elections on its own political appeal. If the electorate has already bestowed such a powerful mandate, why must that mandate be reinforced through the steady migration of dubious legislators elected on rival party symbols?

History suggests that great democracies are distinguished not by governments that accumulate the greatest power, but by governments confident enough to allow a credible Opposition to survive and compete.

Aristotle argued more than two millennia ago that political systems cease to be virtuous when public office becomes an instrument of private advantage rather than public good. Kautilya's wisdom was in knowing that a ruler's legitimacy rested on the confidence of the people. Even Machiavelli, often caricatured as an apostle of raw power, warned that the destruction of all independent centres of influence ultimately weakens the state itself. The tragedy of modern democracies is that electoral mandates are increasingly treated

not as solemn covenants of public trust, but as negotiable assets in the marketplace of power.

History offers sobering parallels. Italy's post-war Transformismo saw politicians frequently switching allegiances and governments held together more by patronage than ideology. Brazil's coalition presidentialism has often encouraged transactional politics. The Philippines has long struggled with a culture of political turncoatism. Though not identical, they share a common lesson: when political office becomes a tradable asset, institutional decay begins, with citizens losing faith in the system.

The voter's loss

Perhaps, however, the hardest questions are not for politicians alone. Why do parties continue to nominate candidates whose convictions appear so negotiable? Why does mainstream media celebrate defections as strategic manoeuvres instead of condemning them as betrayals of the electorate? And why do voters so often forgive the very conduct they publicly denounce?

If opportunism is flourishing, it is because parties reward it and institutions fail to discourage it, with citizens gradually coming to accept it as normal.

The greatest victim of political defections is not the Opposition party that loses a legislator. It is the voter. The voter casts a ballot believing it represents a choice between competing visions for the country. When that representative later abandons the very platform on which the vote was sought, the voter is left dispossessed.

India's democracy is strong enough to produce decisive mandates. It must also be strong enough to preserve the sanctity of those mandates. A vote is not a transferable asset that belongs to the elected representative; it is a trust reposed by the citizen. When that trust can be traded for power, the real defector is not the politician – it is democracy itself.

The greatest victim of political defections is not the Opposition party that loses a legislator. It is the voter

'Defections affect moral sanctity of democracy' — The Hindu, 21 July 2026

STATIC / SYLLABUS LINKAGE

- **Tenth Schedule** aims to curb the 'Aaya Ram Gaya Ram' culture of political horse-trading.
- Criticisms: undermines the representative's freedom of conscience; the **Speaker's role** and **delays in deciding** disqualification petitions have drawn Supreme Court concern.
- Reform ideas: time-bound decisions; shifting adjudication to an independent tribunal / the ECI.

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

GS 3 · ECONOMY

10 Marks · 150 words

Q. The revised Index of Core Industries (Base 2022-23) is more than a routine statistical update. Discuss its methodological changes and their significance for economic policymaking.

प्र. संशोधित कोर उद्योग सूचकांक (आधार वर्ष 2022-23) महज एक सामान्य सांख्यिकीय अद्यतन से अधिक है। इसके पद्धतिगत परिवर्तनों और आर्थिक नीति-निर्माण में उनके महत्व पर चर्चा कीजिए।

GS 2 · POLITY

15 Marks · 250 words

Q. Frequent political defections weaken the moral foundations of representative democracy. Critically examine the effectiveness of the Tenth Schedule and suggest reforms.

प्र. बार-बार होने वाले राजनीतिक दल-बदल प्रतिनिधित्वात्मक लोकतंत्र की नैतिक नींव को कमजोर करते हैं। दसवीं अनुसूची की प्रभावशीलता का आलोचनात्मक परीक्षण कीजिए और सुधार सुझाए।

THOUGHT OF THE DAY — “A mandate belongs to the electorate, not to the elected; when trust is traded for power, the real defector is democracy itself.”

