



CONCEPTS IN NEWS

June 2024



Concepts	Official Definition	Easy Explanation
Pro tem Speaker	A temporary speaker appointed for the time being until the permanent speaker is elected in the lower house of parliament.	A temporary speaker chosen to oversee the proceedings in parliament until a permanent speaker is elected.
Tenth Schedule of the Indian Constitution	Contains provisions relating to disqualification of members on the grounds of defection.	The part of the Indian Constitution that deals with rules for preventing politicians from switching parties.
Anti-defection Law	A law that disqualifies elected members if they defect from one party to another.	A law that prevents politicians from changing parties after being elected.
Agnipath Scheme	A recruitment scheme for the Indian armed forces aimed at enrolling soldiers for a short duration.	A new plan to hire soldiers in India for a short-term period.
Personnel Below Officer Ranks (PBOR)	Members of the armed forces who hold ranks below that of commissioned officers.	Soldiers and military personnel who are not officers.



Seva Nidhi Fund	A fund established under the Agnipath Scheme to provide financial support to the recruited personnel after their service.	A savings fund for soldiers recruited under the Agnipath Scheme, given to them after their service period.
Notified Disasters	Disasters that are officially recognized by the government for the purpose of providing relief and rehabilitation.	Disasters officially declared by the government to qualify for emergency help and resources.
Disaster Management Act, 2005	An Act of the Indian Parliament enacted to provide for the effective management of disasters and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.	A law made to ensure proper handling and response to disasters in India.
National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF)	A fund managed by the central government to meet the expenses for emergency response, relief, and rehabilitation in the event of a disaster.	A special fund set up by the government to provide money for emergency relief and recovery after disasters.
State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)	A fund established at the state level to deal with disasters and meet the cost of relief activities.	A fund that states use to cover the costs of disaster relief and recovery efforts.
Heatwaves	Prolonged periods of excessively hot weather, which may be accompanied by high humidity.	Long periods of very hot weather that can be dangerous to health and cause other problems.
Arbitration Clauses	Provisions in contracts that require disputes to be resolved through arbitration rather than litigation.	Parts of contracts that say any disagreements will be settled out of court through arbitration.
Vivad se Vishwas Scheme	A scheme introduced by the Indian government to settle pending tax disputes by providing a waiver on interest and penalties if the taxpayer pays the disputed tax amount.	A government plan to resolve tax disputes by allowing taxpayers to pay the owed tax without additional penalties.
Article 72 of the Constitution	Gives the President of India the power to grant pardons, reprieves, respites, or remissions of punishment or to suspend, remit or commute the sentence of any person convicted of any offense.	Allows the President of India to forgive or reduce the punishment for a person convicted of a crime.
Rarest of Rare Doctrine	A principle in Indian law used to justify the imposition of the death penalty in cases where the crime is exceptionally heinous.	A legal rule in India that allows the death penalty only for the most extreme crimes.
Lok Adalats	A system of alternative dispute resolution developed in India, where disputes/cases pending in the court of law or at pre-litigation stage are settled amicably.	Public courts in India where people can resolve disputes quickly and peacefully without going to regular court.
Kafala System	A system used to monitor migrant laborers, working primarily in the construction and domestic sectors in Gulf Cooperation Council member states.	A system in Gulf countries where a local sponsor is responsible for migrant workers.





Negotiable Instruments	A signed document that promises a sum of payment to a specified person or the assignee.	Documents like checks or promissory notes that guarantee payment of money.
Twin Test (PMLA)	A legal test under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act to ensure the accused's involvement in money laundering.	A legal check to prove someone's involvement in money laundering activities.
Voice Vote	A voting method used in legislative assemblies where members vote orally.	A way of voting in assemblies by speaking out loud rather than using ballots.
Trans Fats	A type of unsaturated fat that is harmful to health, found in processed foods.	Unhealthy fats found in many processed and fried foods.
Negotiable Instruments	Documents guaranteeing the payment of a specific amount of money to the bearer on demand or at a set time.	Documents like checks that promise to pay a certain amount of money.



Concepts	Official Definition	Easy Explanation
UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea)	An international agreement that defines the rights and responsibilities of nations with respect to their use of the world's oceans.	An international treaty that sets the rules for using the oceans and seas.
ITLOS (International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea)	An independent judicial body established by the UNCLOS to adjudicate disputes arising out of the interpretation and application of the Convention.	A court set up to resolve disputes related to the laws of the sea.
Due Diligence Obligation	The obligation of states to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other states.	A country's responsibility to make sure its actions do not harm other countries' environments.
ICJ (International Court of Justice)	The principal judicial organ of the United Nations, which settles disputes between states and gives advisory opinions on international legal issues.	The main court of the United Nations that handles disputes between countries and gives legal advice.





