



VEDANTA COACHING ACADEMY & LIBRARY PRESENTS

The Hindu Analysis

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30 September 2026 ♦ Wednesday

Drug Pricing

NSA Detention

Niyamgiri & Dongria Kondh

Revised GRAP

Academic Freedom

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Compiled by **Sapna Chauhan**

SC Flags Steep Mark-ups on Essential Drugs

WHY IN NEWS A Bench of Justices **Vikram Nath** and **Sandeep Mehta** termed steep retail mark-ups on essential medicines “carnage”, pointing to an anti-cancer drug supplied to retailers at ~₹3,000 but sold at ~₹27,000, and asked the Centre why the **16% retailer margin under DPCO, 2013** should not apply uniformly to all essential medicines.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPING · THE HINDU · PAGE 1

Top court flags steep mark-ups on essential drugs

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday expressed concern over the sharp disparity between the prices charged to retailers and consumers for essential medicines, particularly cancer drugs, observing that steep mark-ups placed an enormous burden on taxpayers and amounted to “carnage”.

A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta questioned the Centre on why the 16% retailer margin provided for under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO), 2013, should not be applied uniformly to essential medicines to curb steep mark-ups over the price to retailer (PTR).

“Why not keep the 16% margin on MRP, which is



Unchecked prices

The petitions in SC have sought directions to make drug formulations more affordable

■ Justice Sandeep Mehta, part of the Bench, points to the mark-up on an ‘essential cancer drug’ supplied to retailers for around ₹3,000 but sold to consumers for ₹27,000

■ He also points to Rosuvas, a common statin, priced at ₹240 per strip, contrasting it with its combined formula with aspirin, which costs a mere ₹70 per strip



Why not keep the 16% margin on MRP, which is prescribed in the DPCO, on everything? ... Ultimately, the loser is the taxpayer. This is carnage, as simple as that - SC BENCH



prescribed in the DPCO, on everything?... Ultimately, the loser is the taxpayer. This is carnage, as simple as that,” the Bench remarked.

The observations came while the top court was hearing petitions filed by advocate Kishan Chand

Jain and paediatric surgeon Sanjay Kulshrestha, seeking its intervention to regulate the prices of drugs, medical equipment, and generic medicines, and make them more affordable.

Justice Mehta pointed, in particular, to the nearly

ten-fold mark-up on an essential cancer drug, which was supplied to retailers for around ₹3,000 but sold to consumers for ₹27,000. He questioned who ultimately benefited from the nearly ₹24,000 difference. “You tell us why this difference... Where does this chunk of money go? Ten times...” Justice Mehta remarked.

He also referred to Rosuvas, a commonly used statin, noting that a strip costs around ₹240. He said that while the drug falls in the non-scheduled category, its combination with aspirin is a scheduled formulation subject to price control under the DPCO and costs around ₹70 per strip. “So a combination should be more costly. It should be costlier, but the disparity is there,” he said.

Solicitor-General Tushar

Mehta, appearing for the Centre, acknowledged the concern and said the government would have to find a way forward while “balancing equities”.

‘Private gainers’

He, however, said it was private hospitals, rather than pharmaceutical companies, that benefited from the steep mark-ups. “The pharma company is not the gainer. The gainer is the private hospital,” the law officer submitted.

The Bench also flagged the practice of private hospitals insisting that patients purchase medicines from their in-house pharmacies, leaving them with little choice to procure the same drugs at lower prices elsewhere.

CONTINUED ON
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- ◆ **The core issue — PTR vs MRP:** The Court flagged the gap between the *price to retailer* (PTR) and the *maximum retail price* (MRP). A nearly ten-fold mark-up left a ₹24,000 difference per unit, which the Bench said ultimately falls on the taxpayer through public insurance and reimbursement schemes.
- ◆ **Pricing anomaly:** Rosuvas (rosuvastatin), a non-scheduled drug, costs about ₹240 per strip, while its combination with aspirin — a scheduled formulation under price control — costs only ~₹70. A combination “should be more costly”, the Court noted, exposing how control by formulation lets near-identical products escape.
- ◆ **Centre’s stand:** Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta accepted the concern, said the government must find a way forward while “balancing equities”, and argued that the gainer is the **private hospital**, not the pharmaceutical company.
- ◆ **Captive pharmacies:** The Bench flagged private hospitals insisting that patients buy from in-house pharmacies. Information asymmetry and the urgency of treatment leave patients with no real choice to buy the same drug cheaper elsewhere.
- ◆ **Structural gaps:** (i) DPCO ceiling prices cover only scheduled (NLEM) formulations, a limited slice of the market; (ii) non-scheduled drugs are free-priced, subject only to a 10% annual MRP increase cap;

(iii) **Trade Margin Rationalisation** (TMR) has been used sparingly — in 2019 NPPA capped trade margins at 30% for 42 non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs, cutting MRPs of hundreds of brands by up to ~90%; (iv) enforcement and overcharging recovery remain weak.

- ◆ **Constitutional anchor:** The right to health is read into **Article 21** (*Paschim Banga Khet Mazdoor Samity*, 1996), and **Article 47** directs the State to improve public health — affordable medicine is central to both.
- ◆ **Way forward:** Extend TMR to high-value cancer and critical-care drugs; mandate disclosure of PTR alongside MRP; prohibit compulsory purchase from in-house pharmacies; standardise hospital charges under the Clinical Establishments Act, 2010; scale up **Jan Aushadhi Kendras** (PMBJP) and State Price Monitoring & Resource Units.

VALUE ADDITION · NPPA, DPCO & NLEM

NPPA: Constituted in **1997** by a Government resolution as an attached office of the **Department of Pharmaceuticals**, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers — an independent regulator that fixes/ revises prices of controlled bulk drugs and formulations and enforces prices and availability under the DPCO.

DPCO, 2013: Issued under **Section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955**. Ceiling price = simple average of all brands with at least 1% market share + **16% retailer margin**. Scheduled prices are revised annually in line with the Wholesale Price Index. **Para 19** gives extraordinary powers in public interest (used to cap coronary stent and knee-implant prices in 2017).

NLEM: Prepared by the Ministry of Health; NLEM 2011 was the basis for DPCO 2013, and **NLEM 2022** lists 384 medicines. Medicines in NLEM become ‘scheduled formulations’ for price control.

PRELIMS POINTERS

◆ DPCO flows from the Essential Commodities Act, not the Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940 ◆ NPPA is **not** a statutory body ◆ Trade chain: Manufacturer → Stockist (PTS) → Retailer (PTR) → Patient (MRP) ◆ Para 19 DPCO: coronary stents (Feb 2017)

Syllabus Link: GS 2 — Issues relating to health; Government policies and interventions. GS 3 — Pharmaceutical sector.

02

GS 2 · POLITY & FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

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Sambhal Violence: SC Quashes NSA Detention, Fines U.P. Govt.

WHY IN NEWS A Bench of Justices **Dipankar Datta** and **Sheel Nagu** set aside the October 2025 NSA detention order against **Mulla Afroz**, arrested in connection with the November 2024 Sambhal violence, holding it “more punitive than preventive”, and imposed costs of **₹10 lakh** on the U.P. government, payable to him within a month.

- ◆ **Background:** Four persons were killed in violence during a court-ordered survey of the **Shahi Jama Masjid**, Sambhal, on November 24, 2024. The survey was ordered by a civil court on November 19, 2024, on a suit claiming the mosque was built over a temple.

- ◆ **Timeline:** While Afroz was already in custody, the District Magistrate invoked **Section 3(2) of the NSA** on October 13, 2025; representations to the State and Centre were rejected; detention was confirmed till October 12, 2026. The Allahabad High Court dismissed his *habeas corpus* petition on June 8, 2026.
- ◆ **Holding 1 — No nexus:** The link between the material relied upon and the 'subjective satisfaction' of the detaining authority was "conspicuously absent". Subjective satisfaction is not immune from judicial review when it rests on no relevant material.
- ◆ **Holding 2 — Confession to police:** A confessional statement before a police officer cannot, by itself, justify preventive detention. Allowing it would violate the protection against self-incrimination under **Article 20(3)**; such confessions are inadmissible under **Section 23, Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023** (earlier Sec. 25, Evidence Act). The detenu alleged he was forced to confess under threat of a staged encounter.
- ◆ **Holding 3 — Punitive vs preventive:** Preventive detention looks forward to prevent a future prejudicial act; it cannot be used to punish past conduct. Here the distinction had become "blurred".
- ◆ **Detention of a person already in custody:** Under the *Kamarunnessa* (1991) test, the authority must show awareness of custody, a real likelihood of release on bail, and compelling necessity — otherwise ordinary criminal law suffices.
- ◆ **Jurisprudence:** *A.K. Gopalan* (1950); *Ram Manohar Lohia* (1966) — 'law and order', 'public order' and 'security of State' as concentric circles; *Rekha v. State of T.N.* (2011) — preventive detention is an exception to Article 21; *Banka Sneha Sheela* (2021) — a mere law-and-order problem cannot justify detention.
- ◆ **Significance and way forward:** Exemplary costs signal accountability for misuse. Reforms suggested by experts include time-bound Advisory Board hearings, recording of reasons open to review, personal accountability of detaining officers, and publication of detention data.

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Sambhal Nov. violence: SC quashes NSA detention of accused, fines U.P. govt.

