



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

26th August 2026



CONTEXT: India's youth crisis is about the absence of jobs, not just examination reform.

India's Youth Employment Crisis: From Exam Preparation to Quality Jobs

Why is this issue important?

India's youth face a **two-ended crisis** -

- **PM's Solution - Free Coaching**
- **STRUCTURAL ISSUE?**

Reality Check: CHALLENGES

A. Rising Cost of Private Coaching

- Significant component - HEE
- MoSPI - 16% - Family Expenditure - Child's Education
- By Higher-Secondary Stage - **~25%** - Education Budget

free/low-cost digital coaching - DPI - ACCESSIBILITY

ISSUE? - Affordable Preparation ≠ Adequate Opportunities.

B. The Higher-Education Bottleneck

- **Medical Education**
 - 2.2 Million - 1.4 Lakh Seats
 - ~10k - Top Colleges
- **Engineering**
 - Limited Seats

Emerging Concern -

AISHE - Undergraduate Enrolment - Declined in 2023-2024

Diploma Enrolment Increased - 1.38 lakh

Possible Interpretation - Shorter, Skill-oriented and Employment-linked Programmes

C. The Real Crisis: Graduate Employment

PLFS unit-level data -

- Among every 100 graduates aged 15-29, only ~ 26 - regular salaried employment (2025)
- Only ~ 4 had Salaried Employment

Broader Problem

Education → Employability ?

Employability → Employment ?

D. Why Free Coaching Alone is Insufficient?

- **Free coaching can address:**
 - Cost of Examination Preparation
 - Digital Divide - Learning Resources
- **But it cannot address:**
 - Shortage - Quality College Seats
 - Lack of Industry-Ready Skills
 - Weak Private Investment
 - Secure Jobs

E. Manufacturing: The Missing Link

Source - MASS EMPLOYMENT

- Jobless Growth -
- Remains - 1/6th - GVA - TARGET?

Why manufacturing matters?

- Can generate - Productive Emp. Opportunities -

Demographic Dividend



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F. Weakening Private Investment

Corporate investment/GDP -
17.3% in 2007-08 → 10.3% in 2024-25

- **Sustained Private Investment**
 - Capacity Creation
 - Technology Adoption
 - Manufacturing Expansion

2019 Reduction - Corporate Tax ?

G. The Bigger Issue - FRUSTRATION

Growing Aspirations vs Limited Opportunities

Erodes Trust

What Needs To Be Done? - The Way Forward

- A. Expand Quality Higher Education**
 - Capacity Creation
 - Expand - State Universities
- B. Move - Degree-centric to Skill-centric Education**
 - Apprenticeships, VE and Industry-linked Courses
 - NEP's - multidisciplinary & vocational orientation
- C. Create - Employment-intensive Manufacturing Ecosystem**
 - Textiles
 - Electronics
 - Food Processing

A. Revive Private Investment

- Remove - Regulatory Uncertainty
- EoDB - MSMEs

B. Export-Oriented Industrialisation

- Avoid excessive Protectionism
- Manufacturing Clusters -

C. Strengthen public investment

- Infra.
- Logistics
- ICs
- Skilling Ecosystem

D. Use Digital Public Infrastructure for education

- Important *Equalising Instrument*

Mains Practise Question :

India's youth challenge is no longer merely a problem of access to education, but of converting education and aspirations into productive and secure employment. Discuss the structural factors behind this disconnect and suggest measures to bridge the education-employment gap.

(10 Marks, 150 words)

19. समकालीन भारत में जनसांख्यिकीय संक्रमण की चुनौतियों का आलोचनात्मक परीक्षण कीजिए।

(उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Critically examine the challenges of demographic transition in contemporary India.

(Answer in 250 words) 15



Who Chooses the Judges?



CONTEXT: The judiciary that demands transparency from every institution of governance cannot ask citizens to trust it on faith alone

Why is the issue in news?

- Observations – SC Judge **Justice Ujjal Bhuyan** – greater openness – collegium process
- The issue involves balancing three constitutional values:

Judicial Independence + Merit + Institutional Accountability

What is the Collegium System?