BRICS Summit	An annual international relations conference attended by the heads of state or government of the five member states (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa).	A yearly meeting of leaders from Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa to discuss important issues.
Indo-Pacific Strategy	A strategy to ensure free and open navigation and security in the Indo-Pacific region.	A plan to keep the Indo-Pacific region safe and ensure free movement through its waters.
Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue)	A strategic dialogue between the United States, India, Japan, and Australia that is maintained by talks between member countries.	A partnership between the US, India, Japan, and Australia to discuss security and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.
Global South	A term often used to refer to countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Oceania that are less economically developed.	Countries that are less wealthy and developed, typically in the southern hemisphere.
Grey-Zone Warfare	Activities by state and non-state actors that are coercive and aggressive in nature but that remain below the threshold of conventional military conflict.	Aggressive actions by countries or groups that fall short of actual war.
United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC)	A Colombian paramilitary and drug trafficking group that has been involved in the country's internal conflict.	A group in Colombia involved in paramilitary activities and drug trafficking.
Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA)	An agreement between countries to enhance economic cooperation and reduce tariffs and barriers to trade.	A deal between countries to work together economically and lower trade barriers.



Environment

Concepts	Official Definition	Easy Explanation
Anthropogenic Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG)	Emissions of greenhouse gases resulting from human activities such as industry, agriculture, and transportation.	Greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere because of human activities like factories, cars, and farming.





Principle of Prevention or No Harm Rule	A principle in international environmental law that requires states to prevent significant harm to the environment of other states or areas beyond national jurisdiction.	A rule that says countries must prevent their actions from harming the environment of other countries.
Greenhouse Effect	The warming of Earth's surface due to the trapping of heat by greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.	The process by which certain gases in the Earth's atmosphere trap heat, making the planet warmer.
El Niño and La Niña	Climate patterns in the Pacific Ocean that influence weather conditions around the world.	Natural phenomena in the Pacific Ocean that affect global weather patterns, causing various climatic changes.
Wet-bulb Temperature	A measure that combines air temperature and humidity to indicate the level of heat stress on the human body.	A temperature measure that shows how hot and humid it feels, important for understanding heat stress.
Paris Climate Agreement	An international treaty aimed at reducing carbon emissions and combating climate change, adopted in 2015.	A global agreement where countries promise to reduce carbon emissions to fight climate change.
Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)	A policy approach under which producers are given a significant responsibility for the treatment or disposal of post-consumer products.	A rule that makes manufacturers responsible for the entire lifecycle of their products, including disposal and recycling.
Circular Economy	An economic system aimed at eliminating waste and the continual use of resources through recycling, reusing, and repairing.	An economy where everything is reused, recycled, or repaired to minimize waste.
Greenhouse Gases (GHGs)	Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere, such as carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide.	Gases like carbon dioxide and methane that trap heat in the atmosphere and contribute to global warming.
Great Green Wall	An African-led initiative to grow an 8,000 km natural wonder of the world across the entire width of Africa to combat desertification.	A project to plant a huge strip of greenery across Africa to stop deserts from spreading.
Gas Flaring	The burning of natural gas that is associated with oil extraction processes.	Burning off natural gas that comes out when drilling for oil.
Biochar	Charcoal used as a soil amendment. It is created by pyrolysis of biomass.	A type of charcoal added to soil to improve its quality and capture carbon.
Polymetallic Nodules	Rock concretions on the sea bottom formed of concentric layers of iron and manganese hydroxides.	Lumps of minerals found on the ocean floor containing valuable metals like manganese and iron.





Persistent Organic Pollutants	Organic compounds that are resistant to environmental degradation and have harmful impacts on human health and the environment.	Dangerous chemicals that don't break down easily and can harm people and the environment.
Bioluminescence	The production and emission of light by a living organism.	When living organisms, like some jellyfish and insects, produce light.
Blue Hole	A large marine cavern or sinkhole, usually circular, that is open to the surface and has developed in a bank or island composed of a carbonate bedrock.	A deep underwater hole in the ocean, often with strikingly blue water.
Katabatic Winds	Winds that carry high-density air from a higher elevation down a slope under the force of gravity.	Strong, cold winds that flow downhill from high areas.
Mercury Island	An island that was historically used for the mining of mercury and is associated with environmental and health hazards due to mercury exposure.	An island known for mining mercury, which poses significant health and environmental risks.
Space Debris	Defunct human-made objects in space, such as old satellites and spent rocket stages.	Junk left in space from old satellites and rockets.
Carbon Farming	Agricultural methods that capture and store carbon dioxide in the soil.	Farming practices that help capture and store carbon dioxide in the ground.
Cloudburst	A sudden, intense rainfall that can lead to flash floods.	Very heavy rain that falls in a short time, causing floods.
Tree Canopy	The upper layer of trees and branches in a forest or urban area.	The top part of trees that form a cover in a forest or city.
Green Ammonia	Ammonia produced using renewable energy sources, typically for use as a fuel or fertilizer.	Ammonia made with clean energy, used as a fuel or fertilizer.
Polymetallic Nodules	Rock formations on the ocean floor rich in metals like manganese, nickel, and cobalt.	Metal-rich rocks found on the ocean floor.





