

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

## UPSC CSE 2026



**DAILY CURRENT  
AFFAIRS NOTES**

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### India's first anti-terror policy to be out soon

- The **Union government** is finalising **India's first anti-terror policy** to serve as a **template for States** to combat and respond to **terror attacks**.
- Key issues under discussion include **digital radicalisation**, **misuse of open borders**, and **foreign-funded conversion networks**.
- **National Investigation Agency (NIA)** is organising an **anti-terror conference in Delhi**, where the policy's **contours** may be shared. The **Home Ministry** is finalising the document, with **inputs from the NIA**. He had announced that a **National Counter Terrorism Policy and Strategy** would be introduced soon.
- After the **Pahalgam terror attack**, the **NIA** held meetings with **State anti-terror units** to discuss **preventive and pre-emptive measures**.
- Use of the **National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID)** for secure data access by law enforcement has been discussed.
- It briefed State police chiefs on **foreign-funded conversion rackets**, **online radicalisation**, and **Aadhaar spoofing**.

### A good template

- **Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (AI-ECTA)** provides only **1,000 "working holiday" visas annually**, allowing **short-term work** mainly in **hospitality and services**.
- Read alongside **New Zealand's decision** to allow **uncapped entry of Indian students** into **higher education institutions** with a **minimum 20-hour weekly part-time work** entitlement, the agreement builds a **people-centric economic bridge**.
- The context includes India's **exit from the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership in 2019**, in which **Australia and New Zealand** were key players.
- The agreement includes **New Zealand's commitment of about \$20 billion investments** in India over **15 years**. The deal moves beyond **goods trade** towards a **holistic economic partnership**. If ratified by **New Zealand Parliament**, the agreement could **come into force within seven months**.
- Gains are **modest amid global trade headwinds**, with the real test being **removal of non-tariff barriers** such as **recognition of Indian educational qualifications**, **quality standards**, and **rules of origin**, and **popularising the agreement** among beneficiary sectors.

### The VB-G RAM G Act 2025 fixes structural gaps

- The **Act** retains the **statutory and justiciable** character of the employment guarantee while strengthening **enforceability**. Entitlement expanded from **100 to 125 days**.
- **Procedural dis-entitlement clauses** nullifying **unemployment allowance** removed.
- **Time-bound grievance redress** mechanisms reinforced.
- Reform addresses the gap between **statutory promise** and **lived reality**.
- **Demand for work** continues to originate from **workers**. Shift towards **advance, participatory village-level planning** to ensure **work availability**.
- **Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans** aggregated at **block, district, State and national** levels.
- **Extensive consultations** held with **State governments** and other stakeholders.
- **Budgetary allocation** increased from **₹33,000 crore (2013-14)** to **₹86,000 crore (2024-25)**.
- **Women's participation** rose from **48% to 56.73%**.
- **Over 99%** fund transfer orders generated **on time**. Nearly **99%** active workers linked to **Aadhaar Payment Bridge**.
- Earlier framework showed **episodic employment**, **weak unemployment allowance**, **fragmented assets**, and scope for **duplication and ghost entries**.
- **Equity ensured** through **rule-based normative allocation** using **objective parameters**.
- **States treated as partners**, empowered to notify and operationalise **their own schemes**.
- **Flexibility preserved** during **natural disasters** and **extraordinary situations**.
- **Cooperative federalism** balanced through **rule-based allocation** and **contextual flexibility**. **States empowered** to notify up to **60 days** during **peak sowing and harvesting seasons** when works will not be undertaken.

### End the exploitation

- **Child trafficking** is one of the **worst forms of modern slavery**, and the **Supreme Court of India** issued a **stern wake-up call** on the situation in India.
- The **Court upheld convictions** of gang members under the **Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act**.
- The Court highlighted the **complex and layered structure** of **organised crime networks** involved in **recruiting, transporting, harbouring and exploiting** minor victims.



- The Bench laid down **guidelines for child trafficking cases**, stressing the need for “**sensitivity and latitude**” while recording a **child’s testimony**.
- Courts must not **disbelieve testimony** due to **minor inconsistencies**, as children may not narrate crimes with **precision and clarity**.
- **India recorded 10,659 cases of human trafficking (2018–2022)**, but the **conviction rate was only 4.8%**.
- **Rehabilitation after rescue** needs serious attention, as **mere compensation is not enough**.
- The focus must be on **prevention and protection**.

#### How exports are concentrated in few States

- **RBI Handbook of Statistics on Indian States 2024-25** reveals **structural dynamics** in exports.
- **Top five exporters: Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh** command **nearly 70%** of the **national export basket**. The **national average** masks a **deepening regional crisis**, with exports becoming **agglomerated** rather than **dispersed**.
- Firms are increasingly benefitting from **spatial clustering**, not expanding to **newer regions**.
- **Five years ago**, the top five States contributed **about 65%** of national exports; this has risen to **nearly 70%**.
- The **Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI)** of India’s export geography is **rising**, indicating **increasing concentration**.
- **UNCTAD 2023** estimates show the **top 10 global exporters** control **around 55%** of **world merchandise trade**.
- **PLFS data** shows **manufacturing employment share** stuck at **11.6%–12%**.

#### Rhino dehorning nearly eliminated poaching in African reserves: study

- **Greater Kruger** protects the **world’s largest rhino population**. **11 reserves** lie in the **South African portion** of the Greater Kruger region.
- **Rhinoceros horns** are made of **keratin**, the same protein as **hair and nails**. Rhinos use horns to **dig for edible plants and roots** and as a **symbol of virility during mating**. Rhino horns are perceived as **status symbols**.
- **Traditional medicine** in **China and Vietnam** includes **rhino horns** in preparations.
- To remove horns safely, rhinos are **sedated, blindfolded, and fitted with earplugs** to reduce stress. **90–93% of the horn** is cut **above the germinal layer**, allowing **regrowth**.
- Researchers used **hierarchical Bayesian regression modelling** to compare **poaching trends** in reserves **with and without dehorning**.