Collegium System is NOT explicitly mentioned in the Constitution.

- **First Judges Case (1981):** “primacy” of the CJI’s recommendation – refused for “cogent reasons.” – **Primacy to Executive**
- **Second Judges Case (1993):** SC introduced – **Collegium system** – “consultation” = “concurrence”; not the CJI’s individual opinion – consultation with 2 senior-most judges SC
- **Third Judges Case (1998):** SC – President’s reference – expanded the Collegium – 5 membered body
- **Fourth Judges Case (2015):** The 99th CAA, 2014 & JAC Act, 2014 – replaced collegium system – NJAC; SC – Unconstitutional

Major Concerns with the Present System

A. Lack of transparency

- Selection Criteria or Eligibility Matrix?
- Limited Disclosure

B. Accountability deficit

- “judge-made mechanism”
- Judicial Independence = Institutional Immunity ?

C. Concerns over Nepotism

- “Uncle Judge” Phenomenon
- Absence – Transparent Mechanism – MERIT

D. Representation concerns

- Gender Diversity?
- Regional Diversity?
- Minorities?

E. Delays

- Multiple Institutional Stages

What Do Other Democracies Do?

United Kingdom

- JAC plays central role.
- Vacancies – can be publicly advertised
- Structured selection processes

South Africa

- JSC plays a key role.
- Candidates – can be nominated publicly
- Interviews are conducted openly



Who Chooses the Judges?



CONTEXT: The judiciary that demands transparency from every institution of governance cannot ask citizens to trust it on faith alone

Way Forward – Reform, Not Abolition

- A. **Publish – annual Judicial Vacancies Calendar**
- B. **Define broad eligibility criteria – Including –**
 - professional competence
 - integrity
 - judicial temperament
 - constitutional understanding
 - quality of judgments/advocacy
 - contribution to the legal profession

C. Reasoned collegium resolutions

D. Conflict-of-interest safeguards

- Candidates – close familial relationships – **enhanced scrutiny**

E. Improve diversity

- Track representation of:
women + SC/ST/OBC communities + minorities + regional diversity + first-generation lawyers

F. Create institutional research support

- **Judicial Appointments Secretariat**
– background research, data and comparative assessment

Mains Practise Question

Judicial independence cannot be preserved at the cost of institutional transparency and accountability. In the context of the collegium system of judicial appointments in India, discuss the associated challenges and suggest a comprehensive way forward.

(10 Marks, 150 words)



Electoral trends

Young voters are a dynamic part of India's electoral landscape. Participation varies sharply across States, while party preferences differ between States as well as age groups. Voting patterns can also change considerably from one election to the next.

Table 1: Youth voter turnout across States and age groups

State	Average Turnout	18-21 years	22-25 years
Lok Sabha election 2024	66.1	60	68
Assembly Elections			
Bihar (2025)	67.3	41	62
M.P. (2023)	75.6	89	70
Punjab (2022)	72.2	77	70
U.P. (2022)	61.1	51	62
Uttarakhand (2022)	65.4	49	56
Gujarat (2022)	64.8	78	65
Himachal (2022)	75.8	59	62
West Bengal (2026)	93.7	93	95
Tamil Nadu (2026)	86	90	88
Kerala (2026)	79.5	83	86
Assam (2026)	86.8	76	95

Note: All figures are in %. The State turnout is for the latest Assembly poll in that specific State.

Table 2: Party preferences of young voters in West Bengal, 2021 and 2026

Age Group	2026		2021	
	AITC+	BJP	AITC+	NDA
18 to 21 years	33	51	49	38
22 to 25 years	43	46	49	42
26 to 28 years	45	48	45	42
29 years and above	41	46	49	37



Table 3: Party preferences of young voters in Uttar Pradesh, 2017 and 2022

Age Group	2022			2017		
	BJP+	SP+	BSP	NDA	SP+	BSP
18 to 21 years	44	38	11	42	30	20
22 to 25 years	44	39	11	42	27	24
26 to 28 years	47	36	12	43	29	20
29 years and above	44	36	13	41	28	22

Note: All figures are in %. Others voted for different parties.