Ruling comes on a petition filed by Mulla Afroz; Bench says a confessional statement made by an accused before a police officer cannot, by itself, constitute a basis for detention under NSA

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday quashed the preventive detention of a man under the National Security Act (NSA) in connection with the November 2024 Sambhal violence, finding that the connection between the material on record and the detention order was "conspicuously absent". The top court also imposed a cost of ₹10 lakh on the Uttar Pradesh government.

A Bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Sheel Nagu set aside the October 2025 order passed by the Sambhal District Magistrate under the National Security Act, 1980, holding that the detention had assumed a character that was "more punitive than preventive". "We are unable to persuade ourselves to sustain the detention order as legal and valid. The requisite nexus between the material relied upon and the satisfaction recorded by the detaining authority



Four persons were killed during violence that broke out during a court-ordered survey of the Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal on November 24, 2024. FILE PHOTO

is conspicuously absent," the Bench said.

The ruling came on a petition filed by Mulla Afroz, who was arrested in connection with the violence that broke out during a court-ordered survey of the Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal on November 24, 2024.

Four persons were killed in the clashes. The survey had been ordered by a Sambhal civil court on November 19, 2024, while hearing a suit instituted by Hindu petitioners who claimed that the mosque had been constructed over a temple. While Mr. Afroz

remained in custody, the Sambhal District Magistrate invoked Section 3(2) of the NSA to order his preventive detention on October 13, 2025. His subsequent representations to the State and Central governments were rejected. The U.P. government confirmed the detention order directing that he remain in preventive detention until October 12, 2026.

Mr. Afroz then moved the Allahabad High Court through a *habeas corpus* petition challenging his detention. The High Court dismissed his plea on June 8, 2026, following which

he approached the Supreme Court.

Confessional statement
Advocate Divyesh Pratap Singh, appearing on Mr. Afroz's behalf, submitted that he was taken into custody on January 17, 2025, and forced to confess under threat of being killed in a staged encounter.

The Bench held that "a confessional statement made before a police officer cannot, by itself, constitute a basis for detaining an accused under NSA". The court said allowing such a confession to form the basis of preventive detention would also run contrary to the constitutional protection against self-incrimination. The court found that the distinction sought to be maintained by the State between punitive and preventive detention had, in substance, become "blurred" in Mr. Afroz's case.

The top court imposed costs of ₹10 lakh on the U.P. government, directing that the amount be paid to him within a month.

VALUE ADDITION · NATIONAL SECURITY ACT, 1980 & ARTICLE 22

Basis: Enacted 1980; flows from **Article 22(3)(b)** (safeguards of Art. 22(1)–(2) do not apply to preventive detention) and **Article 22(4)** (no detention beyond 3 months unless an Advisory Board reports sufficient cause). Legislative competence: **Entry 9, List I** (defence, foreign affairs, security of India) and **Entry 3, List III** (security of a State, public order, essential supplies).

Grounds: Acts prejudicial to defence, security of India, relations with foreign powers, security of the State, public order, or maintenance of essential supplies and services; also regulation of foreigners. **Authorities:** Centre, States, District Magistrates and Commissioners of Police (if authorised).

Procedure: Grounds to be communicated ordinarily within **5 days**, and in exceptional cases within **10 days**; the government refers the case to an **Advisory Board** within **3 weeks**; the Board reports within 7 weeks of detention. **Maximum detention: 12 months.** The detenu has no right to be represented by a lawyer before the Board. Remedies: writs under **Art. 226/32**; the government may revoke at any time.

PRELIMS POINTERS ♦ Art. 22(5): grounds + earliest opportunity of representation ♦ Art. 22(6): facts against public interest may be withheld ♦ Art. 22(7): Parliament prescribes maximum period ♦ 44th Amendment (1978) reduced Board period to 2 months — not yet notified

Syllabus Link: GS 2 — Fundamental Rights; Judiciary; Separation of powers; Statutory safeguards.

03

GS 3 · ENVIRONMENT | GS 1 · TRIBES

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Activists Caution Against Reviving Bauxite Mining in Niyamgiri

WHY IN NEWS The **National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM)** warned against “renewed efforts” to revive bauxite mining in Odisha’s **Niyamgiri hills**, reacting to Vedanta Group chairman **Anil Agarwal’s** statement that the reserve spread across **Kalahandi and Rayagada** districts should be reopened to create local jobs.

- ♦ **Background:** The Odisha Mining Corporation–Vedanta proposal to mine bauxite on Niyamgiri to feed the **Lanjigarh alumina refinery** was halted about 13 years ago after sustained opposition by tribal groups.
- ♦ **Landmark ruling:** In *Orissa Mining Corporation v. MoEF* (April 2013), the Supreme Court held that the **gram sabhas** must decide whether mining would affect the religious, cultural and community rights of the Dongria Kondh under the **Forest Rights Act, 2006**. All 12 gram sabhas consulted unanimously rejected the project, and the Environment Ministry rejected forest clearance in 2014. A review attempt in 2016 also failed.
- ♦ **Activists’ case:** Goldman Prize winner **Prafulla Samantara** said neither Vedanta nor the State or Centre can claim ownership of Niyamgiri, which belongs to the Dongria Kondh — a **PVTG** that has historically protected the hills. NAPM alleged the arrests of Lada Sikaka (Niyamgiri Suraksha Samiti) and Lingaraj Azad are attempts to weaken the movement.
- ♦ **Legal safeguards cited:** The **Fifth Schedule, PESA Act, 1996** and **Forest Rights Act, 2006** recognise the rights of Adivasi communities in Scheduled Areas. The *Samatha* judgment (1997) had earlier barred transfer of tribal land in Scheduled Areas to private parties for mining.
- ♦ **Development argument:** Odisha holds the largest share of India’s bauxite reserves. Aluminium demand is rising with electrification and renewable energy; supporters point to jobs, royalty and District Mineral Foundation funds for a backward region.
- ♦ **Ecological and cultural stakes:** The forested hills feed streams of the Vamsadhara and Nagavali systems; for the Dongria, the peak is the abode of **Niyam Raja**, making the dispute one of faith as well as livelihood.

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Activists caution against efforts to revive bauxite mining in Odisha's Niyamgiri hills

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

The National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM), a pan-India platform of groups working to protect the environment, on Tuesday cautioned against what it described as "renewed efforts" to revive bauxite mining in Odisha's Niyamgiri hills.

The NAPM was reacting to Vedanta Group chairman Anil Agarwal's recent statement that the Niyamgiri bauxite reserve, spread across Kalahandi and Rayagada districts, should be reopened for mining and that it would create jobs for the local tribal population.

Prafulla Samantara, winner of the Goldman Environmental Prize 2017, said the hills belong to the Dongria Kondh – a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group that has "historically protected and depended



Vedanta Group's proposed bauxite mining project was halted nearly 13 years ago following opposition by local tribal groups. FILE PHOTO

on the region's natural resources". "Neither Vedanta Group chairman Anil Agarwal nor the State or Central governments can claim ownership over Niyamgiri. The State government must not dare to hand over Niyamgiri to Vedanta again," he said.

Mr. Samantara said the group's proposed Niyamgiri bauxite mining project was halted nearly 13 years ago following sustained opposition by tribal groups.

"People from all 112 villages in the affected region opposed the project. The Supreme Court made it clear that the question of whether mining could be undertaken in Niyamgiri had to be decided by the gram sabhas concerned. Following the direction, the gram sabhas of 12 Dongria Kondh villages unanimously rejected the project. These decisions must be respected," he said.

Narendra Mohanty, the

NAPM's State convener, alleged that the recent arrest of Lada Sikaka, president of the Niyamgiri Suraksha Samiti, and the prolonged incarceration of Lingaraj Azad, an adviser to the organisation, in several cases are "part of a wider attempt to weaken the movement opposing corporate control over Niyamgiri".

'Legal safeguards'

Human rights activist Biswapriya Kanungo said the decisions by the gram sabhas have constitutional and statutory significance.

"The rights of Adivasi communities in Scheduled Areas are protected under the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution, the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, and the Forest Rights Act. Vedanta had approached the Supreme Court and filed a review petition in 2016, but it was rejected," he said.

- ◆ **Way forward:** Respect the gram sabha verdict as a model of **free, prior and informed consent**; strengthen horticulture-based livelihoods (pineapple, turmeric, jackfruit) through value chains and FPOs; deliver **PM-JANMAN** benefits; resolve pending FRA claims; ensure any future proposal passes through transparent, uncoerced consultation.

VALUE ADDITION · DONGRIA KONDH & PVTGS

Dongria Kondh: A PVTG indigenous to the Niyamgiri hills (Kalahandi-Rayagada, Odisha). 'Dongria' comes from *dongar* (hill); they call themselves *Jharnia* – "protectors of streams". Animist faith: hilltops and forests are living deities; ancestral deity **Niyam Raja**, honoured in an annual festival. They speak **Kuvi** (Kui/Kuvi group), a Dravidian language distinct from Odia.

PVTGs: The 'Primitive Tribal Groups' category arose from the **Dhebar Commission** (1960–61); renamed PVTGs in 2006. There are **75 PVTGs**; Odisha has the most (13). Criteria: pre-agricultural technology, stagnant or declining population, extremely low literacy, subsistence economy. **PM-JANMAN** (2023) targets their housing, roads, water, health and education.

PRELIMS POINTERS

- ◆ Goldman Environmental Prize – the 'Green Nobel'; Samantara won in 2017 ◆
- Bauxite = chief ore of aluminium ◆ Gram sabha verdict on Niyamgiri: 2013 ◆ FRA, 2006: community forest resource rights

Syllabus Link: GS 3 — Conservation, EIA, Mining. GS 1 — Tribal society. GS 2 — Vulnerable sections, Fifth Schedule.

