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PART II • ETHICS TO DIRECT HIT TRACKER



Ethics Case Examples from Today's News

GS Paper 4 · Mapped to UPSC Syllabus · Answer Writing Ready

Case 1: PM SVANidhi — Dignity of Labour & the State as Enabler

NEWS EXAMPLE

Street vendors empowered with credit loans (not doles) under PM SVANidhi after 6 years — model of dignity-preserving welfare.

ETHICAL ISSUE

Should the state provide charity or enable self-sufficiency? Tension between paternalism and empowerment in public policy.

STAKEHOLDERS

Street vendors (urban poor), MoHUA, SIDBI, municipal bodies, banking institutions, taxpayers.

GS4 SYLLABUS MAPPING

Public service values · Probity in governance · Compassion · Ethical governance · Role of civil servants in welfare delivery.

Compassion

Public Service Values

Dignity

Accountability

Probity

How to use in answer writing:

In GS4 answers on "civil servant's role in welfare delivery," cite SVANidhi as a model where the state shifted from patron to enabler — rooted in Antyodaya philosophy and Article 21 (right to livelihood). Contrast with Direct Benefit Transfer debate: cash vs. credit.

Case 2: Israel-Lebanon Conflict — Proportionality, Heritage & Ethical Governance in War

NEWS EXAMPLE

Israeli forces seize 900-year-old Beaufort Castle (UNESCO-significant) for military purposes during war on Hezbollah.

ETHICAL ISSUE

Is destruction/use of cultural heritage sites justifiable for military objectives? Just War Theory: proportionality, discrimination, necessity.

STAKEHOLDERS

Israeli government, Lebanese civilians, Hezbollah, UN, UNESCO, international community, India (as energy-dependent state).

GS4 SYLLABUS MAPPING

Moral dilemma · Leadership · Emotional Intelligence · International ethics · Ethical dilemmas in governance.

Moral Dilemma

Ethical Governance

Leadership

Attitude

Emotional Intelligence

How to use in answer writing:

For "ethical dilemmas in international relations" — cite Beaufort Castle as tension between military necessity and obligations under the 1954 Hague Convention for Protection of Cultural Property in Armed Conflict. Apply consequentialism vs. deontological ethics: ends vs. means.

Case 3: Planetary Boundaries Breach — Inter-Generational Equity & Accountability

NEWS EXAMPLE

SOE 2026: 7 of 9 planetary boundaries breached — present generation consuming ecological capital at the cost of future generations.

ETHICAL ISSUE

Do present generations have a moral obligation to preserve environmental resources for future generations? (Rawls' Veil of Ignorance; Brundtland definition of sustainability).

STAKEHOLDERS

Present governments, corporations, consumers, future generations, non-human species, international environmental bodies (UNEP, IPCC).

GS4 SYLLABUS MAPPING

Integrity · Accountability · Probity · Inter-generational ethics · Environmental ethics.

Integrity

Accountability

Inter-generational Equity

Probity

Compassion

How to use in answer writing:

Use Brundtland definition: "Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations." Connect to India's constitutional duty under Article 51A(g) — duty to protect the environment. Classic GS4 + GS3 bridge.

Case 4: Khet Bachao Abhiyan — Institutional Integrity & Land Governance

NEWS EXAMPLE

Nationwide campaign against illegal agricultural land encroachment — raises question of bureaucratic complicity in allowing encroachments.

ETHICAL ISSUE

Conflict between short-term political patronage (allowing encroachment) and long-term food security obligations. Role of civil servant vs. political pressures.

GS4 MAPPING

Integrity · Accountability · Probity in governance · Courage of conviction

STAKEHOLDERS

Farmers, encroachers, local politicians, district administration, food security system, future food consumers.

Integrity

Courage of Conviction

Accountability

Probity

How to use in answer writing: Model answer frame: "A district collector faces pressure from local politicians to overlook agricultural land encroachments by party supporters. What should the collector do?" — Apply AIS conduct rules, Article 309, and GS4 values of integrity and courage of conviction.

02



Prelims MCQs — 15 Original Questions

Q.01 · POLITY

EASY

PM SVANidhi scheme is implemented by which Ministry?

(a) Ministry of Finance

(b) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs ✓

(c) Ministry of Rural Development

(d) Ministry of MSME

PM SVANidhi (PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi) was launched in June 2020 under the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) to provide collateral-free micro-credit to urban street vendors displaced by COVID-19. It provides loans in three tranches: ₹10,000 → ₹20,000 → ₹50,000.

