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India's crude oil imports decline by 4.3% in April, but bill goes up by 50%

THE HINDU : 22-05-2026

Practice questions

A dedicated section featuring UPSC-style Prelims and Mains practice questions based on the major issues, concepts, and debates discussed in today's newspaper.

EDITORIALS DECODED FOR UPSC



Bat for the better

Courts must treat tax exemptions to the BCCI as a form of state grant



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They must gear up for gig economy, AI churn

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PYQ COMPASS
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Explore alternative energy sources, PM tells Govt amid West Asia crisis

Amid the West Asia crisis and disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz affecting global energy supplies, the Prime Minister urged ministries to urgently explore alternative energy sources, particularly biogas as a substitute for LPG. The development highlights India's vulnerability to external energy shocks and the growing policy emphasis on renewable, indigenous, and diversified energy systems such as compressed biogas (CBG), ethanol blending, green hydrogen, and LNG infrastructure. The issue is closely linked to energy security, climate goals, supply-chain resilience, and rural economic development.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

- Crude Oil Dependence : India imports nearly 88% of its crude oil requirement
- Natural Gas Dependence : Around 50% of natural gas requirement is imported Around 2.5–2.7 million barrels/day (~50% of India's crude oil imports) pass through the Strait of Hormuz.
- Major suppliers: Iraq, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Kuwait.
- Nearly 60% of India's LNG imports transit through the Strait of Hormuz, mainly from Qatar and UAE.
- Almost all imported LPG supplies to India move through this route.

SATAT Initiative : Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation

Ministry : Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas

Objective : Promote production and use of Compressed Biogas (CBG)

Launch : 2018

Target : 5,000 commercial plants and 15 MMT CBG production

Feedstock : Agricultural waste, animal waste, MSW, sewage sludge etc.

Points to remember

- West Asia crisis exposes India's external energy vulnerability.
- India responds through diversification: CBG/SATAT, ethanol blending, green hydrogen, LNG infrastructure, and waste-to-energy.
- This serves energy security, price stability, emissions reduction, and rural development simultaneously.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) The question of India's Energy Security constitutes the most important part of India's economic progress. Analyze India's - energy policy cooperation with West Asian Countries. (GS II - International relations - 2017)

Q.) Do you think India will meet 50 percent of its energy needs from renewable energy by 2030? Justify your answer. How will the shift of subsidies from fossil fuels to renewables help achieve the above objective? (GS III - 2022)

Practice questions

Q.) Any major disruption in the Strait of Hormuz is most likely to affect India through:

1. Higher crude oil prices
2. LPG supply disruptions
3. Increased fertiliser production costs
4. Decline in maritime insurance costs

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 1, 2 and 3 only
- c) 2, 3 and 4 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

RELEVANCE

GS III : Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

Sedition trials can go on if accused is willing, says SC

The Supreme Court recently clarified that trials, appeals, and proceedings involving sedition under Section 124A of the IPC may continue if the accused has no objection. This comes four years after the Court's 2022 interim order that effectively suspended sedition prosecutions while the Union government reconsidered the colonial-era provision. The issue is significant because it involves the balance between national security and constitutional freedoms such as freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a).

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

Sedition : acts or speech that incite hatred, contempt, or disaffection against the government established by law.

Legal Provision : Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860

Current Status : Provision under judicial reconsideration; trials paused in 2022 except where accused consents

Objective Claimed by State : Protection of sovereignty, integrity, and public order

Criticism : Misuse against dissent, journalists, activists, and political opposition

Constitutional Dimensions

Article 19(1)(a) : Guarantees freedom of speech and expression

Article 19(2) : Allows reasonable restrictions in interests of sovereignty, integrity, public order, security of state

Article 21 : Protection of personal liberty; prolonged incarceration raises due process concerns

Rule of Law : Arbitrary application of sedition law questioned



Historical Evolution of Sedition Law

1837 : Draft IPC by Thomas Babington Macaulay included sedition provision (Section 113)

1860 : IPC enacted without sedition provision due to "oversight"