04

GS 3 · ENVIRONMENT & POLLUTION

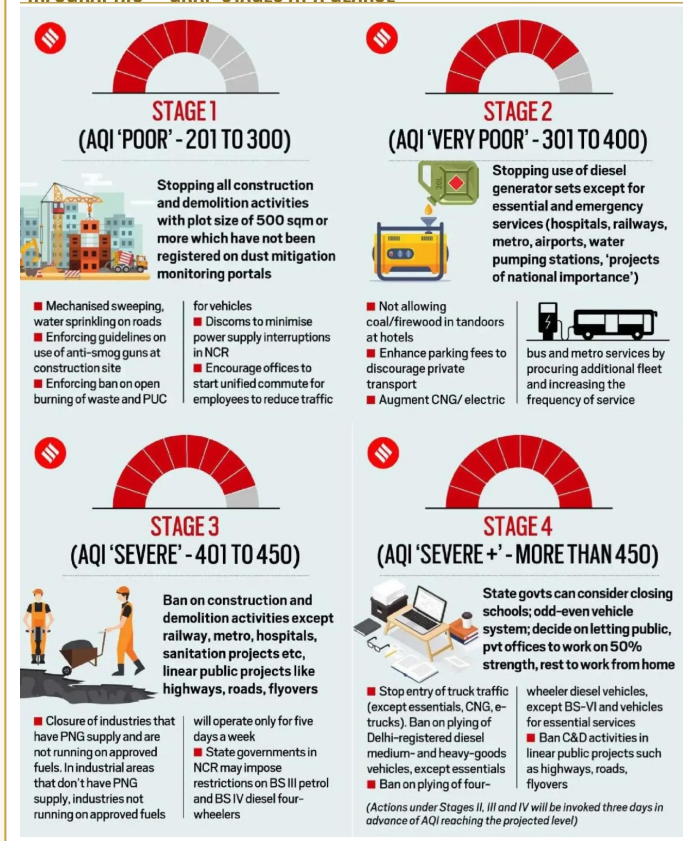
The Hindu · Page 6

CAQM Tightens Winter Pollution Curbs under Revised GRAP

WHY IN NEWS The Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) announced tighter restrictions under a revised **Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)** to curb winter air pollution in Delhi and nearby districts.

- ◆ **Trucks:** The exemption allowing non-BS-VI trucks carrying essential commodities into Delhi during extreme pollution has been **withdrawn**. Only EV, BS-VI, CNG or LNG trucks will be permitted during Stage 4.
- ◆ **Sonipat added:** Sonipat joins Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Gautam Buddha Nagar as a high-vehicle-density district where **BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel cars** cannot ply during Stage 3.
- ◆ **Goods vehicles:** Exceptions for Delhi-registered diesel medium goods vehicles (non-BS-VI) and for diesel light goods vehicles registered outside Delhi carrying essentials have been removed at Stage 3.
- ◆ **Exceptions:** Pothole repair is added to activities allowed despite the Stage 3 construction ban. Differently-abled commuters may continue using BS-III petrol/BS-IV diesel cars adapted for their personal use.

INFOGRAPHIC · GRAP STAGES AT A GLANCE



◆ **Why tighten now:** Vehicular exhaust is a leading local source of PM_{2.5} in Delhi. In winter, temperature inversion, low wind speed, stubble burning in Punjab-Haryana and festive fireworks trap pollutants near the ground.

- ◆ **Critique:** GRAP is an emergency, reactive tool. Stop-start curbs hit daily-wage construction workers and small transporters; enforcement varies across four States; and it cannot substitute for year-round structural action.
- ◆ **Structural fixes:** Faster fleet electrification and public transport, dust control, industrial shift to cleaner fuels (PNG), crop-residue management (in-situ and ex-situ), and airshed-level planning under the **National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), 2019**.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPING · THE HINDU · PAGE 6

tightens winter pollution restrictions under GRAP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) on Tuesday announced tighter restrictions under a revised Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) to mitigate air pollution in Delhi and nearby districts during winter.

An exemption allowing trucks that are not BS-VI compliant and carry essential commodities to enter Delhi during extreme pollution has been withdrawn.

GRAP is a set of short-term emergency measures taken to reduce air pollution and is divided into four stages depending on the level of air pollution that exists at a particular time or is predicted for the near future.

The commission has also added Sonipat to the existing list of high-vehicle-density districts of Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Gautam Buddha Nagar, where BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel cars will not be allowed to ply during Stage 3 of GRAP. It also added pothole repair to the list of exceptions during a ban on construction and demolition activities under Stage 3.

Differently abled commuters will continue to be permitted to ply BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel cars even during Stage 3 of GRAP, provided that



The national capital during last year's winter. FILE PHOTO

these are specifically adapted for them and are run only for their personal use, read the CAQM order.

It said that trucks that are EVs, BS-VI compliant or run on CNG or LNG will continue to be permitted during Stage 4.

The pollution watchdog has also removed the exception that allowed Delhi-registered diesel-operated medium goods vehicles that are not BS-VI compliant but carry essential commodities or provide essential services to ply in the city during Stage 3. The revised GRAP order has also removed the exception for diesel-operated light goods vehicles registered outside Delhi that carry essential commodities or provide essential services, barring those from entering the Capital during Stage 3.

VALUE ADDITION · GRAP & CAQM

GRAP: A pre-emptive emergency framework for Delhi-NCR, formulated under Supreme Court directions in *M.C. Mehta v. Union of India* (2016) and notified in **2017**. Now enforced by **CAQM** with the MoEFCC and State authorities. Actions under Stages II–IV are invoked about **three days in advance** of AQI reaching the projected level.

Stage	AQI	Key actions
I · Poor	201–300	Dust control on C&D sites, mechanised sweeping, ban on open burning, PUC checks
II · Very Poor	301–400	Curbs on DG sets (except essential), no coal/firewood in tandoors, higher parking fees
III · Severe	401–450	C&D ban (exceptions), curbs on BS-III petrol/BS-IV diesel cars, non-PNG industry limits
IV · Severe+	>450	Truck entry curbs, ban on non-essential diesel goods vehicles, schools/offices may shift online

CAQM: Statutory body under the **CAQM Act, 2021**, which dissolved the **EPCA** (set up in 1998). Chairperson of the rank of Secretary to GoI or State Chief Secretary. Exclusive jurisdiction on air pollution over NCR and adjoining areas of **Haryana, Punjab, U.P. and Rajasthan**; supersedes

pollution control boards on these matters and can issue binding directions; penal powers of fines up to ₹1 crore and imprisonment up to 5 years.

PRELIMS POINTERS

◆ National AQI (2014): 8 pollutants — PM10, PM2.5, NO₂, SO₂, CO, O₃, NH₃, Pb ◆ BS-VI nationwide from April 1, 2020 (BS-V skipped) ◆ EPCA (1998) was created under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 ◆ NCAP target: reduction in PM10 levels in non-attainment cities

Syllabus Link: GS 3 — Environmental pollution and degradation; Conservation.

05

GS 2 · EDUCATION | GS 4 · ETHICS

The Hindu · Page 8 (Op-Ed)

Indian Academia's Drift from Reason to Ritual

WHY IN NEWS In an op-ed, geoscientist **C.P. Rajendran** criticises the ritualisation of academic ceremonies — citing reports from the August 2026 IIT Delhi convocation — and the **Scholars at Risk 'Free to Think 2026'** report, which rates India's academic freedom "severely restricted", with the Academic Freedom Index falling from **0.38 (2022) to 0.14 (2025)**.

- ◆ **The author's premise:** Universities are 'temples of empiricism'; the scientific method thrives on questioning, falsifiability and rigorous doubt — virtues opposed to uncritical reverence. Knowledge advances by challenging the past, as Galileo, Darwin and Einstein did.
- ◆ **The trigger:** Reports that IIT Delhi graduates were instructed how far to bow while receiving medals from the Prime Minister and asked to stand during Vedic chants. The author argues such courtly hierarchy infantilises graduates and signals that authority is to be obeyed, not interrogated.
- ◆ **Guru-shishya vs Socratic method:** The traditional paradigm demanded unquestioning obedience; modern pedagogy rests on dialectic and respectful dissent. Labelling critics 'anti-national' or '*Dimagi Naxal*' fosters self-censorship.
- ◆ **What the SAR report flags:** Expanded central authority over higher education through the UGC, relaxed eligibility for Vice-Chancellors, removal of the 10% cap on contractual faculty (casualisation), influence over administration and curricula, and police action against student protests.
- ◆ **The counter-view:** Supporters see such ceremonies as cultural courtesy, not coercion. **NEP 2020** explicitly promotes **Indian Knowledge Systems** alongside critical thinking. The government and the

NEWSPAPER CLIPPING · THE HINDU · PAGE 8 (OP-ED)

Indian academia's drift from reason to ritual

At their core, educational institutions are intended to be "temples of empiricism". Their entire legitimacy rests on a single, unforgiving premise: that truth is discovered through observation, experimentation, and peer-reviewed verification, not through revelation, tradition, or charismatic authority. The scientific method thrives on questioning, falsifiability, and rigorous doubt — virtues that stand in direct opposition to belief, spiritualism, and uncritical reverence. This is not a mere aesthetic choice; it is a profound philosophical contradiction. This raises a disquieting question: when an academic institution prioritises spiritual performance and political deference over intellectual rigour, does it create the very foundation of its own mission?

