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IMPORTANT INSIGHTS**US Russia Sanctions Bill Raises Energy Security and Trade Challenges for India Amid Global Oil Market Uncertainty****Recent Developments:*****US House Passes the Russia Sanctions Bill:***

- The **US House of Representatives** passed the **Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026** on 16 September 2026 by **262–159 votes**, following its passage in the US Senate by 86–11 votes on 7 August 2026.
- The legislation authorises the US President to impose **tariffs of up to 100%** on imports from major purchasers of Russian oil and natural gas, potentially affecting countries such as **India and China**.
- The provision does not automatically impose a 100% tariff; it provides the **US President with discretionary authority** to impose such measures after the legislation becomes law.
- The bill also contains measures targeting **Russian energy entities, individuals, vessels and sanctions-evasion networks**, while extending sanctions-related provisions concerning Iran.
- The legislation has therefore created a new layer of uncertainty for India because Russia remains a major source of India's imported crude oil.

Background: India's Crude Oil Import Dependence:***High Import Dependence and Energy Vulnerability:***

- India is among the world's largest crude oil importers because domestic production is insufficient to meet the rapidly expanding requirements of its transport, industrial and petrochemical sectors.
- High import dependence exposes India to **international crude prices, geopolitical conflicts, shipping disruptions, exchange-rate movements and supply-chain risks**.
- The International Energy Agency expects India's crude oil imports to increase further as refinery intake and petroleum demand expand, making diversification and resilience increasingly important for energy security.
- India has consequently pursued a combination of **supplier diversification, strategic petroleum reserves, overseas energy assets, refinery expansion, biofuels and renewable energy development**.

Rise of Russian Crude in India's Oil Basket:

- Russia became India's largest crude supplier after the **Russia–Ukraine conflict began in February 2022**, when several Western economies reduced purchases of Russian energy.
- Russian producers offered competitive crude supplies to willing buyers, creating an attractive procurement opportunity for Indian refiners.
- Indian refiners increased Russian purchases because discounted crude could improve **refinery economics**, reduce procurement costs and diversify supplies away from traditional West Asian sources.
- Russia's importance has remained significant even though India's crude sourcing has continued to include suppliers such as **Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, the United States and Venezuela**.
- India has also expanded the number of countries from which it can source crude, with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas stating that sourcing had expanded from **27 countries to 40 countries** by 2025.

Current Position of Russian Oil in India:

August 2026 Import Trends:

- India imported approximately **2.08 million barrels per day of Russian crude in August 2026**, according to provisional tanker-tracking data, making Russia the largest individual crude supplier.
- Russian crude represented approximately **45% of India's crude imports in August**, compared with around **55.9% in July**, when Russian supplies had reached a record level.
- The decline in August does not necessarily indicate a structural withdrawal from Russian crude because lower Russian export availability, stronger Chinese competition and refinery maintenance also affected shipment volumes.
- India's overall crude imports also declined in August, demonstrating that changes in Russian supplies occurred within a broader adjustment in India's crude procurement.

What Does the US Bill Propose?

Secondary Tariff Mechanism:

- The central concern for India is the bill's provision allowing the US President to impose **up to 100% tariffs** on imports from certain major purchasers of Russian oil and natural gas.
- The legislation is designed as a form of **secondary economic pressure**, because the potential measures can target countries that continue significant energy trade with Russia rather than Russia alone.
- The bill focuses on major purchasers and certain entities involved in facilitating Russian oil sanctions evasion, including parts of the maritime **shadow fleet**.
- The President would retain significant discretion regarding whether and how the tariff authority is used, including the possibility of waiving measures in specified circumstances.
- The bill therefore creates a distinction between **legislative authorisation and actual implementation**, making the final economic impact dependent on subsequent executive action.

Clarification on the 500% Tariff Figure:

- The earlier **500% tariff figure should not be described as a general tariff on countries purchasing Russian energy**.
- The Senate version authorised tariffs of up to **500% on certain Russian-origin goods**, while the separate provision concerning major foreign purchasers of Russian oil and natural gas allowed tariffs of up to **100%**.
- This distinction is important for UPSC answers because the two provisions have different targets and economic implications.

Why Is Russian Crude Important for India?

Energy Security:

- Russian crude provides India with an additional large-scale source of supply and reduces excessive dependence on any single geographical region.
- Supplies from Russia became particularly valuable when disruptions in **West Asia and maritime routes** created uncertainty around conventional sources of crude.
- India therefore views energy security not only as the availability of crude but also as the ability to obtain supplies at **competitive prices through diversified routes and suppliers**.

Refinery Economics:

- Indian refineries can process a wide range of crude grades because of their sophisticated and relatively flexible refining capabilities.
- Discounted Russian crude can improve refinery margins when the discount is sufficiently large relative to freight, insurance, financing and compliance costs.
- A substantial reduction in Russian supplies could therefore increase procurement costs or require refiners to modify their crude mix.
- The ultimate impact would depend on the availability, quality and price of alternative crude supplies.

Potential Impact on India:

Energy and Inflationary Impact:

- A rapid reduction in Russian crude purchases could require India to obtain additional supplies from alternative markets.
- If global crude prices rise simultaneously, India's **import bill, current account position and domestic inflationary pressures** could increase.
- Higher petroleum prices can have wider effects because transportation, logistics, manufacturing and agricultural activities depend heavily on petroleum products.

Impact on Refining and Trade:

- Reduced access to discounted Russian crude could affect the procurement costs and margins of Indian refiners.
- Any US tariff imposed on Indian exports could create additional pressure on **export competitiveness, trade flows and investment decisions**.
- The issue is therefore not limited to crude oil because energy trade, merchandise exports, financial transactions and bilateral economic negotiations are interconnected.

India-US Relations:

- The legislation introduces an additional complication into the broader **India-US economic relationship**, particularly while both countries manage trade and tariff-related negotiations.
- India may seek exemptions, waivers or implementation arrangements that protect its energy-security interests while avoiding unnecessary disruption to bilateral trade.
- At the same time, India would need to assess the potential consequences for exporters, financial institutions and businesses exposed to the US market.

Global Energy Market Implications:

Supply and Price Risks:

- Russia remains a major global energy producer, so a substantial reduction in Russian crude reaching international markets could tighten global supply.
- The resulting price impact would depend on the ability of other producers to increase output, the availability of shipping capacity, inventories and the duration of the disruption.
- The issue therefore demonstrates the **interdependence of geopolitics and global energy markets**, where sanctions intended to impose economic costs can also affect energy prices and importing countries.