Source: PIB/MoHUA

PYQ: UPSC 2021 Prelims

Consider the following statements about Nominal GDP and PPP-based GDP:

1. Nominal GDP converts output using current market exchange rates.
2. India ranks higher globally in PPP-based GDP than in Nominal GDP.
3. PPP-based GDP is a better measure for international trade comparisons.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 2 only ✓

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Statements 1 and 2 are correct. Nominal GDP uses current exchange rates; India (~3rd by PPP, 6th by nominal in 2026) ranks higher by PPP. Statement 3 is incorrect: PPP GDP is better for welfare/living standard comparisons; Nominal GDP is used for trade and debt comparisons.

Source: Economic Survey 2025-26

PYQ: UPSC 2020 Prelims

As per the State of India's Environment 2026 report, which of the following planetary boundaries have NOT been breached?

1. Biosphere integrity
2. Stratospheric ozone depletion
3. Ocean acidification
4. Atmospheric aerosol loading

Select using codes:

(a) 1 and 3

(b) 1 and 4

(c) 2 and 4 ✓

(d) 3 and 4

Of the 9 planetary boundaries, 7 have been breached. The two still within safe limits are: (1) Stratospheric ozone depletion — recovering due to the Montreal Protocol; (2) Atmospheric aerosol loading — not yet quantified precisely but within limits. Ocean acidification (statement 3) has newly joined the breached list.

Source: CSE SOE 2026

PYQ: UPSC 2019 Prelims

Which was India's FIRST Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with a Gulf country?

(a) Oman

(b) Saudi Arabia

(c) UAE ✓

(d) Kuwait

India signed its first CEPA with the UAE in February 2022, which came into force in May 2022. It was India's first trade agreement with a Gulf nation and covered goods, services, and investment. India-Oman CEPA followed in 2026.

Source: MEA / Commerce Ministry

PYQ: UPSC 2023 Prelims

The Quad grouping comprises which four countries?

(a) India, USA, UK, France

(b) India, USA, Japan, South Korea

(c) India, USA, Australia, Japan ✓

(d) India, Australia, France, Germany

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) comprises India, USA, Australia, and Japan. Originally formed in 2007, revived in 2017, and elevated to Leaders' Summit level in March 2021. It promotes a Free and Open Indo-Pacific and is NOT a military alliance.

Source: MEA

PYQ: UPSC 2022 Prelims

TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India) was established under which legislation?

(a) Indian Telegraph Act, 1885

(b) IT Act, 2000

(c) TRAI Act, 1997 ✓

(d) Telecom Regulatory Commission Act, 2003

TRAI is a statutory body established under the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997. It is not a constitutional body. It regulates telecom tariffs, recommends spectrum pricing, and ensures quality of service. It should not be confused with DoT (Department of Telecommunications), which is the policy body.

Source: TRAI Act 1997

PYQ: UPSC 2018 Prelims

Beaufort Castle (Qal'at al-Shaqif), recently in news, is situated in which country?

(a) Syria

(b) Israel

(c) Lebanon ✓

(d) Jordan

Beaufort Castle (also called Qal'at al-Shaqif) is a 12th-century Crusader fortress in southern Lebanon, situated near the Litani River. It overlooks northern Israel and the Bekaa Valley, giving it strategic military significance. Israeli forces seized it during operations against Hezbollah in May 2026.

Source: The Hindu / Al Jazeera

PYQ: UPSC Map-based 2024

Ocean acidification is primarily driven by which process?

- (a) Nitrogen deposition from agricultural runoff
- (b) Thermal expansion of ocean water due to warming
- (c) Absorption of excess atmospheric CO₂ by oceans ✓**
- (d) Industrial effluent discharge into marine ecosystems

Oceans absorb ~25-30% of anthropogenic CO₂. This CO₂ dissolves in seawater forming carbonic acid (H₂CO₃), which dissociates to lower ocean pH. Since industrialisation, ocean pH has fallen by ~0.1 units (representing a 26% increase in acidity). This threatens coral reefs, shellfish, and entire marine food chains.

Source: IPCC / CSE SOE 2026

PYQ: UPSC 2023 Prelims

As per Economic Survey 2025-26, India's real GDP growth for FY26 is projected at:

- (a) 6.5%
- (b) 7.0%
- (c) 7.4% ✓**
- (d) 8.2%

The Economic Survey 2025-26 (tabled in Parliament January 2026) projects India's real GDP growth at 7.4% and GVA at 7.3% for FY26. Average inflation (April–December 2025) was at a historic low of 1.7%. Unemployment rate declined to 4.8% (December 2025).

Source: Economic Survey 2025-26

PYQ: UPSC 2025 Prelims

Which constitutional provision directs the State to organise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines?