Bilingual (English & Hindi) · Reframed from today's editorials for answer-writing practice

PRELIMS PRACTICE · MCQs 1–6

Q1. With reference to the new series of the Index of Core Industries (ICI), consider the following statements:

1. It has base year 2022-23.
2. It is compiled by the National Statistical Office.
3. Iron ore has been added as a new sector.

Which 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

Q2. The Index of Core Industries is released by:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| (a) RBI | (b) NSO, MoSPI |
| (c) Office of Economic Adviser, DPIIT | (d) NITI Aayog |

✓ Answer: (c) Office of Economic Adviser, DPIIT

Q3. The summoning of Parliament is provided under which Article of the Constitution?

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| (a) Article 74 | (b) Article 85 |
| (c) Article 108 | (d) Article 123 |

✓ Answer: (b) Article 85

Q4. Regarding the quorum of Parliament, consider:

1. It is one-tenth of the total membership.
2. Lok Sabha quorum is 55 members.
3. Rajya Sabha quorum is 25 members.

Which 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

Q5. Which statement about Prorogation is correct?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| (a) It dissolves the Lok Sabha | (b) It ends a session but not the House |
| (c) It is ordered by the Speaker | (d) Pending Bills lapse on prorogation |

✓ Answer: (b) It ends a session but not the House

Q6. QDENG (TAK-003), recently approved in India, is a:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| (a) Inactivated monovalent vaccine | (b) mRNA vaccine |
| (c) Live-attenuated tetravalent vaccine | (d) Viral-vector vaccine |

✓ Answer: (c) Live-attenuated tetravalent vaccine

PRELIMS PRACTICE · MCQs 7–10

Q7. The dengue virus belongs to which genus?

- (a) Alphavirus (b) Flavivirus
(c) Lyssavirus (d) Enterovirus

✓ Answer: (b) Flavivirus

Q8. In Maniyar Iliyaz vs P. Ayyappan (2026), the Supreme Court linked the right to safe footpaths to which Articles?

- (a) Art. 14 and 15 (b) Art. 19(1)(a) and 21
(c) Art. 19(1)(d) and 21 (d) Art. 21 and 25

✓ Answer: (c) Art. 19(1)(d) and 21

Q9. The anti-defection law is contained in which Schedule of the Constitution?

- (a) Ninth Schedule (b) Tenth Schedule
(c) Eleventh Schedule (d) Twelfth Schedule

✓ Answer: (b) Tenth Schedule

Q10. RIMPAC and Talisman Sabre, mentioned in the news, are:

- (a) Trade agreements (b) Military exercises
(c) Space missions (d) Climate frameworks

✓ Answer: (b) Military exercises

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

Q1 — (b)

Statements 1 & 3 correct. ICI new series has base 2022-23 and adds iron ore (nine sectors). It is compiled by the OEA, DPIIT — not the NSO. So 2 is wrong.

Q2 — (c)

The Office of Economic Adviser, DPIIT (Ministry of Commerce & Industry) releases the ICI monthly.

Q3 — (b)

Article 85 deals with summoning, prorogation and dissolution of Parliament.

Q4 — (d)

Quorum = one-tenth of total membership; LS = 55, RS = 25. All three correct.

Q5 — (b)

Prorogation ends a session (by the President) but does not dissolve the House; pending business does not lapse.

Q6 — (c)

QDENGGA is a live-attenuated tetravalent vaccine covering all four dengue serotypes; two doses, three months apart.

Q7 — (b)

Dengue, Zika, yellow fever and Japanese encephalitis viruses belong to genus Flavivirus.

Q8 — (c)

The Court held safe footpaths a fundamental right under Art. 19(1)(d) (free movement) and Art. 21 (life).

Q9 — (b)

The Tenth Schedule (52nd Amendment, 1985) contains the anti-defection provisions.

Q10 — (b)

RIMPAC (Rim of the Pacific) and Talisman Sabre are large multinational military exercises.