West Asia and Maritime Security:

- India's energy-security calculations are also influenced by disruptions in **West Asia and the Strait of Hormuz**, through which a substantial share of global oil and gas trade traditionally moves.
- India has sought supplies that do not depend exclusively on Hormuz-linked routes and has increased monitoring of petroleum stocks and supply chains during periods of geopolitical instability.
- The experience highlights the importance of **maritime security, diversified import routes and resilient logistics infrastructure** for an energy-importing economy.

India's Existing Energy-Security Measures:

Diversification of Suppliers:

- India has expanded its crude procurement network to reduce dependence on individual suppliers and regions.
- Diversification includes greater engagement with **Russia, West Asian producers, the United States, Venezuela and other emerging sources**.
- Such diversification provides flexibility when geopolitical developments disrupt supplies from a particular region.

Strategic Petroleum Reserves:

- India has established underground strategic crude oil storage facilities at **Visakhapatnam, Mangalore and Padur**.
- The existing strategic storage capacity is approximately **5.03 million tonnes**, providing a physical buffer against temporary supply disruptions.
- India has also explored cooperation with external energy companies for additional storage and supply arrangements, including collaboration involving **Abu Dhabi National Oil Company**.
- The International Energy Agency has emphasised the need to strengthen India's strategic petroleum reserves and broader oil-supply resilience as future demand increases.

Energy Transition:

- Long-term energy security cannot depend exclusively on imported fossil fuels.
- India is therefore pursuing **renewable energy, electric mobility, ethanol blending, green hydrogen, energy efficiency and domestic exploration** alongside conventional energy security measures.
- Greater diversification of the energy mix can gradually reduce exposure to international crude-price volatility.

Challenges for India:

Balancing Multiple Strategic Interests:

- India must simultaneously protect **energy affordability, national economic interests, strategic autonomy and major international partnerships**.
- Excessively rapid reduction in Russian imports could increase energy costs, while continued dependence could expose Indian exporters and financial institutions to secondary sanctions or tariff risks.
- The challenge is therefore to maintain flexibility rather than allow energy procurement to become dependent on a single geopolitical alignment.

Limited Short-Term Substitution:

- Replacing large Russian volumes immediately may be difficult because alternative crude grades differ in **price, quality, availability, freight requirements and refining compatibility**.
- Competition from other large Asian buyers can further increase the cost of obtaining alternative supplies.
- India's large and growing petroleum demand also limits the effectiveness of short-term substitution alone.

Way Forward for India:***Strengthen Energy Resilience:***

- India should continue **diversifying crude suppliers and import routes** while maintaining adequate strategic petroleum reserves and commercial inventories.
- Greater use of long-term supply contracts, overseas energy investments and flexible spot-market procurement can reduce exposure to individual supply shocks.
- Strategic reserves should be expanded progressively in line with rising consumption and India's increasing dependence on imported crude.

Deepen Diplomatic Engagement:

- India should continue engaging the **United States, Russia, European countries, Gulf producers and other major energy stakeholders** to protect its legitimate energy-security interests.
- Diplomatic engagement should focus on practical mechanisms such as **waivers, transition periods, payment arrangements and sanctions-compliance clarity**.
- India can simultaneously maintain diversified partnerships without allowing energy procurement to undermine its broader foreign-policy objectives.

Accelerate Domestic and Clean-Energy Capacity:

- Increasing domestic exploration, renewable generation, biofuels, electric mobility and energy efficiency can reduce the long-term vulnerability created by imported fossil fuels.
- The objective should be a gradual transition from **import dependence to strategic energy resilience**, rather than an abrupt reduction of conventional energy supplies.

Value Addition for UPSC:***Key Concepts:***

- **Strategic Autonomy:** Ability to pursue national interests without becoming excessively dependent on any single major power or geopolitical bloc.
- **Energy Security:** Reliable availability of energy at affordable prices while protecting the economy from external supply disruptions.
- **Secondary Sanctions:** Measures designed to pressure third-country entities or states that continue specified transactions with a sanctioned country.
- **Strategic Petroleum Reserves:** Emergency crude-oil stocks maintained to cushion the economy against major supply disruptions.
- **Energy Diversification:** Distribution of energy sourcing across suppliers, regions, routes and fuel types to reduce systemic vulnerability.

Conclusion:

- The US Russia sanctions legislation demonstrates that **energy security, foreign policy and economic security are increasingly interconnected**.
- For India, the immediate priority is to preserve reliable and affordable energy supplies while limiting exposure to geopolitical and sanctions-related risks.
- A balanced strategy based on **supplier diversification, strategic reserves, diplomatic engagement, refinery flexibility and accelerated clean-energy transition** can strengthen India's resilience while preserving its strategic autonomy.

PM Vishwakarma Scheme Completes Three Years with 30 Lakh Artisans Registered and Expands Skills, Credit and Market Access

Recent Developments:***Three Years of PM Vishwakarma Scheme:***

- The **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises** marked the third anniversary of the **PM Vishwakarma Scheme** in September 2026, highlighting the registration of its target of **30 lakh traditional artisans and craftspeople**.
- The scheme was launched on **17 September 2023** to provide end-to-end support to traditional artisans through **skill development, modern toolkits, institutional credit, digital incentives and market linkages**.
- As of September 2026, around **24.50 lakh beneficiaries** had received basic skill training, while **18.15 lakh modern toolkits** had been delivered through India Post.
- About **6.18 lakh beneficiaries** had received loans up to **₹1 lakh** at a concessional interest rate of **5% per annum**, with sanctioned credit amounting to approximately **₹5,297 crore**.
- The scheme has also expanded digital and market integration, with beneficiaries being connected to the **Udyam Assist Platform, Government e-Marketplace, Open Network for Digital Commerce and other e-commerce platforms**.