(a) Article 39

(b) Article 43

(c) Article 48 ✓

(d) Article 51A(g)

Article 48 is a Directive Principle (GS2) that directs the State to organise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines, and prohibit cow slaughter. Note: Article 51A(g) is a Fundamental Duty — to protect the natural environment. Article 39 relates to equitable distribution of resources. Article 43 relates to living wages for workers.

Source: Constitution of India

PYQ: UPSC 2016, 2020

The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC) was formally announced at which summit?

(a) G7 Summit, Hiroshima 2023

(b) G20 Summit, New Delhi 2023 ✓

(c) SCO Summit, India 2023

(d) ASEAN Summit, Indonesia 2023

IMEEC was announced at the G20 New Delhi Summit in September 2023, as a multi-modal connectivity corridor linking India to Europe via UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Israel. It is seen as a strategic alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Oman's Duqm Port is relevant to this corridor's maritime extension.

Source: MEA / G20 India 2023

PYQ: UPSC 2024 Prelims

The 'Planetary Boundaries' concept was developed by which scientist?

(a) James Lovelock

(b) Rajendra Pachauri

(c) Johan Rockström ✓

(d) Paul Crutzen

Johan Rockström and colleagues at the Stockholm Resilience Centre proposed the Planetary Boundaries framework in 2009. It defines nine Earth-system processes within which humanity can safely operate. Paul Crutzen coined 'Anthropocene'; James Lovelock proposed the Gaia hypothesis.

Source: CSE SOE 2026 / Nature 2009

PYQ: UPSC 2019

India's Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) relevant to India-Australia SAR cooperation is located in:

(a) Mumbai

(b) Kochi

(c) Chennai ✓

(d) Visakhapatnam

India's MRCC Chennai is central to India-Australia Search and Rescue (SAR) cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region. The two countries agreed to host a SAR tabletop exercise at MRCC Chennai in June 2026. India's coastline extends 7,516 km; the Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean are primary SAR zones.

Source: Ministry of Defence / PIB

PYQ: Map-based UPSC

A sharp depreciation of the Indian Rupee against the US Dollar directly results in which of the following?

1. Reduction in India's nominal GDP in dollar terms
2. Higher cost of crude oil imports for India
3. Increased competitiveness of Indian exports

Select the correct answer:

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 1, 2 and 3 ✓

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1 and 3 only

All three are correct: (1) Rupee depreciation reduces India's output value when converted to USD → nominal GDP falls → India slipped to 6th in 2026. (2) India imports ~85% of oil in USD → costlier when rupee falls. (3) Indian exports become cheaper for foreign buyers, boosting competitiveness. Note: this is a double-edged sword.

Source: Economic Survey 2025-26

PYQ: UPSC 2022 Prelims

With reference to CEPA vs FTA, consider the following:

1. CEPA covers trade in goods, services and investment.
2. FTA primarily focuses on reduction of tariffs on goods.
3. India has signed more FTAs than CEPAs with Gulf nations.

Which are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 1 and 2 only ✓

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Statements 1 and 2 are correct. CEPA is broader than FTA — it covers goods, services, investment, and IP. Statement 3 is incorrect — India has signed CEPAs (not FTAs) with Gulf nations (UAE 2022, Oman 2026). India has FTAs with ASEAN, Sri Lanka, SAFTA partners, etc. The distinction between CEPA and FTA is a recurring UPSC trap.

Source: MEA / Commerce Ministry

PYQ: UPSC 2023



"India's CEPA strategy with Gulf nations reflects a sophisticated convergence of economic diplomacy, diaspora leverage, and strategic geography." Critically analyse. (250 words)

► GS PAPER & SYLLABUS

GS2 • India and its neighbourhood • Bilateral & regional groupings • International trade agreements

► MODEL INTRODUCTION

India's recent CEPAs with UAE (2022) and Oman (2026) signal a strategic recalibration from multilateral hesitance to targeted bilateral engagements. These agreements are layered with geopolitical, diaspora, and supply-chain considerations that transcend mere tariff reduction.

► BODY POINTS

- **Economic rationale:** Gulf is India's largest trade bloc (~\$180B); CEPAs reduce tariffs and unlock services access for Indian professionals and firms
- **Diaspora as foreign policy capital:** ~8 million Indians in Gulf; remittances (~\$40B/year from Gulf); CEPA formalises diaspora protection and mobility
- **Strategic geography:** Duqm (Oman) + Chabahar (Iran) form India's western maritime arc; IMEEC connectivity for Europe access
- **Energy security:** Gulf supplies ~60% of India's crude oil; CEPA deepens supply chain stability and diversification
- **Critique:** Risk of import surge in sensitive sectors; need for robust sunset clauses and MSME protection; domestic industry impact must be monitored

► CONCLUSION

India's Gulf CEPA architecture is not merely transactional — it is civilisational, rooted in ancient trade ties and current strategic imperatives. Its success requires balancing diplomatic ambition with domestic preparedness.

