

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

## UPSC CSE 2026



**DAILY CURRENT  
AFFAIRS NOTES**

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## Judiciary cannot tie President, Governor to timelines, says SC

- The Constitution is **silent** about whether an **opinion given by the Supreme Court under Article 143** would overrule a binding judgment.
- **Article 141** mandates that **“the law declared by the Supreme Court shall be binding on all courts within the territory of India.”**
- **Article 144** states that **“all authorities, civil and judicial, in the territory of India shall act in aid of the Supreme Court.”**
- These two Articles make it clear that the **law declared by the Supreme Court through its judgments is binding, and “all” authorities must comply with it.**

## India’s fisheries and aquaculture, its promising course

- On **World Fisheries Day 2025 (November 21)**, the **FAO** calls for a renewed commitment to **India’s Blue Revolution**, supporting the Government’s theme: **“India’s Blue Transformation: Strengthening Value Addition in Seafood Exports.”**

### India’s Growth in Fisheries and Aquaculture

- Fisheries and aquaculture are among **India’s fastest-growing food-producing sectors**, vital for **livelihoods, nutrition, and trade**.
- India faces challenges of **overfishing, habitat degradation, water pollution, and climate change**, affecting aquatic ecosystems.
- Small-scale fishers lack **finance, technology, market access**, and face issues of **poor traceability and inadequate post-harvest measures**.
- According to **SOFIA 2024**, global capture fisheries produced **92.3 million tonnes (2022)**, while aquaculture produced **130.9 million tonnes** valued at **\$313 billion**.
- India contributed **10.23 million tonnes**, becoming the **second-largest aquaculture producer globally**. India’s aquatic food production grew from **2.44 million tonnes (1980s)** to **17.54 million tonnes (2022–23)**.
- Growth driven by **advanced technologies, infrastructure, and institutional support**.
- Key agencies include **ICAR fisheries institutes, MPEDA, NFDB, and Coastal Aquaculture Authority**.
- Private sector investment expanded across the value chain from **hatcheries to exports**.

### Reforms and Government Initiatives

- The past decade marked transformation under **India’s Blue Revolution** and **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)**.
- **Key reforms include: Vessel transponders** for fisher safety, **Digital and credit inclusion** via Kisan Credit Card, **Matsya Seva Kendras** for integrated support.
- Positive developments include the **Climate-Resilient Coastal Fishermen Villages Programme** and **draft National Fisheries Policy 2020**.

### FAO’s Support in India

- FAO has supported India for decades in **sustainability, resilience, and institutional strengthening**.
- Collaboration began with the **Bay of Bengal Programme (BOBP)**, improving **small-scale fishing technologies, sea safety, and post-harvest management**.
- The **BOBLME project** supported the **Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM)** and **National Plans of Action** against **IUU fishing**.
- FAO supports a **GEF-funded project in Andhra Pradesh** on **climate-resilient, sustainable aquaculture**, guided by **GSA and EAA** principles.

## Supreme Court’s advisory opinion

Breaking down the court’s response to **14 questions raised by the President** asking if a constitutional court can impose timelines for Governors and the President to give assent to Bills passed by legislatures

### Governor’s discretion under Article 200

- May assent to the Bill
- May withhold assent, but must communicate reasons to the State legislature
- May refer the Bill to the President for consideration under Article 201

### Judicial limits

- SC cannot impose timelines for assent or create a concept of ‘deemed assent’ under Article 142
- When a Bill is referred, the President need not seek SC’s advisory opinion under Article 143 every time

### Governor’s accountability

- Governors cannot indefinitely sit on a Bill; if they do, **limited judicial review applies**
- Courts can direct Governors to decide within a reasonable time frame, but not dictate the outcome

## Court’s rebuttal

The Supreme Court on Thursday countered objections raised by non-BJP-ruled States that the 2025 Presidential Reference was an “appeal in disguise” against the court’s binding verdict

- Tamil Nadu had argued that the May 13 Presidential Reference was only a thinly-veiled “appeal” against the April 8 judgment in the Governor case

- The Reference Bench, however, pointed to a majority opinion delivered by Justice Y.V. Chandrachud (retired) in a 1978 PR in which he said that “our opinion may even go so far as to overrule, if necessary”



- A **Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP)** aims to strengthen **fishing ports and harbours**, with pilot sites at **Vanakbara (Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Diu)** and **Jakhau (Gujarat)**.
- TCP will provide **strategic and operational tools** for investment planning to address environmental, social, and economic challenges.

#### Focus on Sustainability

- **Sustainability** must remain central to India's fisheries future.
- **Priorities include:** Science-based stock assessments, **Co-managed Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS)** to curb **IUU fishing**, **Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture**, **Ecosystem-based approaches**, Strengthening **certification, traceability, and digital tools**, Ensuring **inclusivity** for smallholders.

#### Is air pollution a South Asian crisis?

- In **2024**, eastern and northern Pakistan and north India faced a severe pollution event termed the '**2024 India-Pakistan Smog**', with **Lahore** and **Delhi** recording the highest AQI globally.