Reason versus reverence
Knowledge advances not by revering the past, but by challenging it. Newton's famous "shoulders of giants" line was half-jest — not a call to worship, but to build critically on past work. History shows this: Galileo, Darwin, and Einstein each overturned once-sacred truths. This relentless, iconoclastic spirit is the engine of human knowledge. When a university or research body such as the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) introduces feudalistic, socially hierarchical etiquette — requiring students to bow before dignitaries and formal functions such as convocations suffused with religious incantations — it transmits a deeply corrosive message.

Consider the 2026 convocation ceremony, in August, at IIT Delhi, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the chief guest. Reports surrounding the ceremony highlighted two practices that drew criticism: students were reportedly instructed on how far to bow while receiving medals from the Prime Minister, and were reportedly asked to stand during Vedic chants.

In a secular, democratic republic, these are ideological statements with far-reaching consequences. By doing so, the institution subtly endorses the idea that the state and its functionaries operate under a supernatural mandate, a concept antithetical to the rational, evidence-based framework of a modern republic.

The bowing protocol resurrects a pre-modern, courtly hierarchy that has no place in an institution ostensibly committed to meritocracy and intellectual emancipation. It infantilises the graduating students, reducing them from autonomous, critical thinkers to supplicants seeking the favour of a political figure. Yet, it is precisely here that the ceremony reveals its deepest irony: the Prime Minister — a self-proclaimed votary of his religious practices — used his address to urge students to question conventional



C.P. Rajendran
Geoscientist and a communicator on science, politics, environment and education

wisdom and challenge accepted traditions. The dissonance between the ritual performance and the rhetorical exhortation could hardly be more pronounced. This performative contradiction reveals the ceremony for what it is: a carefully orchestrated spectacle of power, where the substance of the message is sacrificed for the optics of reverence. The spirit of the Constitution requires us to value democratic equality over feudal submission.

Implications for institutional integrity
By reintroducing ritualised submission into academic life, we are resurrecting an intellectual straitjacket. When a student is compelled to bow before a political figure on a date, the message is that authority is to be obeyed, not interrogated. When a scientific convocation opens with a religious prayer, it is implied that the supernatural has a seat at the table of empirical inquiry.

Defenders will call these practices mere "cultural flourishes" — innocent tributes to India's ancient past, meant to ground students and teach respect. But that argument fails the moment we examine it. The old *guru-shishya* paradigm, for all its reverence, demanded unquestioning obedience — the student absorbing the master's word without debate. Modern pedagogy has moved on. It is built on Socratic dialectic — on the clash of ideas, on rigorous, respectful dissent.

The performative traditionalism often serves a political function. By wrapping themselves in the cloak of ancient culture, institutions deflect scrutiny and discourage dissent. Critics can be branded as "westernised", "anti-national" or a recently added epithet, "*Dimagi Naxal* (intellectual extremist)" for objecting to what is, in essence, a breach of academic ethics. This rhetorical strategy is intellectually dishonest; it conflates so-called cultural pride with uncritical obedience, and tradition with truth. The result is a climate of fear — where academics and students self-censor, wary of being branded traitors for defending institutional integrity. Most Indian researchers today are too afraid to question government overreach, including their

Scholars at Risk (SAR) — an international network that monitors education communities worldwide — presents a comprehensive assessment of the challenges confronting India's academic landscape. Based on data from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, the report assesses academic freedom in India as "severely restricted". The report says that India's Academic Freedom Index score fell from 0.38 in 2022 to 0.14 in 2025, leaving it in the "severely restricted" category.

This is attributed to deterioration to systematic government interference in university

governance, suppression of dissent among faculty and students, and a pervasive climate of fear and self-censorship across Indian campuses.

The report says that the central government, led by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, has expanded its authority over higher education through the University Grants Commission (UGC). Measures include relaxing academic qualification criteria for Vice-Chancellors and accelerating the casualisation of the academic workforce by removing the 10% cap on non-permanent or contract-based faculty appointments. These policy shifts eliminated the previous limit on contractual faculty positions under the 2018 regulations. The report highlights that government interference in university operations — such as exerting influence over administration, curricula, and management — undermines institutional autonomy and standards of teaching; it also cites police violence against student protests as instances of direct repression of critical voices on campuses and outside.

A call for vigilance and the Tagorean ideal
The presence of spiritual rituals and hierarchical protocols in research institutions is no trivial matter. It is a canary in the coal mine of academic freedom. If a scientist can be compelled to bow to a politician, or to sit through religious chants before a lecture, we must ask: what other compromises are ahead? Will research agendas be steered by political pieties rather than public need? Will funding be allocated based on ideological alignment rather than scientific merit, thereby rewarding sycophants?

If we are to preserve the integrity of scientific inquiry, we must insist that our universities remain sanctuaries of scepticism, not stages for spiritual theatre or political sycophancy. The future of knowledge, and indeed the future of a free and democratic society, depends on it.

If we truly wish to honour India's legacy of cultural renaissance and critical thought, we need only turn to Rabindranath Tagore. His poem "Where the Mind is Without Fear" — written under British rule — is not a relic of nostalgic pride, but an invocation for a future world: one where people think with courage, seek truth fearlessly, and live without narrow walls of division. That is one traditional link worth defending — and perhaps even chanting at a convocation. It is a hymn to intellectual courage and the relentless pursuit of truth, not the hollow verse used to silence and intimidate. Let us reclaim the free spirit of inquiry, ensure our academic landscapes remain true to their secular purpose, and help resurrect an education sector currently in a shambles — largely due to doctrinaire rigidity, corruption and misgovernance.

Academic institutions must remain spaces for scepticism, dissent and fearless inquiry

EAC-PM have also questioned perception-based global indices (such as V-Dem's) for methodological bias and small expert samples.

- ◆ **Constitutional frame: Article 51A(h)** — duty to develop scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform; **Article 28(1)** — no religious instruction in institutions wholly funded by the State; **Article 19(1)(a)** — free expression; secularism is part of the basic structure (S.R. Bommai, 1994).
- ◆ **Ethical dimension (GS 4):** Intellectual integrity, courage of conviction and a culture that rewards merit over sycophancy. The author invokes Tagore's "Where the Mind is Without Fear" as an ideal of fearless inquiry.
- ◆ **Way forward:** Real institutional autonomy, transparent and merit-based VC selection, secure tenure-track faculty, grievance mechanisms that protect dissent, and research funding insulated from ideology.

VALUE ADDITION · MEASURING ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Academic Freedom Index (AFI): Developed by the **V-Dem Institute** (Sweden) with FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg; scored 0–1 on five indicators — freedom to research and teach, freedom of academic exchange and dissemination, institutional autonomy, campus integrity, and freedom of academic and cultural expression.

Scholars at Risk (SAR): An international network founded in 1999 that protects threatened scholars and publishes the annual *Free to Think* report on attacks on higher-education communities worldwide.

'Where the Mind is Without Fear': Poem by **Rabindranath Tagore**, part of *Gitanjali*; Tagore won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913.

PRELIMS POINTERS

- ◆ Art. 51A(h) added by the 42nd Amendment, 1976
- ◆ Art. 28(1): no religious instruction in wholly State-funded institutions
- ◆ UGC established 1953; statutory under UGC Act, 1956
- ◆ NEP 2020 replaced the 1986 policy

Syllabus Link: GS 2 — Education, Human resources. GS 4 — Probity, Intellectual integrity.



06

GS 2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Hindu · Page 8 (Op-Ed)

The United Nations' Long Road to Restoring Trust

WHY IN NEWS As the high-level week of the **81st UN General Assembly** met under the theme "**Restoring Trust, Managing Transformation: a UN that delivers for all**", an op-ed by Raja Karthikeya (Takshashila Institution) examines why global trust in the UN has frayed.

- ◆ **Why the UN exists:** Created after the Second World War to make state behaviour predictable through dialogue and international law — "the game of thrones would still be played, but with some rules".
- ◆ **What the surveys show:** Edelman Trust and Pew found declining trust and favourability; a **UN Foundation** poll found **52%** feel the UN struggles to deliver and want deep structural reform; a Rockefeller Foundation–Focaldata poll found only **58%** think the UN can lead on global problems.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPING · THE HINDU · PAGE 8 (OP-ED)

The United Nations' long road to restoring trust

As world leaders gathered in New York for the high-level week of the 81st United Nations General Assembly, they debated an increasingly urgent question: trust. This year's theme, chosen by wide-ranging consultations, was: "Restoring Trust, Managing Transformation: a UN that delivers for all" – with "restoration" suggesting a collapse of trust. The world has historically been a low-trust society. Mistrust between nations has fuelled conflict throughout history. The UN was hence established after the Second World War to make the actions of nation-states more predictable, by creating a space for dialogue and an elaborate scaffolding of international law. The game of thrones would still be played, but with some rules. The UN has been one of humanity's greatest achievements precisely because of its ability to build and channel trust between nations.

Surveys about the UN

But over the past three decades, that ability has frayed. Where once UN staff designed and seeded "trust-building" approaches between conflicting parties as part of peacebuilding, today the organisation is in a place where it needs to restore trust in its own approaches. Two surveys conducted last year by Edelman Trust and Pew found that both trust in and favourability towards the UN had declined in the countries surveyed.