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PM Vishwakarma Scheme: About and Objectives:***Core Framework:***

- **PM Vishwakarma** is a **Central Sector Scheme** with a financial outlay of **₹13,000 crore** for five years from **FY 2023-24 to FY 2027-28**.
- The scheme is implemented jointly by the **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Department of Financial Services under the Ministry of Finance**.
- It is based on three broad pillars: **Samman, Samarthya and Samriddhi**, representing respect, capability and prosperity for traditional artisans.
- The scheme seeks to strengthen the **Guru-Shishya Parampara**, or the family-based transmission of traditional skills, while improving the quality, productivity and market reach of artisan products.
- It covers **18 traditional trades** involving artisans who primarily work with their hands and tools in the unorganised sector.

Target Beneficiaries:

- The scheme covers **artisans and craftspeople aged 18 years or above** who are engaged in one of the notified traditional trades on a self-employment basis.
- Benefits are generally restricted to **one member of a family**, while government employees and their family members are excluded.
- Applicants are subject to eligibility conditions concerning previous government-supported self-employment loans.
- Beneficiaries of schemes such as **Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana** and **PM SVANidhi** can also become eligible after fulfilling the prescribed repayment conditions.

Key Components of the Scheme:

Recognition and Skill Development:

- Eligible beneficiaries receive formal recognition through a **PM Vishwakarma Certificate and Identity Card**, helping integrate traditional artisans into the formal support ecosystem.
- **Basic Training** is provided for **5–7 days**, while **Advanced Training** continues for **15 days or more**, with a stipend of **₹500 per day**.
- Training introduces artisans to **modern tools, improved production techniques, digital transactions, marketing and entrepreneurship**, thereby connecting traditional skills with contemporary market requirements.

Toolkit and Credit Support:

- Beneficiaries receive a **toolkit incentive of up to ₹15,000** through an electronic voucher to acquire modern tools and improve productivity.
- The scheme provides **collateral-free Enterprise Development Loans up to ₹3 lakh** in two tranches: **₹1 lakh for 18 months** and **₹2 lakh for 30 months**.
- The loans carry a concessional interest rate of **5%**, with the Government providing interest subvention of up to **8%**.
- Credit support is intended to help artisans purchase inputs, upgrade equipment, expand production and develop sustainable micro-enterprises.

Digital and Marketing Support:

- Artisans receive incentives for eligible digital transactions to encourage **digital financial inclusion** and adoption of formal payment systems.
- The scheme connects beneficiaries with **GeM, ONDC, e-commerce platforms, trade fairs and exhibitions**, expanding their access to institutional and consumer markets.
- By September 2026, more than **30,000 beneficiaries** had been onboarded onto e-commerce and related market platforms.
- More than **8.11 lakh beneficiaries** had received digital incentives, with over **₹42 crore** disbursed, while more than **12,000 artisans** had also received training in the use of artificial intelligence tools for branding, product design, packaging and marketing.

Progress and Achievements:

Skill, Toolkit and Credit Delivery:

- The scheme achieved its **30 lakh registration target** substantially ahead of its original five-year implementation period, demonstrating significant outreach among traditional artisans.
- By September 2026, more than **24.37 lakh artisans** had received basic skill training and over **18.16 lakh** had received toolkits according to the latest official progress data.
- More than **6.19 lakh loans**, amounting to approximately **₹5,316 crore**, had been sanctioned under the scheme as of 15 September 2026.

Market Integration and Formalisation:

- PM Vishwakarma beneficiaries are also being onboarded onto the **Udyam Assist Platform**, which enables informal micro-enterprises to enter the formal **MSME ecosystem**.
- Formalisation can improve access to institutional credit, government support, market opportunities and other enterprise-related services.
- The scheme therefore attempts to move artisans beyond welfare-based assistance towards **enterprise development and value-chain integration**.
- The first **PM Vishwakarma National Exhibition-cum-Trade Fair** was organised at Dilli Haat in January 2026, where more than 117 artisans participated and recorded sales exceeding **₹2 crore**.

Significance of PM Vishwakarma:

Economic and Social Significance:

- The scheme supports **rural and urban self-employment** by improving the productivity and earning potential of artisans engaged in traditional occupations.
- It promotes **financial inclusion** by connecting beneficiaries with formal banking channels, collateral-free enterprise credit and digital payments.
- Integration with formal MSME systems can improve the visibility and institutional recognition of traditionally informal economic activities.
- The scheme can also strengthen livelihoods among communities that have historically depended on traditional crafts and occupations.

Preservation of Traditional Knowledge:

- Traditional skills often depend on **intergenerational knowledge transfer**, which can weaken when younger generations move away from traditional occupations because of low incomes and limited market opportunities.
- By combining skill preservation with modern tools, design, technology and market access, PM Vishwakarma seeks to make traditional occupations economically viable.
- The scheme therefore links **cultural heritage preservation with livelihood security**, rather than treating traditional crafts only as cultural assets.

Productivity and Competitiveness:

- Modern toolkits can improve **productivity, quality, precision and production capacity** while reducing dependence on rudimentary equipment.

- Digital marketing and e-commerce can reduce the geographical limitations traditionally faced by small artisans.
- Integration with domestic and global value chains can enable traditional products to reach wider consumer and institutional markets.

Challenges and Way Forward:

Key Challenges:

- Registration numbers alone do not necessarily indicate sustained improvement in **income, productivity or enterprise survival**.
- Many artisans continue to face challenges related to **working capital, raw materials, design innovation, branding, logistics and access to larger markets**.
- Digital adoption may remain uneven because of differences in digital literacy, connectivity and familiarity with formal financial systems.
- Effective implementation therefore requires continuous handholding after training, credit disbursement and initial market onboarding.

Way Forward:

- Implementation should focus on measuring outcomes such as **income enhancement, enterprise survival, productivity, exports and sustained market access**, rather than only beneficiary numbers.
- Greater convergence with **district-level clusters, One District One Product, tourism circuits, handicraft promotion programmes and export-support institutions** can strengthen market opportunities.
- Design institutions, technology centres and digital platforms can help artisans combine traditional knowledge with **contemporary designs, quality standards and changing consumer preferences**.
- Greater access to affordable working capital, insurance, logistics and digital literacy can further strengthen the long-term sustainability of artisan enterprises.

Value Addition for UPSC:

Key Concepts:

- **Guru-Shishya Parampara:** Intergenerational transmission of traditional skills and occupational knowledge.
- **Formalisation:** Integration of informal economic activities and enterprises into recognised institutional, financial and regulatory frameworks.
- **Value-Chain Integration:** Connecting producers with suppliers, markets, consumers and institutional buyers to improve economic returns.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Expanding access to formal financial services such as credit, banking and digital payments.
- **Social Capital:** Knowledge, networks and community relationships that support the transmission and continuation of traditional occupations.