1870 : Section 124A formally inserted by James Fitzjames Stephen

1891 : First major sedition case: Queen-Empress v Jogendra Chunder Bose

Freedom Struggle Era : Used extensively against nationalists including Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi

Gandhi's View : Called sedition the "prince among the political sections of IPC designed to suppress liberty"

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) "Sedition has become my religion" was the famous statement given by Gandhiji at the time of (2025):

- (a) the Champaran Satyagraha
- (b) publicly violating Salt Law at Dandi
- (c) attending the Second Round Table Conference in London
- (d) the launch of the Quit India Movement

Practice questions

Q.) With reference to Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code, consider the following statements:

1. It was part of the original IPC enacted in 1860.
2. It criminalises disaffection against the government established by law.
3. It was inserted into the IPC in 1870.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

RELEVANCE

GS II : Indian Constitution— significant provisions and basic structure.



Bat for the better

The Central Information Commission (CIC) in May 2026 ruled that the Board of Control for Cricket in India is not a “public authority” under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005, and therefore cannot be compelled to disclose information under the Act. The decision has revived debate over whether bodies performing significant public functions and enjoying monopoly status should be subject to transparency and accountability standards despite being formally private entities.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

BCCI:

Established : 1928

Legal Status : Registered under Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975

Primary Role : Governing and regulating cricket in India

BCCI had transformed into major economic and governance institution through media rights, sponsorships, IPL, and WPL

What is the Issue ?

RTI Application Sought Information on player selection, government support to cricket infrastructure, and extent of state control over cricket administration.

CIC Decision

- BCCI is a private society,
- not established by Constitution, statute, or government notification,
- not substantially financed or deeply controlled by government.

Right to Information Act, 2005 : Section 2(h) of the RTI Act defines a “public authority” as any body or institution established by the Constitution, by parliamentary or state legislation, or through government notification/order, and also includes bodies that are substantially financed, owned, or controlled by the government.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) "Recent amendments to the Right to information Act will have profound impact on the autonomy and independence of the Information Commission". Discuss (GS II – Governance – 2020)

Q.) Citizens' Charter is an ideal instrument of organizational transparency and accountability, but. it has its own limitations. Identify the limitations and suggest measures for greater effectiveness or the Citizens Charter. (GS II – Governance – 2018)

Practice questions

Q.) With reference to the Board of Control for Cricket in India, consider the following statements:

- 1.It was created through a parliamentary law.
- 2.It is registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act.
- 3.The Supreme Court in Zee Telefilms case held that BCCI is “State” under Article 12.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 2 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Q.) Which of the following correctly describes Section 2(h) of the Right to Information Act, 2005?

- A. It defines “public servant”
- B. It defines “constitutional authority”
- C. It defines “public authority”
- D. It defines “state action”

RELEVANCE

GS III : Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

At UNGA, incomplete climate justice

The UN General Assembly recently adopted a resolution endorsing the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice that countries are obligated to prevent harm arising from climate change. While 141 countries supported the resolution, India abstained, citing concerns regarding climate justice, historical responsibility, and inadequate emphasis on climate finance. The development is significant because it strengthens the legal and moral basis for demanding stronger climate action from major emitters and may influence future international climate negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE	
<p>International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion States are obligated to prevent environmental harm caused by climate change</p> <p>UNGA Resolution: Supporting Countries : 141 countries Opposing Countries : 8 countries including United States Abstentions : 28 countries including India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It reinforces idea that climate mitigation cannot rely solely on voluntarism It also enhances negotiating leverage of vulnerable countries 	<p>INDIA'S CLIMATE DIPLOMACY AND INITIATIVES</p> <p>Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) : Launched in 2015. India's maritime cooperation doctrine aimed at strengthening security, economic integration, sustainable development, disaster management, and regional connectivity in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).</p> <p>International Solar Alliance (ISA) : The International Solar Alliance is a global initiative launched jointly by India and France at COP21 in Paris in 2015 to promote solar energy adoption and climate cooperation.</p>
<p>India's Climate Progress</p> <p>Emissions Intensity Reduction : 36% reduction achieved (2005–2020) Non-Fossil Installed Capacity : 52.57% achieved by February 2026 Forest and Tree Carbon Sink : 2.29 billion tonnes CO₂ equivalent created by 2021</p>	<p>India's Updated NDCs (2031–2035)</p> <p>Emissions Intensity : Reduce GDP emissions intensity by 47% from 2005 levels by 2035 Non-Fossil Fuel Capacity : Achieve 60% cumulative installed electric power capacity from non-fossil sources by 2035 Carbon Sink : Create additional carbon sink of 3.5–4 billion tonnes CO₂ equivalent through forest and tree cover</p>