Table 4: Party preferences of young voters in Uttarakhand, 2017 and 2022

Age Group	2022		2017	
	Cong.	BJP	Cong.	BJP
18 to 21 years	48	33	42	39
22 to 25 years	36	41	28	53
26 to 28 years	42	38	29	48
29 years and above	37	46	35	46



Table 5: Party preferences of young voters in Bihar, 2025 and 2020

Age Group	2025		2020	
	NDA	MGB	NDA	MGB
18 to 21 years	50	40	24	39
22 to 25 years	49	38	39	38
26 to 28 years	41	36	39	39
29 years and above	47	38	38	37

Table 6: Party preferences of young voters in Punjab, 2022 and 2017

Age Group	2022			2017		
	Cong.	BJP+	AAP	Cong.	BJP+	AAP
18 to 21	24	6	47	38	23	34
22 to 25	16	2	52	33	31	27
26 to 28	15	11	50	37	27	30
29 years & above	24	8	40	40	32	21

Table 8: Party preferences of young voters in Delhi, 2020 and 2015

Age Group	2020			2015		
	Cong.	BJP+	AAP	Cong.	BJP+	AAP
18 to 21	4	32	58	8	26	64
22 to 25	4	33	59	11	34	52
26 to 28	3	39	57	6	34	58
29 years & above	5	42	52	10	33	53

Table 7: Party preferences of young voters in Tamil Nadu, 2026 and 2021

Age Group	2026			2021	
	DMK Alliance	AIADMK Alliance	TVK	DMK+	AIADMK+
18 to 21	16	6	69	38	38
22 to 25	18	12	61	44	32
26 to 28	25	18	50	38	38
29 years & above	36	33	26	47	41



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Environment
Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 14**

Key Takeaways

- **Paradigm shift:** India called for moving from **post-drought relief to proactive, technology-enabled drought resilience**.
- Drought is increasingly a **development challenge**, affecting water security, agriculture, biodiversity and economic stability.
- India's approach integrates **early warning, satellite-based drought assessment, preparedness, mitigation, relief and community resilience**.
- **Catchment and riverscape restoration** is central to improving water retention, reducing erosion and enhancing groundwater recharge.
- The principle "**restore the forest before the flow**" highlights the importance of ecosystem restoration for long-term water security.
- **COP17 of UNCCD** is being held in Mongolia under "*Restoring Land. Restoring Hope*".
- UNCCD is one of the **three Rio Conventions**, alongside UNFCCC and CBD.
- Land degradation affects **up to 40% of global land**, threatening livelihoods and food/water security.
- COP17 seeks to convert global commitments into **measurable and investable solutions** for land, water and food security.

Basics & Value Addition

- **UNCCD:** Adopted in **1994**; legally binding global agreement focused specifically on combating desertification, land degradation and drought.
- **India:** Hosted **UNCCD COP14 (2019)** in New Delhi.
- India has committed to achieving **Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)** and has a target of restoring **26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030**.
- **Drought types:** Meteorological (rainfall deficit), agricultural (soil-moisture stress), hydrological (low surface/groundwater) and socioeconomic drought.
- **Technology:** Remote sensing, GIS, AI-based forecasting, soil-moisture monitoring and automated weather stations can enable **early action rather than emergency response**.
- **Way forward:** Combine **ecosystem restoration + water conservation + climate-resilient agriculture + local communities + climate finance**.
- **UPSC linkage:** SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), 6 (Clean Water), 13 (Climate Action) and 15 (Life on Land).