Conclusion:

- **PM Vishwakarma** represents an integrated approach to strengthening traditional artisans through **recognition, skills, modern tools, affordable credit, digital inclusion and market access**.
- Its broader significance lies in connecting **cultural heritage with economic development**, allowing traditional occupations to remain relevant within a modernising economy.

- For sustainable impact, the next phase should move beyond registration and benefit delivery towards measurable improvements in **artisan incomes, enterprise productivity, market competitiveness and intergenerational continuity of traditional skills.**

India Tightens Regulation of Stem Cell Therapy for Autism, Emphasising Clinical Evidence, Patient Safety and Ethical Oversight

Recent Developments:

Union Health Ministry Issues Advisory:

- The **Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** issued an advisory on **16 September 2026** directing States and Union Territories that have adopted the **Clinical Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2010** to regulate the clinical use of stem cell therapy.
- The advisory clarifies that **stem cell therapy for Autism Spectrum Disorder** can be offered only through **duly approved clinical trials** with the necessary regulatory clearances.
- Unproven stem cell interventions for autism must not be offered or marketed as **routine, standard or commercial clinical services.**
- The advisory follows the **Supreme Court judgment dated 30 January 2026** in *Yash Charitable Trust and Others v. Union of India and Others*, strengthening the regulatory focus on patient safety and evidence-based medical practice.

Stem Cell Therapy: Scientific Basis:

What is Stem Cell Therapy?

- **Stem cells** are cells capable of **self-renewal** and, depending on their type and biological context, differentiation into specialised cell types.
- Stem cell therapy seeks to use these properties to **repair, replace or regenerate damaged or dysfunctional cells and tissues**, forming an important area of regenerative medicine.
- In laboratory settings, stem cells can be directed towards particular cell types, such as blood, nerve or muscle cells, which may subsequently be investigated for therapeutic applications.
- However, the ability of stem cells to differentiate in laboratory conditions does not by itself establish that a therapy is **safe, effective or clinically appropriate** for a particular disease.

Regenerative Medicine:

- **Regenerative medicine** aims to restore or improve the function of damaged tissues by using cells, biomaterials, biological molecules or combinations of these approaches.
- Stem-cell-based approaches have potential applications across several fields, including **blood disorders, cancer, tissue injury, cardiovascular disease and selected neurological conditions**, although the level of clinical evidence differs substantially between indications.
- **Haematopoietic stem-cell transplantation** is an established treatment for several blood and immune disorders, illustrating that some stem-cell applications have already entered standard medical practice.

Stem Cell Therapy and Autism:

Current Scientific Position:

- **Autism Spectrum Disorder is a neurodevelopmental condition**, and there is currently insufficient evidence to establish stem cell therapy as a standard treatment for autism.
- The **Indian Council of Medical Research** maintains an evidence-based assessment of stem cell therapy for Autism Spectrum Disorder separately from its broader stem-cell research guidelines.
- Consequently, experimental stem-cell interventions for autism must be evaluated through appropriately designed **clinical trials** rather than being promoted directly as established treatment.
- This distinction is important because promising laboratory findings or preliminary clinical observations do not automatically establish therapeutic efficacy.

Why Clinical Trials are Necessary:

- Clinical trials are designed to determine whether an intervention provides meaningful benefits while identifying **adverse effects, appropriate dosage, treatment protocols and long-term risks**.
- Properly controlled trials also allow researchers to distinguish genuine therapeutic effects from placebo effects, natural variation and other confounding factors.
- For autism, such evidence is particularly important because the condition has diverse manifestations and individuals can have substantially different support requirements.

India's Regulatory Framework:

National Guidelines for Stem Cell Research, 2017:

- The **National Guidelines for Stem Cell Research, 2017** provide the principal framework for the ethical and scientific oversight of stem-cell research and its clinical translation in India.
- The guidelines were jointly developed by the **Indian Council of Medical Research and the Department of Biotechnology**.
- Clinical trials involving stem cells require appropriate approvals from relevant institutional and regulatory bodies, including the **Institutional Committee for Stem Cell Research, Institutional Ethics Committee and Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation**, depending on the nature of the intervention.
- Stem-cell clinical trials are also required to be registered with the **Clinical Trials Registry-India**, strengthening transparency and public accountability.
- The guidelines emphasise regulatory approval, informed consent, monitoring and reporting of adverse events during clinical research.

Clinical Establishments Act, 2010:

- The **Clinical Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2010** provides a regulatory mechanism for clinical establishments in States and Union Territories where the Act has been adopted.
- The Union Health Ministry's latest advisory uses this framework to reinforce action against establishments offering unauthorised stem cell interventions.
- The framework therefore complements scientific regulation by addressing the **clinical delivery and commercial provision** of healthcare services.

Potential Benefits of Stem Cell Research:

Treatment and Regenerative Applications:

- Stem-cell-based approaches may contribute to the treatment of selected **blood and immune disorders, cancers, tissue injuries and other diseases**, subject to the strength of available evidence.
- Regenerative medicine could eventually help address conditions where conventional treatment cannot adequately restore damaged tissues.
- The field may also support the development of **cell-based therapies, tissue engineering and advanced biological products**.

Research and Personalised Medicine:

- Stem cells can be used to create disease models that help researchers understand disease mechanisms and identify potential therapeutic targets.
- Patient-derived cells can support research into **individual responses to medicines**, thereby contributing to personalised and precision medicine.
- Such research can reduce dependence on some conventional experimental models and improve understanding of complex diseases.

Major Challenges:

Limited Clinical Evidence:

- A major challenge is the gap between **laboratory promise and clinically demonstrated efficacy**.
- Many stem-cell applications remain experimental, and early-stage findings cannot be treated as proof of safety or effectiveness for widespread clinical use.
- Long-term follow-up is particularly important because some potential adverse effects may emerge only after considerable periods.

Safety Risks:

- Poorly controlled cell-based interventions can result in **immune reactions, infections, abnormal tissue growth and tumour formation**.
- Risks can also arise from inadequate manufacturing standards, contamination, inappropriate cell selection or uncontrolled administration.
- Strict quality control and long-term monitoring are therefore essential before experimental interventions can be translated into routine care.