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) The Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE), a UN mechanism to assist countries transition towards greener and more inclusive economies, emerged at: (2018)

- The Earth Summit on Sustainable Development 2002, Johannesburg
- The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development 2012, Rio de Janeiro
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate change 2015, Paris
- The World Sustainable Development Summit 2016, New Delhi

Practice questions

Q.) Consider the following statements regarding India's updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs):

- India aims to reduce emissions intensity of GDP by 47% by 2035 from 2005 levels.
- India targets 60% installed electric power capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2035.
- India's net-zero target year is 2050.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1 only
- 1, 2 and 3

RELEVANCE

GS II : Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.

BL Reforming schools

A recent report titled "School Education System in India: Temporal Analysis and Policy Roadmap for Quality Enhancement" released by the NITI Aayog highlights that India has achieved near-universal access to primary education with improvements in enrolment, infrastructure, and inclusion. However, the report also points to persistent concerns regarding student retention, learning quality, secondary-level dropout rates, and mismatch between schooling and future labour-market needs. The issue is important because India's demographic dividend and long-term economic competitiveness depend not merely on school access, but on quality education, employable skills, and human capital formation.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

School Education System in India: Temporal Analysis and Policy Roadmap for Quality Enhancement

Released By : NITI Aayog

Focus Areas : Enrolment trends, retention, learning quality, infrastructure, governance, and future-ready education

Coverage : School education trends from 2014–15 to 2024–25

Constitutional and Legal Framework

Article 21A : Right to free and compulsory education for children aged 6–14 years

Article 45 : Early childhood care and education directive

Article 46 : Promotion of educational interests of weaker sections

Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (Operationalises Article 21A)

National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 : Focus on foundational literacy, holistic learning, and skill integration

Key Concerns highlighted in the report

Secondary-Level Dropouts : Student participation declines sharply beyond elementary level

Higher Secondary GER : Only about 58.4% at higher secondary stage

Economic Pressures : Adolescents often enter labour market early

Cost Burden : Transport, books, uniforms, exams, and tuition increase at secondary level

Weak Learning Outcomes : Students often progress without mastering basics

Rote Learning : Assessment system remains memory-oriented not competency-based

Skill Mismatch : Education system insufficiently aligned with future economy

PYQ Compass



What is the aim of the programme 'Unnat Bharat Abhiyan'?

- Achieving 100% literacy by promoting collaboration between voluntary organizations and government's education system and local communities.
- Connecting institutions of higher education with local communities to address development challenges through appropriate technologies.
- Strengthening India's scientific research institutions in order to make India a scientific and technological power.
- Developing human capital by allocating special funds for health care and education of rural and urban poor, and organizing skill development programmes and vocational training for them

RELEVANCE

GS II : Issues relating to development and management of Education

Practice questions

Q.) Which of the following skills are increasingly emphasised for the future economy according to recent education policy discussions?