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Environment
Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 15**

Key Takeaways

- **Policy push:** Cabinet approved the revamped **GOBARDhan scheme worth ₹23,731 crore**, aiming to scale CBG substantially till **2036**.
- **Core challenge:** CBG plants need a **reliable, affordable and year-round feedstock supply chain**, not merely production capacity.
- **Major feedstocks:** Press mud, paddy/wheat straw and cattle dung; each faces different challenges of **seasonality, transport and storage**.
- **Location matters:** High-moisture feedstocks like cattle dung and press mud should be sourced close to plants; around **25 km** is considered a viable radius for press mud.
- **Seasonality:** Press mud is generated mainly during the **4–5 month sugarcane crushing season**, while paddy straw must often be collected within about **15 days** of harvest.
- **Storage risks:** Biomass must be protected from **fire and moisture**, requiring scientific storage infrastructure.
- **Aggregator model:** Aggregators can connect farmers with CBG plants, organise collection and facilitate feedstock supply.
- **Circular economy:** CBG production generates **bio-slurry**, which can return to farms as organic fertiliser.
- India currently has **1,302 functional CBG plants**, with **256 more under development**.
- India targets **3% CBG blending with CNG/PNG in FY27**, rising to **4% and 5%** subsequently.

Basics & Value Addition

- **CBG** is produced by anaerobic digestion of organic material; purified biogas can be used as a transport fuel or for domestic/industrial applications.
- It supports **energy security + waste management + farmer income + reduction in stubble burning** simultaneously.
- The **SATAT initiative (2018)** seeks to promote CBG production and its sale as a clean transport fuel.
- **GOBARDhan**, under the Swachh Bharat Mission–Grameen, promotes conversion of cattle dung and organic waste into **biogas, CBG and bio-slurry**.
- CBG can contribute to India's **circular economy** by converting agricultural and animal waste into energy and fertiliser.
- **Way forward:** Promote decentralised plants, multi-feedstock technology, biomass aggregation centres, scientific storage, assured offtake and transparent pricing.
- **UPSC linkage:** CBG can simultaneously address **energy transition, rural economy, air pollution, waste management and climate mitigation**.



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Polity
Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number :** 3

What is a Public Interest Litigation (PIL)?

According to the **Supreme Court** (in Janata Dal v. H.S. Chaudhary, 1993) Public Interest Litigation (PIL) means a legal action started in a court of law for the enforcement of public/general interest where the public or a particular class of the public have some interest (including pecuniary interest) that affects their legal rights or liabilities.

- Public Interest is the interest belonging to a particular class of the community that affects their legal rights or liabilities.
- The concept of PIL has its origin in the USA in the 1960s.

History of PIL in India

- **Mumbai Kamagar Sabha vs. Abdul Thai (1976):** In this case, Justice Krishna Iyer argued that PIL had an important role to play in ensuring that the legal system served the interests of the poor and the oppressed.
 - He emphasized that PIL was not a substitute for traditional litigation but rather to complement it.
- **Hussainara Khatoon vs. State of Bihar case (1979):** It was the first reported instance of PIL, which brought attention to the inhuman conditions of prisoners and under-trial prisoners.
 - This case established the right to speedy justice as a basic fundamental right.
- **S.P. Gupta vs. Union of India (1981):** It was presided over by Justice P.N. Bhagwati, which led to a new era for PIL.
 - The decision held that any individual member of the public or a social action group can invoke the jurisdiction of the **High Courts** (Article 226) or the Supreme Court (Article 32) and seek remedies for violations of legal or constitutional rights for those who are unable to do so due to social, economic, or other disabilities.

What are the features of PIL in India?

The following are some of the features of Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in India:

- PIL has neither been defined in the Constitution nor in any Indian statute.
- **Constitutional provisions:** The Supreme Court and the High Court under Articles 32 and 226 (authority to issue writs) of the Constitution, respectively, can hear a PIL petition submitted by any concerned individual.
- **Relaxation of locus standi rule:** PIL in India was made possible by the relaxation of the requirement of "locus standi".
- **Different from traditional litigation:** PIL is different from traditional litigation, which is adversarial in nature and involves disputes between two parties.
- **Proactive role of courts:** In PIL, the role of the court is more proactive than in traditional actions and requires a more positive attitude in determining acts.
- **Flexibility:** While PIL allows for greater flexibility in the procedure, it must still adhere to judicial procedure and principles.



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Polity
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What are some of the important judgments relating to PIL?