A new poll by the non-profit UN Foundation found that 52% of respondents feel the UN is struggling to deliver results and want deep structural reform. Well over half believe that it has struggled to enforce international law and protect human rights, and that it is dominated by a few powerful countries. Another poll by the Rockefeller Foundation and Focaldata suggests that only 58% think that the UN can lead efforts to solve global problems, potentially a historic low for the organisation. There are at least four reasons for this situation. First, the persistent



Raja Karthikeya

Adjunct Fellow,
Takshashila
Institution

The UN, one of humanity's greatest achievements, needs to confront its deepening crisis of trust

deadlock in the UN Security Council (UNSC) has eroded the General Assembly's trust in the UNSC, so much that a resolution was passed (A/76/262) requiring the UNSC's permanent members to explain each new use of veto to the Assembly.

Second, questions persist about the integrity and oversight of the UN's internal processes ranging from recruitment, procurement to allocation of resources. When high-profile controversies such as a procurement scandal in Afghanistan (2013) or sexual exploitation and abuse cases involving peacekeepers (2017) or contracts for non-existent housing projects in Ghana and India (2021) broke out in the UN, the blame was placed on individuals but systemic accountability was seldom addressed. Consequences for individual malfeasance have been limited.

Financial muscle is a factor

Third, a few countries have come to prevail over the UN system on the strength of their financial contributions. They wield influence through advocacy for their nationals to be recruited into the system, extra-budgetary grants for cherry-picked UN programmes or a combination of the two. For instance, a 2024 report of the UN's highest financial oversight body (ACABQ) pointed out that in one UN agency, eight out of nine technical experts recruited were sponsored by a single government. In such a case, can the policies recommended to a beneficiary country by the entity be deemed completely neutral? The UN development system's transparency about its own programme spending too is increasingly limited to these donor governments and not to the public of their beneficiary countries. When it comes to preventing conflict, a fear of upsetting these powerful countries – which in turn could affect contributions as well as individual careers – has made the UN bureaucracy increasingly risk-averse and hesitant.

Fourth, though the bulk of the UN's programme delivery is in the Global South and trust in the UN is higher in the Global South (UN Foundation poll), only a fraction of the decision-making power rests with the Global South. Developing nations, which account for 84% of the world's population, hold only 44% of UN civil service leadership positions. Only a third of the UN leadership in Africa is African. Only two-fifths of the cities in which various UN entities have headquarters are cities in the Global South. When, as part of a cost-cutting measure, thousands of posts were moved out of New York and Geneva in 2025, cities in the Global South (except those mentioned) got a miss despite their cost advantages.

Reverse the shrinking space

The UN commendably delivered global humanitarian assistance and protection in 2025-26 to 98 million people, or roughly 1.1% of the world population. But aid effectiveness and the proportion of funds transferred to local actors remains an issue.

In wars such as Ukraine, Gaza and Iran, the UN made tactical interventions such as keeping grain exports flowing through the Black Sea, or preventing an oil spill in the Red Sea, but could not build on the goodwill thus earned to create mechanisms for the belligerents to sit and talk. Taking the initiative to facilitate peacemaking has become untenably centralised at the highest rungs of the organisation's bureaucratic ladder.

It is time that the UN moved to enhance its transparency and remake its ties with the people of the world, and not just the governments. The United Nations is more than an inter-governmental organisation. It reflects the best of humanity's hopes for itself. The "transformation" that the 81st General Assembly aims for, would indeed have to start, by restoring trust.

- ◆ **Reason 1 – Security Council deadlock:** Repeated vetoes led the General Assembly to adopt resolution A/RES/76/262 (2022), requiring the GA to meet whenever a veto is cast, where the P5 must explain its use.
- ◆ **Reason 2 – Integrity of internal processes:** Scandals in recruitment, procurement and resource allocation (Afghanistan procurement, 2013; sexual exploitation by peacekeepers, 2017; phantom housing contracts in Ghana and India, 2021) were blamed on individuals while systemic accountability went unaddressed.
- ◆ **Reason 3 – Financial muscle:** Big donors shape the system through extra-budgetary grants to cherry-picked programmes and advocacy for their nationals. An ACABQ report (2024) found that in one agency, eight of nine technical experts were sponsored by one government – raising questions of neutrality.
- ◆ **Reason 4 – Global South under-represented:** Developing nations are 84% of the world's population but hold only 44% of UN civil-service leadership posts; only a third of UN leadership in Africa is African; cost-cutting relocations in 2025 largely bypassed Global South cities.
- ◆ **Delivery and limits:** The UN aided ~98 million people in 2025-26 and made tactical gains (Black Sea grain exports, averting a Red Sea oil spill), but failed to convert goodwill into peace talks in Ukraine, Gaza or Iran; peacemaking is over-centralised at the top.
- ◆ **India's perspective:** India champions **reformed multilateralism** – expansion of the UNSC in both permanent and non-permanent categories (G4 and L.69 positions), text-based Intergovernmental Negotiations, and a greater voice for the Global South, drawing on its record as a leading troop contributor to UN peacekeeping.

- ◆ **Way forward:** Transparency in funding and recruitment, decentralised peacemaking, more resources to local actors, and ties with people — not just governments. The UN80 reform initiative (2025) and the Pact for the Future (2024) offer frameworks.

VALUE ADDITION · UN INSTITUTIONS IN FOCUS

Veto Initiative (A/RES/76/262): Adopted by consensus in April 2022 on a Liechtenstein-led proposal; the GA President convenes a formal debate within **10 working days** of a veto in the Security Council. It does not abolish or restrict the veto itself (Art. 27(3) of the Charter).

ACABQ: The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions — a subsidiary expert organ of the General Assembly that scrutinises the UN budget and reports of agencies.

UN80 Initiative: Launched by the Secretary-General in 2025 on the UN's 80th anniversary to cut costs, streamline mandates and relocate functions. The UN Charter was signed on **26 June 1945** and came into force on **24 October 1945**; India is a founding member.

PRELIMS POINTERS

- ◆ UNGA regular session opens each September
- ◆ Five P5 members hold the veto
- ◆ 2026: selection year for the next Secretary-General
- ◆ Black Sea Grain Initiative: UN + Türkiye, 2022

Syllabus Link: GS 2 — Important international institutions, their structure and mandate.

07

GS 2 · GOVERNANCE & RIGHTS

The Hindu · Page 9 (Op-Ed)

Surveillance Is Not the Only Privacy Issue

WHY IN NEWS An op-ed by **Pankhuri Agarwal** connects three 2026 developments — an SC PIL on **doxxing and deepfakes** (disposed in August), a petition by Rajya Sabha MP A.A. Rahim against Delhi Police's use of **facial recognition** during the CJP protests, and the SC upholding the Election Commission's **Special Intensive Revision (SIR)** — arguing that surveillance is now diffuse across the State, companies and platforms.

- ◆ **Watching 1 — Facial recognition:** The petition alleges police used facial recognition, AI-enabled smart glasses, drones and a mobile command vehicle at Jantar Mantar, with data hosted by two private firms.
- ◆ **Watching 2 — Doxxing:** Women protesters were targeted online with personal details and threats. Public identification as punishment is not new: in 2020 Lucknow put up hoardings of anti-CAA protesters, which the Allahabad High Court ordered removed as an “unwarranted interference in privacy”.
- ◆ **Watching 3 — Identity checks on rolls:** In the SIR, identity checks decide who stays on the electoral roll. The SC held the EC may examine citizenship for this limited purpose, though it cannot decide citizenship itself. Bihar's SIR began with ~7.89 crore electors and ended at 7.42 crore.
- ◆ **The legal gap:** K.S. Puttaswamy (2017), a nine-judge Bench, made privacy a fundamental right, but its test is framed around **state action**. The **DPDP Act, 2023** lets the Centre exempt any state instrumentality on grounds including security of the State and public order.

- ◆ **Pegasus:** A court-appointed technical committee (2022) found malware on some phones but could not confirm Pegasus, noting the Union government had not cooperated; in 2025 the SC indicated parts of the report would not be made public.
- ◆ **Old impulse, new scale:** In 1858 William Herschel, a British magistrate in Bengal, began taking handprints on contracts; this later grew into a fingerprint classification system in Bengal. The impulse to make populations identifiable runs through Aadhaar, city cameras and the SIR — what is new is scale and speed.
- ◆ **Key unanswered questions:** Who is responsible when a protester is identified by a camera, doxxed by anonymous accounts and threatened at home? Which safeguard applies when police data sits with a private company?
- ◆ **Way forward:** A dedicated surveillance and facial-recognition law with judicial or parliamentary oversight; narrowing DPDP exemptions to necessity and proportionality; vendor accountability and audit trails; platform duties against doxxing and deepfakes; and treating surveillance as a **diffuse, networked act**, not a single actor's act.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPING · THE HINDU · PAGE 9 (OP-ED)

Surveillance is not the only privacy issue

In August 2026, the Supreme Court disposed of a public interest litigation on doxxing and deepfakes, asking the Union Ministries to take remedial measures. Earlier in July, A.A. Rahim, a Rajya Sabha member, petitioned the top court against the Delhi Police's use of facial recognition and biometric surveillance during the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) protests. And in May, the SC upheld the Election Commission's (EC) Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, though critics had warned that it could exclude a large number of eligible voters.

While these may look like three unrelated stories, read together, they form a pattern connecting the state, private firms, online networks and the citizens caught among them.