- AI literacy
- Problem-solving ability
- Design thinking
- Memorisation-based repetitive learning

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- 1 and 4 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3 only
- 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ebola crisis: India-Africa Delhi summit postponed

India and the African Union jointly postponed the Fourth India–Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-IV) scheduled for May 2026 due to the evolving Ebola public health emergency in parts of Africa. The development is significant because the summit is India's principal institutional platform for engagement with Africa and comes at a time of geopolitical disruptions, supply chain vulnerabilities, and renewed competition for strategic influence in Africa. The episode also highlights the growing intersection between global health security and diplomacy.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

India–Africa Forum Summit (IAFS)

Established : 2008

Nature : India's premier institutional mechanism for engagement with Africa

Objective : Development cooperation, economic partnership, political dialogue, capacity building

Participants : India + African Union member states

Previous Summits : 2008, 2011, 2015

2015 Summit : Hosted in New Delhi with participation of all 54 African countries

Proposed IAFS-IV : Planned in 2026 after gap of over a decade

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)

Viral hemorrhagic fever

Cause : Ebola virus (Filoviridae family)

Transmission : Contact with blood/body fluids of infected humans or animals

Reservoir Host : Fruit bats (suspected natural host)

Symptoms : Fever, bleeding, weakness, organ failure

Fatality Rate : Can be very high depending on strain and healthcare access

Present WHO Status in Republic of Congo and Uganda : Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) in severe outbreaks

Points to remember : *Africa is a major source of energy resources, critical minerals, fertilisers, and as a growing market for Indian pharmaceuticals, IT services, automobiles, education, and digital infrastructure.*

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) If the last few decades were of Asia's growth story, the next few are expected to be of Africa's." In the light of this statement, examine India's influence in Africa in recent years (GS II – International Relations – 2021)

Q.) Consider the following statements: The India–Africa Summit

1. Held in 2015 was the third such Summit.
2. Was actually initiated by Jawaharlal Nehru in 1951 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Practice questions

Q.) Africa's importance in maritime security for India is mainly linked to:

1. Indian Ocean sea lanes
2. Anti-piracy cooperation
3. Protection of energy supply routes
4. Arctic shipping connectivity

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 1, 2 and 3 only
- c) 3 and 4 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

RELEVANCE

GS II : Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

India's crude oil imports decline by 4.3% in April, but bill goes up by 50%

Government data showed that India's crude oil import volume declined in April following disruptions linked to the West Asia conflict and closure pressures around the Strait of Hormuz, while the value of imports surged sharply due to rising global energy prices. LNG imports and natural gas consumption also declined significantly, reflecting supply constraints and lower consumption. The development highlights India's high dependence on imported fossil fuels, vulnerability to geopolitical shocks, and the urgent need for diversification toward renewable and indigenous energy sources.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

India's Energy Import Dependence

Crude Oil : ~88% imported – 70% imports are now coming from routes outside the Strait of Hormuz compared with about 55% earlier.

Natural Gas : ~50% imported

LPG : 60% imported – about 90% LPG imports come through the Strait of Hormuz, which has been impacted due to the ongoing conflicts.

Strait of Hormuz : Connects Persian Gulf with Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea.

Key Data Trends from Current Crisis

- India's crude oil import volume declined by 4.3% in April, falling from about 21 million tonnes last year to 20.1 million tonnes, but the import bill sharply increased by nearly 50% from \$10.7 billion to \$16.3 billion due to rising global oil prices during the West Asia crisis.
- India's LNG imports fell by nearly 30%, declining from 2,778 MMSCM to 1,954 MMSCM, while the LNG import bill decreased from \$1.2 billion to \$0.9 billion mainly because of lower domestic consumption.
- Domestic natural gas production declined by 4.2% to 2,749 MMSCM, reflecting continuing weakness in India's domestic gas output.
- LPG sales by public sector oil companies fell by 12.7% to around 2.2 million tonnes, partly due to supply pressures and restrictions during the crisis.
- Current Account Deficit (CAD) :Occurs when imports exceed exports.

PYQ Compass



Q.) Access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy is the sine qua non to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Comment on the progress made in India in this regard. (GS III – Energy security – 2018)

Q.) In which of the following regions of India are shale gas resources found? (2016)

1. Cambay Basin
2. Cauvery Basin
3. Krishna-Godavari Basin

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

Practice Questions

Q.) Which of the following can help India reduce vulnerability to external energy shocks?

1. Ethanol blending
2. Green hydrogen promotion
3. Compressed Biogas (CBG)
4. Renewable energy expansion

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1, 3 and 4 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

RELEVANCE

GS III : Indian Economy - planning, mobilization of resources, growth and development