There have been many significant judgments related to Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in India over the years. Some of the most notable ones include

- **Bandhua Mukti Morcha vs. Union of India (1984):** This case dealt with the exploitation of bonded laborers and was the first PIL filed by an NGO.
 - The Supreme Court ordered the release of all bonded laborers and provided them with compensation.
- **Rural Litigation and Entitlement Kendra (RLEK) vs. State of Uttar Pradesh (1985):** It dealt with mining activities that had led to environmental degradation, deforestation, and displacement of local communities.
 - The Supreme Court recognized that the right to a healthy environment was an integral part of the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution.
- **MC Mehta vs. Union of India (1987):** This case dealt with the issue of environmental pollution in Delhi and was the first PIL to be filed on an environmental issue.
 - The Supreme Court replaced the strict liability principle with the absolute liability principle to protect citizens' rights.
- **People's Union for Civil Liberties vs. Union of India (1997):** This case dealt with the issue of custodial deaths and the right to legal aid to these victims.
 - The Supreme Court held that the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution included the right to live with human dignity, free from torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.
- **Vishaka & Others v. State of Rajasthan & Others (1997):** The Court laid down guidelines and norms to be observed to prevent sexual harassment of working women.
 - The judgment led to the enactment of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Polity
Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 2**

National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd

- It is an **apex organization of marketing cooperatives** for agricultural produce in India.
- It was founded on **2nd October 1958** and is registered under the **Multi-State Co-operative Societies Act, 2002**.
- NAFED is now **one of the largest procurement as well as marketing agencies** for agricultural products in India.
- **Objectives:**
 - To organize, promote and develop marketing, processing and storage of agricultural, horticultural and forest produce.
 - To distribute agricultural machinery, implements and other inputs, undertake inter-state, import and export trade, wholesale or retail as the case may be.
 - To act and assist for technical advice in agricultural production for the promotion and the working of its members, partners, associates and cooperative marketing, processing and supply societies in India.



Q1. Consider the following statements with reference to Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in India:

1. Public Interest Litigation has been explicitly defined in the Constitution of India.
2. The Supreme Court and High Courts can entertain PILs under Articles 32 and 226, respectively.
3. PIL involves relaxation of the traditional rule of *locus standi*, allowing a public-spirited person to approach the court on behalf of those whose rights or interests are affected.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 2 only
- d) All of the above

Answer: b

Q2. Which of the following statements regarding the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) is not correct?

- a) It is an apex organisation of marketing cooperatives for agricultural produce in India.
- b) It is registered under the Multi-State Co-operative Societies Act, 2002.
- c) It undertakes activities related to procurement, marketing, processing and storage of agricultural and horticultural produce.
- d) It is exclusively responsible for regulating agricultural exports from India.

Answer : d

Q3. Consider the following statements with reference to the Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) in India:

1. The GOBARdhan scheme seeks to promote the conversion of organic waste into useful resources such as Compressed Bio-Gas and organic manure.
2. The availability of feedstock throughout the year is an important challenge for CBG plants because several biomass sources are seasonal.
3. Bio-slurry generated during CBG production can potentially be returned to farms as organic fertiliser.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: c

Q4. Consider the following statements with reference to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and drought management:

1. The UNCCD is a legally binding international agreement specifically focused on combating desertification and drought.
2. India has committed to achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and restoring 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030.
3. Agricultural drought is primarily associated with low surface and groundwater levels, while hydrological drought is associated with inadequate soil moisture.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 2 only
- d) 3 only

Answer: c

Q5. Consider the following statements with reference to the Collegium System for appointment of judges in India:

1. The Second Judges Case (1993) expanded the Supreme Court Collegium to a five-member body headed by the Chief Justice of India.
2. The Third Judges Case (1998) established the primacy of the Chief Justice of India and the Supreme Court Collegium in judicial appointments.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: d





VAJIRAM & RAVI

Institute for IAS Examination

A unit of Vajiram & Ravi IAS Study Centre LLP

9-B, Bada Bazar Marg, Old Rajinder Nagar,
New Delhi - 110060 • Ph.: 41007400, 41007500

New No. 62, P Block, 6th Avenue, Anna Nagar,
Chennai - 600040 • Ph.: 044-4330-2121

Visit us at : www.vajiramandravi.com