Ethical Concerns:

- Stem-cell research raises ethical questions concerning **informed consent, source of cells, embryo-derived cells, patient autonomy, safety and equitable access**.
- Vulnerable patients may be particularly susceptible to unproven therapies when conventional treatment options appear limited.
- Commercial promotion of experimental interventions can create unrealistic expectations and expose families to substantial financial and medical risks.

Autism Spectrum Disorder: Key Facts:

Nature of Autism:

- **Autism Spectrum Disorder** is a lifelong **neurodevelopmental condition** associated with differences in social communication, social interaction and patterns of behaviour.
- The term **spectrum** reflects substantial variation in the characteristics, abilities, support requirements and lived experiences of autistic individuals.
- According to the **World Health Organization**, autism is a diverse group of conditions related to brain development, and its characteristics may become apparent during early childhood but may sometimes be diagnosed later.

Key Characteristics:

- Core characteristics include persistent differences in **social communication and interaction**, along with restricted, repetitive or inflexible patterns of behaviour, interests or activities.
- Some autistic people also experience differences in **sensory processing**, including heightened or reduced responses to sounds, light, textures or other sensory stimuli.
- Autism is associated with wide variation in intellectual, language and functional abilities, and some individuals may require lifelong support.

Evidence-Based Support:

- Autism management should focus on **individualised, evidence-based interventions**, including appropriate behavioural, developmental, educational, occupational and speech-language support where required.
- WHO emphasises early identification, inclusive education, community support and accessible healthcare as important components of improving outcomes and participation.
- Therefore, experimental interventions should not displace established support systems merely because they are marketed as technologically advanced or regenerative.

Significance of the Government's Advisory:

Patient Safety and Evidence-Based Healthcare:

- The advisory reinforces the principle that **clinical innovation must remain subject to scientific evidence, ethical review and regulatory oversight**.
- It seeks to prevent experimental interventions from being presented to patients as established medical treatments before adequate evidence of safety and efficacy is available.
- The approach is particularly significant for autism because families seeking treatment may encounter commercial claims that are not supported by robust clinical evidence.

Strengthening Healthcare Governance:

- The regulation demonstrates the importance of coordination among **health authorities, scientific institutions, ethics committees, clinical establishments and regulatory agencies**.
- It also highlights the need to strengthen mechanisms for monitoring emerging medical technologies as scientific innovation advances.
- Effective regulation must balance **innovation, patient access, scientific freedom and public safety** without discouraging legitimate clinical research.

Ethics and Governance:

- The issue involves **informed consent, non-maleficence, patient autonomy, equity, transparency and responsible innovation.**
- It demonstrates why scientific advancement requires ethical safeguards when interventions directly affect human health.

Value Addition for UPSC:***Key Concepts:***

- **Regenerative Medicine:** A field of medicine focused on repairing, replacing or regenerating damaged cells, tissues or organs.
- **Stem Cells:** Cells capable of self-renewal and differentiation into specialised cell types under appropriate biological conditions.
- **Clinical Translation:** The process of converting scientific discoveries into interventions that can be safely and effectively used in clinical practice.
- **Evidence-Based Medicine:** Medical decision-making based on the best available scientific evidence, clinical expertise and patient-specific considerations.
- **Informed Consent:** A process through which patients receive adequate information about an intervention, including its potential benefits, risks and alternatives, before voluntarily agreeing to it.
- **Responsible Innovation:** Development and application of new technologies while considering scientific validity, ethical implications, public safety and social consequences.

Conclusion:

- **Stem cell therapy** represents a significant frontier in regenerative medicine, but scientific potential must be distinguished from clinically established treatment.
- India's regulatory approach seeks to ensure that experimental interventions, particularly for **Autism Spectrum Disorder**, are evaluated through scientifically valid clinical trials before being presented as routine care.
- The broader policy objective should be to promote **responsible biomedical innovation** while protecting patients through rigorous evidence, ethical oversight, quality standards, transparency and long-term safety monitoring.

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Himalayan Glaciers, Peak Water and India's Economic Dependence: Climate Risks, Black Carbon and Resilience

Recent Developments:***New Report on Himalayan Economic Dependence:***

- A new report titled "**A Resilient Himalaya: Protecting a Region at Risk and Securing Future Prosperity**" has highlighted the growing economic significance of Himalayan ecosystems for India.

- The report was prepared by **Systemiq** in partnership with the **Integrated Mountain Initiative**, with technical contributions from the **International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development** and the **G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment**.
- The report estimates that **₹64.8 lakh crore, equivalent to 21.5% of India's FY24 GDP, is dependent on the Himalayas**, primarily through economic activities linked to Himalayan water.
- This figure does not represent the GDP that would be directly lost because of glacier melting; instead, it measures the economic activity whose functioning is connected to Himalayan water resources.

Accelerating Glacier Loss:

- The **Hindu Kush Himalaya** is experiencing rapid cryospheric change, with ICIMOD reporting that glacier ice loss accelerated substantially during the 2010s compared with the previous decade.
- ICIMOD's 2026 assessments further indicate that the rate of glacier ice loss across the region has approximately doubled since 2000, highlighting an accelerating rather than static trend.

Economic Significance of the Himalayas:

Measuring India's Himalayan Dependence:

- The report calculates Himalayan-linked economic activity through three interconnected layers:
 - **Direct:** Economic output generated within Himalayan states and regions.
 - **Indirect:** Agricultural production, manufacturing, hydropower and services dependent on Himalayan-fed rivers and groundwater recharge, excluding rain-fed production.
 - **Induced:** Supply-chain and income-spending effects generated by Himalayan-dependent economic activities.
- Therefore, the Himalayan economy extends far beyond mountain states because downstream regions also depend upon the water, energy and ecological services originating in the mountains.

Why Himalayan Water Matters:

- The Himalayas function as a major **natural water-storage system**, storing precipitation as snow and ice and gradually releasing meltwater into river systems.
- The **Indus, Ganga and Brahmaputra** river systems receive substantial water from the Himalayan cryosphere and support agriculture, settlements, industries and hydropower across downstream regions.
- Himalayan water is particularly important during dry periods because glacier and snowmelt can maintain river flows when rainfall is limited.
- Consequently, glacier retreat can create both short-term increases in meltwater and longer-term uncertainty over water availability.

