

CURRENT AFFAIRS

UPSC CSE 2026



**DAILY CURRENT
AFFAIRS NOTES**

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Will consider plea to revive NJAC, end Collegium system of judicial appointments: CJI

- CJI orally said the SC would **consider a plea seeking to revive the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC)** and bring an end to the **Collegium system** of judicial appointments to the constitutional courts.
- The plea urged the **2015 judgment to be rendered void ab initio** as it revived the **Collegium system**, which was described as a **“synonym for nepotism and favouritism”**.

History revisited

1993: Collegium system of judicial appointments **came into existence** by virtue of a Constitution Bench judgment

2014: The National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, 2014 and the Constitution (99th Amendment) Act, 2014 came into existence **to substitute** the Collegium system

2015: A Bench declared the 99th Constitutional Amendment Act and the NJAC Act unconstitutional, **reviving the Collegium system**

Limited room

- The RBI used its **first longer-term currency-swap as a systemic liquidity check**.
- In **2019**, it completed a **\$5 billion three-year dollar/rupee swap**.
- In **February 2025**, it carried out a **\$10 billion dollar/rupee buy-sell swap auction** to infuse **long-term rupee liquidity** into the banking system under global stress.
- Such swaps are a **standard tool by central banks** to supply liquidity, shore up **forex reserves**, and prevent **disorderly currency depreciation** when the dollar surges or capital flows reverse.
- The **steep rupee slide** arises in a context of **external pressures** — a widening **current-account deficit**, driven partly by **higher imports of bullion** as a hedge in uncertain times, and exporters scrambling to maintain competitiveness amid **high U.S. trade tariffs**.
- Under **floating-but-managed regime**, the RBI can only **“smoothen volatility”** rather than fix the exchange rate.
- Between **November last year and now**, the RBI sold a net of **roughly \$50 billion in forex** to stabilise the rupee. Even so, the slide has continued, **highlighting the external pressures**.
- India’s **foreign exchange reserves are comfortable** — close to **\$693 billion**.
- On the domestic front, **retail inflation has slumped**: headline **CPI inflation was 0.25% in October 2025**, well below the RBI’s **target-band of 2%-6%**.
- This gives the RBI space to **tolerate modest currency depreciation** without triggering aggressive rate hikes, especially as India transitions from **cheaper Russian crude to relatively costlier U.S. oil imports**.
- With crude accounting for **over a fifth of total imports in FY25**, rupee depreciation combined with costlier oil imports could **exert upward pressure on inflation**.
- Given this environment, **monetary stabilisation alone cannot suffice**. The Centre must address India’s long-standing vulnerability: **heavy dependence on oil**.

Fighting the fire

- **2024 ended up being the first time that temperatures breached the 1.5°C territory**, though it will require several more such transgressions for **1.5°C to be the ‘new normal’**.
- The **Brazil COP** sought to bring a change in the narrative by stressing **‘implementation’**, and reminding the world that **multilateralism and ‘mutirão’ (coming together)** were indispensable to the **Paris Agreement**.
- The **absence of the U.S.** weakened the developed country blocs.
- This year saw greater thrust on topics such as **‘adaptation’** and **‘just transition’** — concepts that acknowledge the everyday effects of climate change and stress **practical preparatory steps** and **finance pledges** to help countries burnish climate defences.
- **India**, a prominent voice for developing country coalitions, was welcoming of the **Brazil Presidency’s acknowledgement of concerns**.
- India **did not declare its updated Nationally Determined Contributions** (actions on adopting clean energy).

The INO that wasn’t and the JUNO that is

- China has **finished building its Jiangmen Underground Neutrino Observatory (JUNO)**, a bittersweet development given that the **India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO)** has been in limbo for years. JUNO has also released its **first analyses**.

- Both **JUNO and INO** were designed to study neutrinos, subatomic particles that are very hard to catch because they **rarely interact with matter**.
- Both observatories are huge because **more matter increases the chances of neutrino–matter interactions**, creating more opportunities for study.
- The **massive size** of the INO detector (weighing **50 kilotonnes**) was the original trigger of its downfall in India.
- The INO detector could not be operated from inside a lab, nor could it be situated in an existing facility.
- The INO collaboration planned to **install the detector inside a mountain in Theni, Tamil Nadu**, with the mountain's **rock serving as a natural shield**.
- Neutrinos come in **three flavours** and can **oscillate between them** as they travel through space.
- Figuring out **how the three neutrino masses are ordered** is an important open question.
- Neutrino oscillations are described by **θ -12, θ -13, and θ -23**. **θ -13** has been pinned down by previous experiments.
- **JUNO and INO** were conceived to use this knowledge to determine the **neutrino mass ordering**.
- JUNO's second paper reported that it had **measured θ -12 very precisely**.
- India may not have the resources to take a shot at the **next big mystery**, which will require **more specialised and sophisticated technologies**.