Act West Policy

IMEEC

Diaspora Diplomacy

Energy Security

Duqm Port

Strategic Autonomy

"Breaching seven of nine planetary boundaries is not merely an ecological crisis — it is a governance failure of civilisational proportions." Comment. (150 words)

► BODY POINTS

- Planetary Boundaries framework (Rockström 2009): 9 Earth-system limits; 7 now breached including ocean acidification (newly, 2026)
- Governance failures: Tragedy of the commons; market externalities unpriced; regulatory capture in polluting industries; weak international compliance mechanisms
- Intergenerational inequity: Current generation exhausting ecological capital; violating Brundtland sustainability principle
- India angle: CSE SOE 2026 — human-tiger conflict, water stress, biodiversity loss; Article 51A(g) remains aspirational
- Way forward: Carbon pricing, biodiversity mainstreaming in national budgets, BBNJ Treaty implementation, India's leadership in LiFE Mission

Planetary Boundaries

Ocean Acidification

BBNJ Treaty

LiFE Mission

Intergenerational Equity

Analyse how India-Australia defence co-production agreements contribute to Aatmanirbhar Bharat in Defence. What are the risks of over-reliance on defence partnerships? (150 words)

► **BODY POINTS**

- India's defence import dependence: ~65% in 2014; DAP 2020 targets: Buy Indian → Buy & Make Indian → Make in India categories
- India-Australia MoU: Sensor technologies, maritime hardware — fills critical technological gaps faster than indigenous development
- Channels: iDEX, DRDO, DPIIT channelling FDI + technology transfer to private Indian defence sector
- Positive defence exports: India's defence exports rose to ₹21,083 crore in FY24 — partnerships accelerate this
- Risk: Technology dependency shifting from Russia/USA to Australia/UK if indigenisation is not prioritised; IPR constraints on co-produced platforms

Aatmanirbhar Bharat

DAP 2020

iDEX

Tech Transfer

DRDO

Defence Exports

"PM SVANidhi represents a paradigm shift in urban welfare — from subsidy dependency to credit empowerment." Critically examine with evidence from its six-year implementation. (150 words)

► **BODY POINTS**

- Shift from PMGSY / PMAY type direct benefits → credit-linked micro-enterprise model (SVANidhi)
- 68 lakh+ beneficiaries in 6 years; digital transaction incentive creates formal financial footprint for informal workers
- Links to PM Jan Dhan Yojana (banking access) → digital transactions → credit history → future formal credit access
- Critique: Urban poor still face structural barriers — lack of documentation, eviction, seasonal income instability
- Way forward: Integration with Urban Local Bodies for licencing, dedicated vending zones (Street Vendors Act 2014)

Urban Informal Economy

Financial Inclusion

Street Vendors Act 2014

Jan Dhan

Article 21

India's real GDP growth is robust at 7.4%, yet its nominal GDP ranking has slipped to 6th globally. What does this paradox reveal about currency management and India's economic position? (150 words)

► **BODY POINTS**

- Real GDP (PPP) vs. Nominal GDP: Explanation of the distinction and policy significance
- Rupee depreciation (~11% vs. USD): Caused by global dollar strength, India's CAD, foreign capital outflows, and geopolitical risk premium
- Impact: India's dollar GDP shrinks → slip in nominal ranking despite healthy real growth
- RBI tools: Forex intervention, interest rate management, macroprudential regulation
- Silver lining: Cheaper exports, higher remittances in rupee terms, tourism boost
- Policy implication: India must build forex buffers, diversify export basket, and reduce import intensity (energy + electronics)

Nominal vs PPP GDP

CAD

Forex Reserves

Rupee Depreciation

RBI Intervention

A district collector faces political pressure to overlook illegal encroachment on agricultural land by supporters of the ruling party. What course of action should the collector take? Analyse the ethical dimensions. (150 words)

► **ETHICAL FRAMEWORK**

- Conflict: Institutional duty (uphold law, protect food security) vs. political pressure (patronage, career risk)
- Values at stake: Integrity, probity, courage of conviction, public service values, rule of law
- Applicable frameworks: Deontological (duty to uphold law regardless of outcome); consequentialist (long-term food security vs. short-term political peace)
- Legal safeguards: AIS (Conduct) Rules 1968; Article 309; right to make representation; appeal to UPSC/Tribunal
- Action: Document evidence, initiate due process, report to higher authority, refuse political interference — with transparency and due procedure