Understanding Peak Water:

Meaning of Peak Water:

- **Peak Water** refers to the stage at which glacier-derived water contribution to rivers reaches its maximum because accelerated melting temporarily increases runoff.
- After this point, continued glacier shrinkage reduces the amount of stored ice available for melting, causing long-term glacier-fed river flows to decline.
- Most Hindu Kush Himalayan river basins are expected to approach **Peak Water around the middle of the 21st century**, although the timing varies across individual basins.

Projected Glacier Loss:

- Under current high-emission trajectories, the Hindu Kush Himalaya could lose **up to 80% of its present glacier volume by 2100**.
- ICIMOD has also projected declining snow cover, increasing permafrost degradation and greater variability in water availability as the cryosphere changes.
- These changes could affect both mountain communities and large downstream populations that depend upon Himalayan river systems.

The Himalayas as a Disaster Hotspot:

High Disaster Exposure:

- Himalayan states and Union Territories cover around **18% of India's geographical area but have experienced about 35% of major disasters** over the assessed historical period.
- The region's young and tectonically active geology, steep slopes, seismicity, intense rainfall and fragile ecosystems increase its vulnerability to multiple hazards.
- Major risks include **landslides, flash floods, cloudbursts, avalanches, earthquakes, glacial lake outburst floods and land subsidence**.

Cascading Economic Effects:

- Himalayan disasters can simultaneously affect **food security, water security, infrastructure, supply chains and livelihoods**.
- Repeated disasters can increase displacement and reconstruction requirements while diverting public expenditure away from long-term resilience and development.
- Climate change can therefore generate a **compound risk**, in which environmental degradation increases economic vulnerability and economic disruption reduces the capacity to adapt.

Black Carbon and Glacier Melting:

What is Black Carbon?

- **Black carbon** is a fine particulate pollutant produced mainly through the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, biomass and other carbon-based fuels.
- When deposited on snow and ice, black carbon reduces surface reflectivity, allowing the surface to absorb more solar radiation.
- This **snow-darkening effect** increases local heating and can accelerate the melting of snow and glaciers.

Himalayan Impact:

- The new report estimates that roughly **one-third of Himalayan glacier melt is associated with South Asian black carbon**.
- Industry, particularly **brick kilns**, is identified as a major contributor to anthropogenic black carbon deposition across the region.
- The report estimates that industrial sources contribute around **32–42% of South Asian anthropogenic black carbon deposition** in the Himalayan region.
- Reducing black carbon therefore offers a relatively immediate mitigation opportunity because it can simultaneously improve **air quality and cryospheric stability**.

Brick Kilns as a Policy Lever:

Zigzag Kiln Technology:

- **Zigzag kiln technology** improves combustion efficiency and can substantially reduce particulate and black carbon emissions compared with traditional brick kilns.
- The report indicates that the technology can reduce black carbon and particulate emissions by roughly **70%** while lowering fuel consumption by around **20–30%**.
- Adoption, however, remains uneven across India, creating scope for targeted technological and financial interventions.

Beyond Brick Kilns:

- Black carbon control cannot depend exclusively on brick kilns because emissions also arise from **cookstoves, transport, industries and crop-residue burning**.
- Effective intervention requires an **airshed-based approach**, where emission sources across interconnected regions are addressed collectively rather than through isolated city-level measures.
- This approach can generate co-benefits for **public health, climate mitigation, agricultural productivity and glacier conservation**.

Broader Climate and Ecological Risks:

Cryosphere–Water–Ecosystem Linkages:

- Himalayan glacier and snow loss affects more than water supply because the **cryosphere is closely connected with ecosystems, biodiversity, agriculture and human settlements**.
- Permafrost degradation can destabilise mountain slopes and infrastructure, while changing snow patterns can alter the timing and availability of water.
- ICIMOD has warned that rapid cryospheric changes are increasing the likelihood of interacting slow- and fast-onset hazards, including **erosion, sedimentation, landslides and glacial lake outburst floods**.

Transboundary Dimension:

- The Hindu Kush Himalaya extends across several countries, while its major river systems cross national boundaries.
- Glacier monitoring, hydrological data, disaster forecasting and early-warning systems therefore require **regional cooperation**.
- Cross-border coordination is particularly important because hazards originating in high-altitude areas can affect densely populated downstream regions across national borders.

Way Forward:

Building a Resilient Himalayan Economy:

- Treat Himalayan ecosystems as **critical national infrastructure** because their services support water, food, energy and economic security far beyond mountain states.
- Strengthen **glacier monitoring, glacial-lake surveillance, early-warning systems and climate-resilient infrastructure** in vulnerable mountain districts.
- Expand **nature-based solutions**, watershed restoration, spring rejuvenation and sustainable land-use planning to improve water retention and reduce disaster risks.

- Promote climate-resilient agriculture, efficient irrigation and diversified mountain livelihoods to reduce dependence on increasingly uncertain water regimes.
- Accelerate **black carbon reduction** through cleaner brick kilns, improved household energy, cleaner transport and better management of crop residues.
- Adopt an **airshed-level pollution strategy** because atmospheric pollutants travel across administrative boundaries.
- Strengthen India's cooperation with **Hindu Kush Himalayan countries** on scientific monitoring, hydrological data sharing, disaster preparedness and climate adaptation.
- Ensure that Himalayan development projects follow **carrying-capacity assessments, cumulative impact assessments and disaster-risk-sensitive planning** rather than focusing only on individual projects.

Value Addition for UPSC:

- **Third Pole:** The Hindu Kush Himalaya is often described as the **Third Pole** because it contains one of the world's largest concentrations of snow and ice outside the polar regions.
- **Peak Water:** The stage at which glacier-derived river discharge reaches its maximum before declining as glacier storage diminishes.
- **Cryosphere:** The part of the Earth system consisting of frozen water, including glaciers, snow, ice sheets, sea ice and permafrost.
- **Black Carbon:** A short-lived climate pollutant produced mainly through incomplete combustion that strongly absorbs solar radiation.
- **Snow Darkening Effect:** Reduction in snow reflectivity caused by deposited particles such as black carbon, resulting in greater absorption of solar energy.
- **Key Data:** Himalayan-linked economic activity is estimated at **21.5% of India's FY24 GDP**, while the Hindu Kush Himalaya could lose **up to 80% of its present glacier volume by 2100** under current trajectories.