Arbitrary actions by China 'unhelpful' in boosting people-centric ties: Jaiswal

- Days after Chinese officials **detained an Indian citizen from Arunachal Pradesh** at Shanghai international airport, Ministry of External Affairs, said **"arbitrary actions" by China are "most unhelpful"** in nurturing **"people-centric" initiatives**.
- It said **"peace and tranquillity" on the India-China border is the "prerequisite" for the development of ties**.
- MEA emphasised that **Arunachal Pradesh is an "integral and inalienable part of India"**, a fact that is **self-evident**, and **no amount of denial by the Chinese side will change this indisputable reality**.
- She was detained at Shanghai airport over claims **"that my Indian passport was invalid as my birthplace is Arunachal Pradesh, which they claimed is Chinese territory."**

Modi urges Indians to prioritise their duties to the nation

- In an open letter to Indians on Constitution Day, PM **Modi** urged citizens to **prioritise their duties to the nation**, underscored their **responsibility towards democracy through voting**, and suggested that educational institutions **recognise first-time voters turning 18**. **November 26, 1949 was the day India adopted its Constitution**.
- Quoting **Mahatma Gandhi**, he emphasised that **rights arose from duties**, adding that the fulfilment of duties was the path towards **social harmony, economic growth, and national unity**.
- He urged citizens to **internalise duty as a guiding value** in both personal and national development.
- He recalled that in **2015, the Government of India officially declared November 26 as Constitution Day**.
- Calling this year's Constitution Day especially meaningful, he noted that it aligned with the **150th birth anniversaries of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Bhagwan Birsa Munda**, the **150th anniversary of Vande Mataram**, and the **350th martyrdom anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji**.
- These moments reminded citizens of the **fundamental place of duties in national life**, a principle enshrined in **Article 51A of the Constitution**.

SC panel suggests creation of a Goa tiger reserve in phases

- A **Supreme Court-appointed committee** has recommended the creation of a **tiger reserve in Goa**, but in a **phased manner**, incorporating areas with a **lower human presence first**.
- The CEC came into the picture after the Goa government challenged a **Bombay High Court order of 2023**, which directed the State to **notify five protected areas** — the **Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary, Bhagwan Mahavir Wildlife Sanctuary, Bhagwan Mahavir National Park, Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary, Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary** — as a **tiger reserve** within three months.

- The Goa government was reluctant to have the areas declared a tiger reserve on the grounds that **nearly “one lakh people” would be affected**, though it later conceded in its affidavit that there were **only about 1,274 households in 33 villages**, translating to **approximately 5,000 to 6,000 individuals**.
- The committee recommended that Goan parks and sanctuaries **“directly contiguous” to the Kali Tiger Reserve in Karnataka**, which hosts a **permanent tiger presence**, form the **“core” part** of the Goa reserve.

Cabinet approves ₹7,280 cr. scheme for rare earth magnets

- In a push to secure India’s supplies of **rare earth magnets**, the Union Cabinet approved a **new “first-of-its-kind” scheme** with a financial outlay of **₹7,280 crore** to manufacture **Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM)** in India.
- Scheme, named **‘Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets’**, was approved as India and Canada have **“tremendous potential”** to cooperate on **critical minerals**. This discussion took place as both countries **restarted talks on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement**.
- The initiative aims to establish **6,000 metric tonnes per annum (MTPA)** of integrated **REPM manufacturing** in India, enhancing **self-reliance** and positioning India as a **key player in the global REPM market**.
- **REPMs are vital components** with applications in **EVs, renewable energy, electronics, aerospace, and defence sectors**.
- The scheme will support the creation of **integrated REPM manufacturing facilities**, involving the conversion of **rare earth oxides to metals, metals to alloys, and alloys to finished REPMs**.
- The total duration of the scheme is **seven years**.
- The initiative will **reduce import dependence**, provide **long-term resilience to the automotive supply chain**, encourage **investments in advanced materials**, and position India strongly in **global value chains for EVs and clean energy**.