#### Reasons for the Crisis

- **Brown clouds** formed over cities, visible in satellite images. Delhi's air worsened due to **wind patterns** carrying pollutants across borders.
- **Lahore**, followed by **Delhi**, again tops AQI charts in 2025, with reports of smoke drifting in from India due to **low-speed winds**.
- **Bangladesh (Dhaka)** and **Nepal (Kathmandu)** also witness AQI from moderate to very poor in winters.
- **Greenpeace 2023 World Air Quality Report:** poor air quality in South Asia is due to **industrial and vehicular emissions, burning of solid fuel, and waste burning**.
- The **fixed topography** of the Indo-Gangetic Plain causes limited ventilation and poor dispersal of pollutants, leading to **trans-national regional haze**.
- There is also **failure of political will** across South Asian countries to manage the crisis.
- **World Bank 2023 report:** nine of the world's worst polluted cities are in South Asia. **Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Bhutan** are relatively less affected.
- Long-term mitigation requires **decarbonisation measures** and **structural reforms** in agriculture and industry across borders.

#### Crisis of Development

- Air pollution is linked to **development choices** with environmental consequences.
- **World Bank:** high AQI levels in India lead to **3% of GDP being spent on healthcare and lost labour**.
- **The Lancet (2019):** India's GDP reduced by **1.36%** due to morbidity and mortality from air pollution.
- Causes include **rising automobile sales, lack of public transport, poor support for non-vehicular mobility, and concrete urbanisation** replacing greenery.
- **UNEP 2023 report:** consumption and production patterns drive climate change, which drives air pollution.
- **WHO:** air quality affects **life expectancy, public health, economic productivity, and environmental justice**.
- Experts warn of worsening air in **Mumbai** and other **southeast coastal cities**.

#### What Next?

- Need for a **nuanced model of governance** with strong political will to curb pollution sources.
- Need for a **human development model** addressing the needs of **working classes and farmers**.
- Need for a **regionally informed model** for sustainable solutions.
- **IIT Bhubaneswar study** stresses a **regional airshed management strategy**, rather than piecemeal approaches.

#### Why are stone quarries expanding in Kerala?

- A **ban on river sand mining in Kerala** has spurred **stone quarrying**, with many quarries located near **protected areas**, according to a new scientific report.
- Kerala banned **river sand mining in 2016** to protect rivers and ecosystems from **degradation caused by excessive extraction**.

- After the ban, **M-sand**, produced by crushing hard rock like granite, became a popular alternative, leading to a rise in **stone quarrying**.
- Using **GIS and Google Earth Pro**, they compared quarry expansion three years before the ban with expansion in **2016**, immediately after the ban.
- In **2016 alone**, the quarries expanded by **174% in area**, with some **more than doubling in size**.
- Researchers warned that increased quarrying may **threaten regional biodiversity**.
- Many quarries are located **near protected areas**, including **three quarries within 10 km of the Malabar Wildlife Sanctuary** in Kozhikode and Wayanad, which grew **232% in size** in 2016.
- Three more quarries within the **buffer zone of Silent Valley National Park** across Palakkad, Malappuram, and Nilgiris districts also **doubled in size**.
- India is witnessing an **ever-increasing demand for river and marine sand**, especially in major urban centres, according to the **India Rivers Forum**.

#### Doval hosts meeting of Colombo Security Conclave in Delhi

- At the **seventh NSA-level meeting of the Colombo Security Conclave**, member states focused on **five pillars of cooperation**, including **radicalisation and organised crime**.
- The member states also agreed to **enhance cooperation through training and capacity building**.
- A comprehensive review of the **security situation in the Indian Ocean Region** was conducted.
- Cooperation was called for under **five pillars**: maritime safety and security, countering terrorism and radicalisation, combating trafficking and transnational organised crime, cyber security and protection of critical infrastructure and technology, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.
- A **Malaysian team** participated as a **guest country for the first time**.

#### At COP, India seeks 'just transition mechanism'

- India, along with a group of **developing countries**, has asked for the establishment of a **'just transition mechanism'** at the ongoing climate summit.
- The **Just Transition Work Programme** was established at **COP27 (2022)** and operationalised at **COP28 (2023)**.
- It is intended as a dedicated forum to **create jobs for workers in fossil fuel-dependent industries** and shift them towards **livelihoods in renewable energy sectors**.
- India stated that **"just transition"** must include **strengthening resilience, adaptive capacity, creating employment, protecting livelihoods, eradicating poverty, ensuring food security, and providing social protection**.
- Countries must be able to design and implement their own **sustainable development pathways** consistent with their **national priorities and circumstances**.

#### Jaishankar holds talks with Taliban's Commerce Minister

- India reiterated **support for the Afghan people** and promised **enhanced connectivity and trade** between the two sides. It raised the need for **effective use of Iran's Chabahar port**, establishing **dry ports in Nimruz province**, and **facilitating import and export processes at Nhava Sheva port** in Mumbai.

#### 'Over 50% cases pending in Juvenile Justice Boards amid staff shortage'

- Unlike the **National Judicial Data Grid**, there is **no central and public repository of information on Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs)**.
- A decade after the passing of the **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act, 2015**, the study finds that the **decentralised architecture** meant for child-centric services suffers from **systemic gaps**.
- These gaps include a **lack of inter-agency coordination** and **poor data-sharing**.
- It is worrying that **a quarter of JJBs did not have a full Bench** even after **10 years of the JJ Act, 2015** being in force.

**In a first, Indian-born cheetah Mukhi gives birth to five cubs**

- For the **first time** since the Cheetah Reintroduction Project began, an **Indian-born cheetah has given birth to five cubs** at **Kuno National Park** in Madhya Pradesh.
- **Mukhi**, the first Indian-born female cheetah at **33 months of age**, has become the **first India-born cheetah to reproduce**, marking a **landmark achievement for Project Cheetah**.
- The new litter has taken India's **cheetah population to 32**, including **21 Indian-born cheetahs**.
- Of the 32 cheetahs, **29 are at Kuno**, while **three have been relocated** to the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary.

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