Conclusion:

- The Himalayas are simultaneously a **water tower, ecological regulator and economic foundation** for India.
- Accelerating glacier loss and the approaching Peak Water transition create long-term risks for water security, agriculture, energy and disaster resilience.
- While global warming requires international mitigation, reducing **black carbon and other short-lived pollutants** offers India an immediate opportunity to protect air quality while slowing additional pressure on Himalayan glaciers.
- A combination of climate mitigation, ecosystem restoration, scientific monitoring, resilient infrastructure and regional cooperation is therefore essential for securing the Himalayan economy.

ECI Freezes TMC Name and Symbol Amid Internal Dispute: Constitutional Powers, Electoral Symbols and Party-Split Adjudication

Recent Developments:

Interim Freeze on Party Identity:

- On **17 September 2026**, the **Election Commission of India** temporarily froze the use of the name **All India Trinamool Congress** and its reserved **Flowers and Grass** election symbol amid an organisational dispute between rival factions.
- The interim arrangement applies to the upcoming **West Bengal Assembly by-elections**, including the Nandigram and Rejinagar constituencies, where competing factions have fielded candidates.
- The Commission directed both groups to operate under alternative names and symbols so that neither faction receives an electoral advantage from the disputed party identity.
- Each faction was asked to submit **three preferred names and three choices from the list of free symbols** available with the Commission.

Latest Position:

- On **18 September 2026**, the Commission proceeded to allot separate names and symbols to the rival groups for the immediate electoral process, while the substantive dispute concerning the original party identity remains subject to further proceedings.
- The interim arrangement should therefore be distinguished from a **final adjudication under Paragraph 15** of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968.

Legal Basis of Party Name and Symbol:

Paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols Order, 1968:

- **Paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968** provides the framework for determining disputes when rival sections of a recognised political party claim the party's identity and its reserved election symbol.
- The Commission examines the competing claims and determines which group has a stronger claim to the recognised party's organisational identity and reserved symbol.
- The present freeze is an **interim measure** and should not be treated as a final declaration regarding which faction legally represents the original party.

Judicial Foundation:

- The Commission's approach to party-split disputes has historically involved examining the relative strength of rival groups in the **organisational and legislative wings** of a political party.
- The Supreme Court's decision in **Sadiq Ali v. Election Commission of India** recognised the relevance of majority support in the organisational and legislative wings while considering disputes over party identity and symbols.
- The Election Commission has subsequently applied this framework in several disputes involving recognised political parties.

Why Was the Name and Symbol Frozen?

Need for an Interim Arrangement:

- The Commission faced competing claims from rival groups while elections were approaching, making an immediate final determination difficult within the available electoral timetable.
- Allowing both groups to use the same recognised name and reserved symbol could create **voter confusion, administrative difficulties and uncertainty regarding candidate identity**.
- The temporary freeze seeks to maintain a degree of electoral neutrality by preventing either faction from obtaining exclusive use of the disputed identity before the substantive dispute is resolved.
- The Commission's stated approach is intended to place the rival groups on an **even footing** while protecting their respective electoral interests.

How Does the ECI Decide Party-Split Disputes?

Organisational Majority:

- The Commission can examine the level of support enjoyed by competing factions among **party office-bearers, organisational committees and other recognised organisational units**.
- Documentary evidence relating to the party constitution, organisational elections and internal decision-making structures can become relevant to establishing organisational control.

Legislative Majority:

- The Commission can also examine support among the party's **elected Members of Parliament and Members of Legislative Assemblies**.
- Legislative strength provides an additional indicator of the relative support enjoyed by competing groups within a recognised political party.

Documentary and Procedural Evidence:

- The Commission considers the material submitted by the rival factions and assesses the competing claims through the procedure applicable under the Symbols Order.
- The determination is therefore not based merely on the public claim of leadership by either faction but on **evidence concerning organisational and legislative support**.

Constitutional Framework of the Election Commission:

Article 324:

- The **Election Commission of India** is an independent constitutional authority established under **Article 324** of the Constitution.
- Article 324 vests the Commission with the **superintendence, direction and control** of electoral rolls and elections to Parliament, State Legislatures, and the offices of the President and Vice-President.
- The constitutional framework gives the Commission an important institutional role in maintaining the integrity and orderly conduct of elections.

Part XV of the Constitution:

- **Part XV**, comprising **Articles 324–329**, deals with elections and establishes the constitutional framework for electoral administration.
- Article 324 establishes the Election Commission, while subsequent provisions address matters such as electoral laws, adult suffrage, election-related legislation and judicial intervention.
- The constitutional scheme seeks to maintain an independent and uniform institutional framework for elections throughout India.

Major Functions of the ECI:

Electoral Administration:

- The Commission conducts elections to the **Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and State Legislatures**, as well as elections to the offices of the **President and Vice-President**.
- It supervises electoral rolls, election schedules, polling, counting and other processes necessary for conducting elections.

Political Parties and Symbols:

- The Commission registers political parties under **Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951** and administers the framework governing recognised political parties and election symbols.
- It allots **reserved symbols** to recognised political parties and **free symbols** to eligible candidates and groups under the applicable provisions of the Symbols Order.
- The Commission also maintains records concerning organisational elections of recognised political parties.

Quasi-Judicial Functions:

- The ECI performs certain **quasi-judicial functions**, including adjudication of disputes concerning the identity of recognised political parties and their reserved symbols.
- Such functions require consideration of evidence, competing claims and applicable legal principles rather than merely administrative allocation.

State Election Commissions:

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- The ECI does **not conduct elections to Panchayats and Municipalities**.
- Elections to local bodies are conducted by the respective **State Election Commissions** under the constitutional framework governing local self-government.

Significance of the Dispute:

Electoral Fairness:

- The dispute demonstrates why an effective mechanism is necessary when rival factions simultaneously claim the identity and symbol of a recognised political party.
- An interim freeze can prevent the disputed identity from being exclusively used by one faction while the Commission considers the substantive claims.

Voter Clarity:

- Election symbols are particularly significant in India's electoral system because they provide an easily identifiable association between candidates and political parties.
- A dispute over a reserved symbol can therefore have consequences for **voter recognition, campaign communication and electoral administration**.

Constitutional and Institutional Balance:

- The episode highlights the need to balance the Commission's constitutional responsibility under **Article 324** with procedural fairness toward competing political groups.
- It also raises broader questions regarding **internal party democracy, organisational transparency, timely adjudication and the scope of electoral regulation**.

