

# 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**.