Three kinds of watching

Facial recognition is the most visible; the State watches people in public and tries to establish who they are. Mr. Rahim's petition alleges that the police used facial recognition, AI-enabled smart glasses, drones and a mobile command vehicle at Jantar Mantar, and that the data was hosted by two private firms.

The CJP protests revealed a second layer. Women who took part were later targeted online: their personal details were published with reported rape and death threats. Public identification as punishment is not new; in March 2020, the Uttar Pradesh administration put up hoardings in Lucknow with the photographs and addresses of people protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act. The Allahabad High

**Pankhuri Agarwal**

Lecturer and Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at King's Business School, King's College London. Author of 'Fictions of Freedom: Migration, Modern Slavery and Bureaucracy in India' (2026)

Who is responsible when a protester is identified by a camera, doxxed by anonymous accounts, and then threatened at home? Which safeguard applies when data gathered by the police is held by a private company?

Court ordered them removed, calling the display an "unwarranted interference in privacy". Today, a hoarding is not needed; a photo can be uploaded, identified, amplified and linked to an address within hours.

The SIR is a third kind of watching, wherein identity checks decide who stays on the electoral roll. The top court has held that the EC may examine citizenship for this limited purpose, though it cannot decide upon citizenship itself. But the scale is considerable: Bihar's SIR began with about 7.89 crore electors and ended with a final roll of 7.42 crore.

India's privacy jurisprudence has a powerful foundation. In *K.S. Puttaswamy vs. Union of India* (2017), a nine-judge Bench held privacy to be a constitutionally protected right. However, *Puttaswamy* was decided in a case against the state, and its test is framed around state action. The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 lets the Union government exempt any state instrumentality from the Act by notification, on grounds which include the security of the state and public order. Consider Pegasus then, the spyware made by an Israeli firm and allegedly used against journalists, activists and others. A court-appointed independent expert committee reported malware in some phones which it examined in 2022, but could not say for sure if it was Pegasus; it also noted that the Union government had not cooperated. Later in 2025, the SC indicated that parts of the report would not be made public.

The result is, therefore, a legal landscape in which the

strongest constitutional protection may apply at one point in the chain, while the same person's information passes through other hands beyond it. Who is responsible, then, when a protester is identified by a camera, doxxed by anonymous accounts, and then threatened at home? What happens to privacy when an electoral-roll decision determines whether someone can vote? Which safeguard applies when data gathered by the police is held by a private company? India does not have clear answers to these questions.

None of this is new. The state's interest in identifying individuals predates Aadhaar by more than 150 years. In 1858, William Herschel, a British magistrate, began taking handprints on contracts. The technique was later developed into a fingerprint classification system in Bengal. The technology has changed, but the impulse to make a population identifiable has not. It shows up in Aadhaar, in Delhi's cameras, and in the SIR.

What is different today is the scale and speed. The state's cameras, the private companies that operate them, social media accounts that spread deepfakes and the bureaucratic exercises that decide who counts on the rolls are not separate stories that happen to unfold in the same summer. They are connected.

Therefore, the current moment calls for a different starting point: one that treats surveillance not as a discrete act by an identifiable actor against an identifiable person, but as a diffuse act spread across states, companies, and foreign vendors at once.

VALUE ADDITION · INDIA'S PRIVACY FRAMEWORK

Puttaswamy (2017) test for any intrusion: **legality** (a law), **legitimate aim**, **proportionality** (least intrusive means) and **procedural safeguards** against abuse. *Puttaswamy II* (2018, five judges) upheld Aadhaar but struck down Sec. 57 (private use).

DPDP Act, 2023: Rights of data principals, duties of data fiduciaries, consent managers, a **Data Protection Board of India** (statutory, not constitutional), and penalties up to ₹250 crore per instance. Sec. 17 allows exemptions for State instrumentalities. The DPDP Rules were notified in November 2025 with phased implementation.

Interception: *PUCL v. Union of India* (1997) laid down safeguards for phone tapping; current powers lie in Sec. 69 of the IT Act, 2000 and Sec. 20 of the Telecommunications Act, 2023.

PRELIMS POINTERS

- ◆ Henry fingerprint classification developed in Bengal (1897) with Azizul Haque & Hem Chandra Bose
- ◆ Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022 replaced the 1920 Act
- ◆ Justice B.N. Srikrishna Committee (2018) on data protection
- ◆ Right to privacy: Art. 21 + Part III

Syllabus Link: GS 2 — Fundamental Rights; Government policies; Role of civil society. GS 3 — Cyber security.

Sulphur Prices Rise due to Russia-Ukraine, West Asia Wars

WHY IN NEWS International sulphur prices rose nearly **four-fold** — from **\$280 per tonne** (July 2025) to **\$1,050** (July 2026) — and India's sulphur import bill climbed 2.5 times, from **\$248 million** (2024) to **\$638 million** (2025).

NEWSPAPER CLIPPING · THE HINDU · PAGE 9 (DATA POINT)

Sulphur prices rise due to Russia-Ukraine, West Asia wars

The rising demand for a commodity, which is largely produced as a by-product, is because of metals processing, linked to the production of batteries

DATA POINT

Devyanshi Bihani

The international price of sulphur has risen nearly four-fold in one year from \$280 per tonne in July 2025 to \$1,050 in July 2026, adding to India's import burden.

The prices started climbing from late 2025 onwards, driven by rising demand and the Russia-Ukraine war. While the prices climbed steadily, crossing \$500 per tonne by December 2025, it has skyrocketed since March 2026 after the U.S. and Israel launched attacks on Iran (Chart 1).

Sulphur supply is strongly tied to oil and gas production, as about 92% of global sulphur production comes from petroleum refining and natural gas processing. Only 8% is mined directly from natural deposits or sulphur-rich minerals such as pyrites.

China is the largest producer with an estimated production of 19 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) in 2025, followed by the U.S. (8.1 MMT), Russia (7.5 MMT), Saudi Arabia (7.2 MMT) and the UAE (6.3 MMT) (Chart 2).

Despite being among the top 10 producers of sulphur with 3.7 MMT, India relies on imports to meet its demand. India's imports have grown over the years, with West Asian producers contributing to about 90% of its total imports (Chart 3). In 2025, India imported 2.25 MMT of sulphur, of which 2.02 MMT came from West Asia. Russia accounted for 0.15 MMT (6.5%). A majority of India's demand is from the fertilizer industry with the Fertiliser Association of India estimating that 52% of the sulphur required for the industry came through imports in 2024-25.

The first major supply shock came from Russia, the third largest producer, with Ukrainian drone strikes targeting oil and gas-processing plants. This led to Russia restricting the export of industrial

sulphur to maintain domestic supplies. The restriction announced till December 2025, has since been extended till December 31, 2026.

While this contributed to a global escalation of prices, the bigger disruption came in February 2026 from West Asia when the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran. West Asia not only accounts for roughly 90% of India's sulphur imports, but also for more than 45% of global seaborne sulphur trade. Meanwhile, China also restricted sulphuric acid exports in 2026 to meet domestic needs, further tightening the global market.

The sharp increase in prices has led to India's import cost of sulphur going up 2.5 times from \$248 million in 2024 to \$638 million in 2025 (Chart 4).

Demand on the rise

The shortened supply has had such a huge impact as the demand for sulphur was already on the rise. As per the CRU Group, the global market had moved into a structural deficit by 2024. It estimated the demand to be 72.8 MMT in 2025, against a supply of 70.8 MMT — a deficit of about 1.9 MT. Stock releases from Kazakhstan and Saudi Arabia helped bridge the gap, but those inventories were also being drawn down.

A major reason for the increasing demand is because of metals processing, linked to production of batteries. Sulphuric acid is used in High-Pressure Acid Leach (HPAL) plants to extract nickel from laterite ores, which is then used in products including EV batteries (Chart 5). Indonesia has become a key player in this industry with both its nickel-related sulphuric acid demand and imports roughly quintupling between 2021 and 2025. While its demand went from 3.5 MMT to 16 MMT in this period, its imports increased from 0.23 MMT to 1.09 MMT.

With global uncertainties showing no signs of abating, India's burden due to increased import costs may continue for the near future.