Challenges in Party-Split Adjudication:***Determining Genuine Organisational Support:***

- Internal party structures may become contested during a split, making it difficult to establish which organisational meetings, office-bearers or committees legitimately represent the party.
- The Commission may therefore need to scrutinise organisational records, party constitutions and election procedures carefully.

Balancing Speed and Due Process:

- Election schedules create strict time constraints, whereas party-identity disputes may require extensive examination of evidence.
- A speedy decision can reduce electoral uncertainty, but procedural fairness requires that rival groups receive an adequate opportunity to present their claims.

Scope of Article 324:

- Article 324 provides broad constitutional powers to the ECI, but the exercise of such powers must remain consistent with **statutory provisions, constitutional principles and judicial review**.
- The institutional challenge is to ensure that electoral administration remains effective without compromising procedural safeguards.

Way Forward:***Strengthening Electoral Adjudication:***

- Party-split disputes should be resolved through **transparent, evidence-based and time-bound procedures**, particularly when elections are imminent.
- Clearer procedural timelines can reduce prolonged uncertainty over party identity and reserved symbols.

Strengthening Internal Party Democracy:

- Political parties should maintain transparent organisational structures, regular internal elections, updated membership records and clearly defined constitutional procedures for leadership changes.

- Stronger internal democratic mechanisms can reduce the frequency and intensity of disputes reaching the Election Commission.

Improving Electoral Transparency:

- The ECI should continue to publish relevant orders and procedural information so that political parties, candidates and voters can understand the basis of decisions concerning party recognition and symbols.
- Digitisation and systematic preservation of organisational records can also facilitate evidence-based adjudication.

Value Addition for UPSC:

- **Article 324:** Vests the Election Commission with the superintendence, direction and control of electoral rolls and elections to Parliament, State Legislatures, and the offices of the President and Vice-President.
- **Paragraph 15:** Provides the principal mechanism under the Election Symbols Order for resolving disputes between rival sections of a recognised political party concerning its identity and reserved symbol.
- **Sadiq Ali Principle:** The Supreme Court upheld the relevance of examining relative majority support in the organisational and legislative wings in party-split disputes.
- **Reserved Symbol:** A symbol specifically allotted to a recognised political party for its candidates, subject to the conditions prescribed under the Symbols Order.
- **Free Symbol:** A symbol that is not reserved for a particular recognised political party and may be allotted according to the applicable electoral rules.
- **Quasi-Judicial Function:** A function in which an authority determines competing claims by applying legal or regulatory principles and considering evidence, even though it is not functioning as an ordinary court.
- **Constitutional Significance:** The dispute illustrates how electoral institutions must simultaneously protect electoral certainty, institutional neutrality, procedural fairness and democratic competition.

Conclusion:

- The TMC name-and-symbol dispute illustrates the Election Commission's important **constitutional and quasi-judicial role** in managing conflicts over the identity of recognised political parties.
- The interim freeze provides an immediate electoral arrangement while leaving the substantive question of party identity to further proceedings under the Symbols Order.
- The episode also highlights the importance of **transparent procedures, credible organisational records, internal party democracy and timely electoral adjudication** for maintaining public confidence in the electoral process.

QUESTIONS

1. The "Lindsey O. Graham Sanctions Act" recently seen in the news primarily aims to achieve which of the following objectives?

- (A) Imposition of primary sanctions on central banking operations across West Asia.
- (B) Authorization of secondary tariffs on major third-country purchasers of Russian energy.
- (C) Mandatory price-cap enforcement on maritime insurance for European Union fleet operators.
- (D) Direct freezing of foreign exchange reserves belonging to emerging market economies.

2. Consider the following statements regarding the core implementation framework of the PM Vishwakarma Scheme:

- (1) It is a Central Sector Scheme fully funded by the Central Government with an outlay of ₹13,000 crore.
- (2) It is implemented jointly by the Ministry of MSME, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Department of Financial Services.
- (3) The scheme covers all traditional artisans regardless of their age provided they work in the unorganised sector.
- (4) Government employees and their family members are explicitly excluded from receiving benefits under the scheme.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (A) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (B) 2, 3 and 4 only
- (C) 1, 2 and 4 only
- (D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

3. Consider the following statements regarding the comparative properties of stem cells in laboratory settings versus clinical practice:

- (1) A stem cell's demonstrated biological ability to differentiate into specific cell lines in vitro directly guarantees its therapeutic safety and efficacy in vivo.
- (2) Haematopoietic stem-cell transplantation has achieved standard medical practice status, whereas neural regenerative applications for neurodevelopmental disorders remain largely experimental.
- (3) Long-term follow-up requirements are less stringent for cell-based therapies compared to conventional small-molecule synthetic drugs due to lower risk of tumor formation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (A) 1 and 2 only
- (B) 2 only
- (C) 2 and 3 only

(D) 1, 2 and 3

4. Given below are two statements, one labeled as Assertion (A) and the other as Reason (R):

Assertion (A): Mitigating black carbon emissions offers an immediate short-term opportunity to slow down glacier melt in the Himalayas compared to global carbon dioxide reduction efforts.

Reason (R): Black carbon is a short-lived climate pollutant, and its reduction yields rapid local atmospheric and surface-albedo improvements.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (A) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A.
- (B) Both A and R are true but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
- (C) A is true but R is false.
- (D) A is false but R is true.

5. Consider the following electoral functions and responsibilities in India:

- (1) Granting recognition to political parties as National or State political parties
- (2) Disqualification of sitting Members of Parliament on grounds of defection under the Tenth Schedule
- (3) Registration of associations or bodies of individual citizens of India as political parties
- (4) Conducting elections to the office of the Chairman of the Legislative Council of a State
- (5) Preparation and revision of electoral rolls for elections to the Legislative Councils of States

How many of the above functions are constitutionally or statutorily vested in the Election Commission of India (ECI)?

- (A) Only two
- (B) Only three
- (C) Only four
- (D) All five

ANSWER KEY

1 – Answer (B), 2 – Answer (C), 3 – Answer (B), 4 – Answer (A), 5 – Answer (B)



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 oashub19  oashub19
 OASHUB22  oashub19@gmail.com
 M5/17, Acharya Vihar Bhubaneswar 751022