Integrity

Courage of Conviction

AIS Conduct Rules

Rule of Law

Probity



Answer Writing Value Addition

✦ Quote Bank — Use in Today's Answers

"The earth does not belong to us; we belong to the earth." — Chief Seattle → Use in planetary boundaries / environment answers

"Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising future generations." — Brundtland Commission (1987) → Core GS3 sustainability framing

"In the long run we are all dead." — J.M. Keynes → Use for short-term economic policy vs. long-term sustainability trade-offs

"The measure of a civilization is how it treats its weakest members." — Mahatma Gandhi → PM SVANidhi / welfare for urban poor answers

"Diplomacy is the art of letting someone else have your way." — Daniele Vare → India's CEPA/Gulf diplomacy
Mains enrichment

📌 Key Data Points to Drop in Answers Today

Topic	Data Point	Source
PM SVANidhi	68 lakh+ beneficiaries · 6 years · ₹10K→₹20K→₹50K loans	PIB/MoHUA
India GDP 2026	Nominal: \$4.15T (6th) · Real growth: 7.4% · Inflation: 1.7%	Economic Survey 2025-26
India Oil Imports	~85% of crude requirement imported · CAD linked to oil prices	PIB/Ministry of Petroleum
Planetary Boundaries	7 of 9 breached · Ocean acidification = 7th · 2 safe remaining	CSE SOE 2026
India-Australia Trade	~\$45 billion bilateral trade · Comprehensive Strategic Partnership 2020	MEA
India Coastline	7,516 km (mainland) · 11,098 km (including islands)	Ministry of Ports
Defence Exports	₹21,083 crore in FY24 · Target: ₹50,000 crore by 2029	Ministry of Defence
Indian Diaspora Gulf	~8 million total · ~760,000 in Oman · Remittances ~\$100B+ total	MEA/RBI

📌 Committees, Articles & Reports Referenced Today

Reference	Relevance Today
Economic Survey 2025-26	GDP growth 7.4%, inflation 1.7%, GDP ranking slip to 6th
State of India's Environment 2026 (CSE/DTE)	7 of 9 planetary boundaries breached; ocean acidification
Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020	India-Australia co-production MoU; Aatmanirbhar Bharat Defence
Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood) Act, 2014	Legal framework for PM SVANidhi beneficiaries
TRAJ Act, 1997	TRAJ network quality assessment in Punjab
1954 Hague Convention	Ethical angle: Israel-Lebanon, protection of cultural property in war
Brundtland Commission Report (1987)	Sustainability definition; planetary boundaries Mains framing
Article 48, Constitution of India	DPSP on agriculture; Khet Bachao Abhiyan legal-constitutional basis
Article 51A(g)	Fundamental Duty to protect natural environment; environment ethics



Today's content mapped across UPSC GS domains. Track your coverage daily.

3

Polity & Governance Items

4

International Relations Items

2

Defence & Security Items

2

Economy Items

2

Environment Items

1

Science & Technology Items

15

Prelims MCQs Generated

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Mains Questions Generated

4

Ethics Cases Mapped

6

Places in News Covered

9

Key Data Points for Answers

5

Quotes for Enrichment

The Akademia Proof of Precision

This is not a claim. It is a record. The numbers below are drawn from ANTIM 2026 result tracking — a systematic audit of how classroom teaching and daily current affairs directly converted into UPSC questions.

7

UPSC questions came
from a single document

6

UPSC questions came
from a single class

48

Total questions directly
from classroom teaching

Defence & Security

Science & Technology

Space

Government Schemes

Environment

Polity

Geography

Economy

WHAT THIS EVIDENCE DEMONSTRATES

- Disciplined source tracking: Every news item traced to PIB, MEA, CSE, and official sources — not editorial opinion
- Syllabus mapping: Each topic anchored to GS Paper 1–4 and Prelims syllabus before it enters the document
- PYQ-based prediction: Question patterns from 2011–2025 analysed to reverse-engineer probable questions from current events

- Conceptual teaching: Students learn the "why" behind news — not just what happened, but what UPSC can ask about it
- Daily current affairs integration: This document is published twice daily so no UPSC-relevant story slips through
- Classroom teachability: Every item carries an Akademia Teaching Hook for direct use in lectures and answer writing sessions

*"ANTIM ASSURED 100+ is not a compilation.
It is a question-conversion system —
converting daily news into UPSC-ready knowledge."*