Price surge

The data for the charts were sourced from the Department of Fertilizers, United States Geological Survey, UN Comtrade, and the CRU Group which studies global commodity markets, specialising in mining, metals, and fertilizer industries



Sulphur squeeze: Imported sulphur is seen at a port in Nantong, Jiangsu province, China, in March 2018. Sulphur is a key raw material in fertilizer production and is increasingly used in nickel processing. REUTERS

CHART 1: Monthly international sulphur prices (\$ per metric tonne) from July 2025 to July 2026. The prices have risen nearly four-fold. Values are in \$

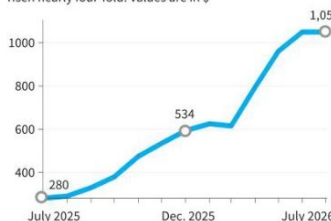


CHART 4: Value of India's sulphur imports (in \$ million) from 2021-2025. It increased 2.5 times between 2024 and 2025

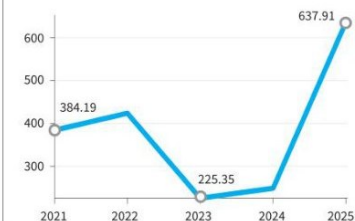


CHART 2: The top 10 sulphur producing countries in 2025. India was the eighth biggest producer of sulphur. Values are in million metric tonnes

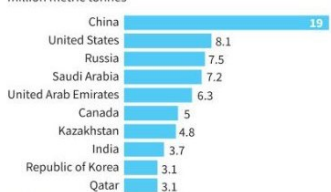


CHART 3: India's sulphur imports (in million metric tonnes) from 2020 to 2025. West Asia accounted for nearly 90% of the imports

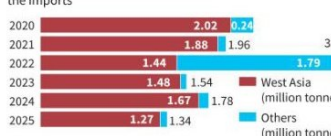
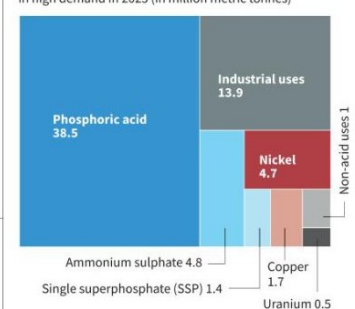


CHART 5: The industries and processes where sulphur is in high demand in 2025 (in million metric tonnes)



A major reason for the increasing demand is because of metals processing, linked to production of batteries. Sulphuric acid is used in high-pressure acid leach (HPAL) plants to extract nickel from laterite ores, which is then used in products including electric vehicle batteries

- ◆ **Price path:** Prices climbed from late 2025 on rising demand and the Russia-Ukraine war, crossing \$500/tonne by December 2025, and skyrocketed after the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran in early 2026.
- ◆ **Supply is a by-product:** About **92%** of global sulphur comes from petroleum refining and natural-gas processing; only **8%** is mined from natural deposits or minerals such as **pyrites**. Supply therefore tracks oil and gas output, not sulphur demand.
- ◆ **Top producers (2025):** China (19 MMT), U.S. (8.1), Russia (7.5), Saudi Arabia (7.2) and UAE (6.3). India is the **eighth-largest** producer (3.7 MMT) yet still import-dependent.

- ◆ **India's imports:** 2.25 MMT in 2025, of which 2.02 MMT came from West Asia (~90%) and 0.15 MMT from Russia (6.5%). The Fertiliser Association of India estimates that **52%** of the fertiliser industry's sulphur came through imports in 2024–25.
- ◆ **Shock 1 — Russia:** Ukrainian drone strikes on oil and gas-processing plants led Russia to restrict exports of industrial sulphur; the ban, first till December 2025, is now extended to December 31, 2026.
- ◆ **Shock 2 — West Asia:** The region supplies ~90% of India's sulphur and over 45% of global seaborne sulphur trade. China also restricted sulphuric acid exports in 2026, tightening the market further.
- ◆ **Demand driver — batteries:** Sulphuric acid is used in **High-Pressure Acid Leach (HPAL)** plants to extract nickel from laterite ores for EV batteries. Indonesia's sulphuric acid demand rose from 3.5 MMT to 16 MMT (2021–25) and imports from 0.23 to 1.09 MMT. CRU Group estimated a 2025 deficit of ~1.9 MMT (72.8 MMT demand vs 70.8 MMT supply).
- ◆ **Implications for India:** Costlier phosphatic fertilisers (sulphuric acid is used to make phosphoric acid for DAP/SSP), a higher subsidy bill under the **Nutrient Based Subsidy** scheme (which covers N, P, K and S), and pressure on chemicals and battery supply chains.
- ◆ **Way forward:** Diversify suppliers and sign long-term contracts, raise sulphur recovery from refineries and coal-gasification projects, promote sulphur-coated and nano fertilisers, and build buffer stocks against chokepoint risk in the Strait of Hormuz.

VALUE ADDITION · SULPHUR BASICS

Recovery: Most sulphur is recovered from hydrogen sulphide in refineries and gas plants through the **Claus process**; the older **Frasch process** mined elemental sulphur from underground deposits using superheated water.

Uses: Most sulphur is converted into sulphuric acid — the most widely used industrial chemical — for phosphatic fertilisers (phosphoric acid 38.5 MMT, the largest use in 2025), ammonium sulphate, metal leaching (nickel, copper, uranium), rubber vulcanisation and fungicides. Sulphur is also a secondary plant nutrient, and its deficiency is widespread in Indian soils.

Indonesia: The world's largest nickel producer; it banned export of raw nickel ore from 2020 to push domestic processing, fuelling HPAL investment.

PRELIMS POINTERS

- ◆ 92% of sulphur is a by-product of oil & gas
- ◆ India imports ~90% of its sulphur from West Asia
- ◆ HPAL = sulphuric acid + nickel laterite
- ◆ Pyrites deposits: Amjhore, Bihar

Syllabus Link: Prelims — Economy, Resources. GS 3 — Agriculture inputs, Energy security. GS 1 — Distribution of resources.



CONNECT THE DOTS — TODAY'S THEMES FOR ESSAY & GS

State power vs individual liberty — The Sambhal NSA ruling and the privacy op-ed both ask how far the State may act on thin or opaque grounds — and who is accountable when it does.

Consent and community rights — The Niyamgiri gram sabhas and the SIR electoral-roll checks turn on who decides — communities and citizens, or authorities and firms.

Regulatory gaps — Drug mark-ups and GRAP exemptions show how rules can exist on paper yet leave loopholes that shift costs to patients and the public.

Global governance and supply chains — The UN's trust deficit and the sulphur shock both reflect a fragmented world where conflicts quickly raise costs for countries like India.

PRACTICE ZONE

Test Yourself — 30 September 2026

MAINS ANSWER WRITING

Q1

GS 2 · POLITY

15 MARKS · 250 WORDS

“Preventive detention is meant to prevent, not to punish.” In the light of the Supreme Court’s recent ruling quashing a detention under the National Security Act, 1980, examine the constitutional and statutory safeguards against the misuse of preventive detention in India.

“निवारक निरोध का उद्देश्य रोकना है, दंड देना नहीं।” राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा अधिनियम, 1980 के अंतर्गत एक निरोध को रद्द करने वाले सर्वोच्च न्यायालय के हालिया निर्णय के आलोक में, भारत में निवारक निरोध के दुरुपयोग के विरुद्ध संवैधानिक एवं वैधानिक सुरक्षा उपायों का परीक्षण कीजिए।

APPROACH

Introduction: Define preventive detention as detention without trial to forestall a future prejudicial act; cite the *Sambhal NSA* case (₹10 lakh costs, detention ‘more punitive than preventive’).

Constitutional safeguards: Art. 22(4) Advisory Board beyond 3 months; Art. 22(5) communication of grounds and right of representation; Art. 22(7) maximum period by Parliament; Art. 20(3) against self-incrimination; writs under Art. 32/226.

Statutory safeguards (NSA): Grounds within 5–10 days; Board reference within 3 weeks; maximum 12 months; power of revocation.

Judicial safeguards: Nexus between material and satisfaction; law and order vs public order (*Ram Manohar Lohia*); *Kamarunnissa* test for detenus already in custody; *Rekha* (2011); *Banka Sneha Sheela* (2021).

Gaps: No lawyer before the Board; subjective satisfaction; use for ordinary crime; delays in habeas corpus; 44th Amendment provision on Board period not notified.

Way forward and conclusion: Time-bound Board hearings, officer accountability, exemplary costs, publication of data; conclude that liberty is the rule and detention the exception.

Q2

GS 2 · HEALTH

15 MARKS · 250 WORDS

India’s drug price control regime has capped manufacturers’ prices but left trade margins largely unchecked. Critically analyse this statement in the context of the Supreme Court’s recent concern over steep mark-ups on essential medicines, and suggest measures to make medicines affordable.

भारत की औषधि मूल्य नियंत्रण व्यवस्था ने निर्माताओं की कीमतों को तो सीमित किया है, परंतु व्यापार मार्जिन को काफी हद तक अनियंत्रित छोड़ दिया है। आवश्यक दवाओं पर अत्यधिक मार्क-अप को लेकर सर्वोच्च न्यायालय की हालिया चिंता के संदर्भ में इस कथन का आलोचनात्मक विश्लेषण कीजिए तथा दवाओं को किफायती बनाने के उपाय सुझाइए।

APPROACH

Introduction: Cite the SC's 'carnage' remark: a cancer drug at ~₹3,000 PTR sold at ~₹27,000 MRP; high out-of-pocket health spending in India.

Framework: NPPA (1997), DPCO 2013 under the Essential Commodities Act, NLEM-based ceiling prices with a 16% retailer margin, Para 19 powers.

Arguments for the statement: Non-scheduled drugs outside ceiling prices; combination-formulation anomalies (Rosuvas example); captive hospital pharmacies; limited use of Trade Margin Rationalisation.

Counter-arguments: Ceiling prices have lowered prices of NLEM drugs; TMR on 42 cancer drugs (2019) cut MRPs sharply; stent and implant caps; Jan Aushadhi Kendras.

Way forward: Extend TMR; PTR disclosure; freedom to buy outside hospitals; Clinical Establishments Act rate standards; generics, PMBJP and State monitoring units.

Conclusion: Link affordable medicines to Art. 21, Art. 47 and Universal Health Coverage.

PRELIMS MCQS

1. Consider the following statements regarding drug price regulation in India:

1. The Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 is issued under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.
2. The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority is a statutory body created under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.
3. Medicines in the National List of Essential Medicines are treated as scheduled formulations for price control.

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 |

2. With reference to the National Security Act, 1980, consider the following statements:

1. No person can be detained for more than twelve months under the Act.
2. The case of every detenu must be referred to an Advisory Board within three weeks of detention.
3. A detenu has the right to be represented by a legal practitioner before the Advisory Board.

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 |

3. Under the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023, a confession made by an accused to a police officer:

- | | |
|--|---|
| (a) is admissible if it is recorded on video | (b) cannot be proved against the accused |
| (c) is admissible if made before an officer above the rank of Superintendent | (d) is admissible only in cases under preventive detention laws |

4. Consider the following statements about the Dongria Kondh:

1. They are a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group inhabiting the Niyamgiri hills spread over Kalahandi and Rayagada districts.
2. Their principal deity is Niyam Raja, the protector of the hills.
3. Odisha has the largest number of PVTGs among Indian States.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| (a) Only one | (b) Only two |
| (c) None | (d) All three |

5. Consider the following pairs (Case – Subject matter):

1. Orissa Mining Corporation v. MoEF (2013) – Role of gram sabhas under the Forest Rights Act
2. Samatha v. State of A.P. (1997) – Mining leases on tribal land in Scheduled Areas
3. PUCL v. Union of India (1997) – Safeguards for telephone tapping
4. Rekha v. State of Tamil Nadu (2011) – Right to privacy as a fundamental right

How many of the pairs given above are correctly matched?

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| (a) Only one | (b) Only two |
| (c) Only three | (d) All four |

6. Under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) for Delhi-NCR, Stage III is invoked when the Air Quality Index is in the range:

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| (a) 201–300 | (b) 301–400 |
| (c) 401–450 | (d) Above 450 |

7. With reference to the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM), consider the following statements:

1. It is a statutory body which replaced the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority.
2. Its jurisdiction covers the NCR and adjoining areas of Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.
3. Its directions on air pollution prevail over those of the State Pollution Control Boards in its area.

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 |

8. The UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/76/262, often called the 'veto initiative', provides that:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (a) a permanent member must abstain from voting on a dispute to which it is a party | (b) the General Assembly shall convene a debate within ten working days of a veto being cast in the Security Council |
| (c) a veto can be overridden by a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly | (d) the veto shall not apply to resolutions on humanitarian assistance |

9. Consider the following statements:

1. Under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, the Union Government may exempt any instrumentality of the State from the Act on grounds including security of the State and public order.
2. The right to privacy was declared a fundamental right by a nine-judge Bench in *K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India* (2017).
3. The Data Protection Board of India is a constitutional body.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| (a) 1 only | (b) 2 and 3 only |
| (c) 1 and 2 only | (d) 1, 2 and 3 |

10. Consider the following statements regarding sulphur:

1. Most of the world's sulphur is obtained as a by-product of petroleum refining and natural gas processing.
2. China is the largest producer of sulphur in the world.
3. Sulphuric acid is used in High-Pressure Acid Leach plants to extract nickel from laterite ores.
4. Russia is India's largest source of sulphur imports.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| (a) 1, 2 and 3 only | (b) 2, 3 and 4 only |
| (c) 1 and 4 only | (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4 |

ANSWER KEY & RATIONALE

1 → (b) NPPA was set up in 1997 by a Government resolution as an attached office of the Department of Pharmaceuticals; it is not statutory. DPCO flows from Sec. 3 of the ECA, 1955, and NLEM medicines are scheduled.

2 → (a) The maximum detention is 12 months and reference to the Board is within 3 weeks. The Act expressly denies a detenu the right to appear through a lawyer before the Board.

3 → (b) Sec. 23 of the BSA (earlier Sec. 25, Evidence Act) bars proving a confession to a police officer against the accused, complementing Art. 20(3). The SC relied on this protection in the Sambhal NSA case.

4 → (d) All three are correct. Odisha has 13 of India's 75 PVTGs — the highest of any State.

5 → (c) *Rekha* (2011) dealt with preventive detention as an exception to Art. 21; the privacy ruling is *K.S. Puttaswamy* (2017). The other three pairs are correct.

6 → (c) Stage I: 201–300 (Poor); Stage II: 301–400 (Very Poor); Stage III: 401–450 (Severe); Stage IV: above 450 (Severe+).

7 → (d) The CAQM Act, 2021 dissolved EPCA (1998), gave the Commission exclusive jurisdiction on air pollution over NCR and adjoining areas, and made its directions binding over State bodies.

8 → (b) Adopted in 2022, it only mandates a GA debate after a veto so that the P5 explain its use; it does not restrict or override the veto.

9 → (c) The Data Protection Board is created under the DPDP Act, 2023 — a statutory, not constitutional, body. Statements 1 and 2 are correct.

10 → (a) About 92% of sulphur is a by-product of oil and gas; China produced 19 MMT in 2025. West Asia supplies ~90% of India's imports; Russia only ~6.5%.

QUICK REVISION RECAP

Drug mark-ups — SC called ten-fold retail mark-ups on essential medicines 'carnage'; asked why DPCO's 16% retailer margin cannot apply uniformly; Centre blamed private hospitals; in-house pharmacies flagged.

Sambhal NSA — SC quashed NSA detention of Mulla Afroz for lack of nexus; confession to police cannot ground detention (Art. 20(3)); ₹10 lakh costs on U.P.

Niyamgiri — NAPM opposed revival of Vedanta's bauxite mining; 2013 SC verdict gave gram sabhas the final say and all 12 rejected the project; Dongria Kondh are a PVTG.

Revised GRAP — CAQM withdrew exemption for non-BS-VI trucks carrying essentials, added Sonipat to high-vehicle-density districts, exempted pothole repair from the Stage 3 construction ban.

Academic freedom — Op-ed decries ritual and hierarchy in convocations; SAR rates India 'severely restricted'; AFI fell from 0.38 to 0.14; Art. 51A(h) scientific temper.

UN trust deficit — 81st UNGA theme on restoring trust; four causes — UNSC deadlock, weak internal integrity, donor capture, Global South under-representation.

Privacy — Facial recognition, doxxing and the SIR show surveillance is diffuse; Puttaswamy is framed around the State; DPDP Act allows broad State exemptions.

Sulphur — Prices up ~4× to \$1,050/t; 92% is by-product of oil and gas; India imports ~90% from West Asia; HPAL nickel processing drives demand.

PRELIMS TRAP-SETTERS

⚠ **NSA grounds** must be given ordinarily within **5 days** and in exceptional cases within **10 days** — not 15.

⚠ **NPPA** is not statutory; **DPCO** derives from the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, not the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.

⚠ **CAQM** is statutory (2021 Act); **EPCA** (1998) was notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 on the SC's direction.

⚠ **GRAP** was notified in 2017; Stage III is 401–450 AQI, Stage IV is above 450.

⚠ **Niyamgiri** lies in **Kalahandi and Rayagada**; the Panchpatmali bauxite mines of NALCO are in Koraput — do not confuse them.

⚠ **A/RES/76/262** does not abolish or override the veto; it only requires a General Assembly debate.

⚠ **Puttaswamy I** (2017) was nine judges on privacy; **Puttaswamy II** (2018) was five judges on Aadhaar.

⚠ India **produces** sulphur (8th largest, 3.7 MMT) yet is import-dependent; Russia supplies only ~6.5% of its imports.

⚠ **Art. 22(4)** Advisory Board threshold is still 3 months — the 44th Amendment's 2-month provision has not been brought into force.

PLACES IN NEWS

Sambhal (U.P.): District in western U.P.; site of the Shahi Jama Masjid survey violence of November 24, 2024.

Niyamgiri Hills (Odisha): Eastern Ghats range across Kalahandi and Rayagada; home of the Dongria Kondh; bauxite reserve.

Lanjigarh (Kalahandi): Site of Vedanta's alumina refinery at the foot of the Niyamgiri hills.

Sonipat (Haryana): Newly added to GRAP's high-vehicle-density districts.

Jantar Mantar (Delhi): Designated protest site where facial recognition was allegedly used.

Nantong (Jiangsu, China): Port pictured handling imported sulphur.

Indonesia: World's top nickel producer; HPAL hub driving sulphuric acid demand.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Justices Vikram Nath & Sandeep Mehta: SC Bench that flagged drug mark-ups.

Justices Dipankar Datta & Sheel Nagu: SC Bench that quashed the Sambhal NSA detention.

Tushar Mehta: Solicitor-General of India.

Prafulla Samantara: Odisha activist; Goldman Environmental Prize 2017.

Anil Agarwal: Chairman, Vedanta Group.

William Herschel: British magistrate who took handprints on contracts in Bengal (1858).

Rabindranath Tagore: Poet of 'Where the Mind is Without Fear'; Nobel Prize 1913.

PRELIMS BYTES

◆ **Essential Commodities Act, 1955:** Empowers the Centre to control production, supply and distribution of essential commodities; drugs are notified as essential commodities.

◆ **PMBJP:** Jan Aushadhi Kendras are run under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana, implemented by the Pharmaceuticals & Medical Devices Bureau of India (PMBI).

◆ **Habeas corpus:** Literally 'to have the body'; the only writ that can be issued against both public authorities and private individuals.

◆ **EPCA:** Set up in 1998 on the Supreme Court's direction and long chaired by Bhure Lal; dissolved by the CAQM Act, 2021.

◆ **NCAP:** Launched by the MoEFCC in January 2019 for non-attainment cities that repeatedly fail National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

◆ **Claus process:** Converts hydrogen sulphide from refineries and gas plants into elemental sulphur — the source of most of the world's sulphur.

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high..." — Rabindranath Tagore