Concepts	Official Definition	Easy Explanation
Thermodynamics	The branch of physical science that deals with the relations between heat and other forms of energy.	The study of how heat and energy interact with each other.
Carnot Cycle	A theoretical cycle that is the most efficient possible engine cycle.	An ideal cycle in thermodynamics that describes the most efficient way an engine can work.
Isentropic Process	A thermodynamic process that is both adiabatic and reversible.	A process where there is no heat transfer and it is perfectly reversible, meaning no energy is lost.
Rankine Cycle	A thermodynamic cycle used as a model for steam engine operation.	A cycle describing how steam engines convert heat into mechanical work.
Heat Engine	A device that converts heat energy into mechanical work.	A machine that turns heat into movement or work.
Reverse Carnot Cycle	A theoretical refrigeration cycle that is the most efficient possible for a given temperature range.	An ideal refrigeration cycle that works as efficiently as possible within a certain temperature range.
Reverse Rankine Cycle	A refrigeration cycle that is similar to the Rankine cycle but operates in the opposite direction to move heat from a cold space to a warm space.	A cycle used in refrigerators to move heat from a cold area to a warm one.
Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET)	Technologies that are seen as crucial for future development and are currently at the forefront of innovation.	New and important technologies that are leading the way in innovation and development.
Adeno-Associated Virus (AAV)	A small virus which infects humans and some other primate species and is commonly used as a vector in gene therapy.	A tiny virus used in gene therapy to deliver new genes to cells.
Gene Therapy	A technique that uses genes to treat or prevent disease by inserting them into a patient's cells.	A medical treatment where doctors insert genes into a person's cells to cure or prevent diseases.
Congenital Hearing Loss	Hearing loss that is present at birth due to genetic factors or conditions during pregnancy.	Hearing impairment that a person is born with, often due to genetic reasons.
Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)	The ability of microbes to resist the effects of drugs, making infections harder to treat.	When bacteria and other germs become resistant to medicines, making infections harder to cure.
Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)	An infection in any part of the urinary system, including the kidneys, bladder, or urethra.	An infection that affects parts of the urinary system, such as the bladder or kidneys.





Deeptech Startups	Startups that are founded on scientific discoveries or meaningful engineering innovations.	New companies that use advanced science and engineering to create groundbreaking products.
Digital Twins	A digital replica of a living or non-living physical entity.	A virtual model that exactly mirrors a real-world object or system.
Gene Therapy	A technique that uses genes to treat or prevent disease by inserting them into a patient's cells.	A medical treatment where doctors insert genes into a person's cells to cure or prevent diseases.
Speciation	The formation of new and distinct species in the course of evolution.	The process by which new species of plants or animals develop.
Cyberspace Warfare	Internet-based conflict involving politically motivated attacks on information and information systems.	Battles fought using the internet to attack a country's computer networks.
Democratization of Technology	The process by which access to technology rapidly continues to become more accessible to more people.	Making advanced technology available to everyone, not just a few.
Neglected Tropical Diseases	A diverse group of tropical infections which are especially common in low-income populations in developing regions.	Diseases that affect many people in poor tropical areas but don't get much attention.
Deeptech Startups	Startups that are founded on scientific discoveries or meaningful engineering innovations.	New companies that use advanced science and engineering to create groundbreaking products.
Digital Twins	A digital replica of a living or non-living physical entity.	A virtual model that exactly mirrors a real-world object or system.
Deep Web	Parts of the internet that are not indexed by standard search engines.	The hidden parts of the internet that you can't find with regular search engines.
Dark Net	A part of the internet that requires specific software to access and is often associated with illegal activities.	A hidden part of the internet often used for illegal activities.
AI Washing	The practice of companies exaggerating the role of artificial intelligence in their products.	When companies claim their products use AI to make them sound more advanced.
Biomass Briquettes	Compressed blocks of biomass material used as fuel.	Blocks made from organic waste used for burning as fuel.
Syngas	A fuel gas mixture consisting of hydrogen, carbon monoxide, and some carbon dioxide.	A gas made from coal or biomass that can be used as fuel.





Coal Gasification	The process of producing syngas from coal.	Turning coal into a gas that can be used as fuel.
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Economy

Concepts	Official Definition	Easy Explanation
Seva Nidhi Fund	A fund established under the Agnipath Scheme to provide financial support to the recruited personnel after their service.	A savings fund for soldiers recruited under the Agnipath Scheme, given to them after their service period.
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	The total value of goods produced and services provided in a country during one year.	The total amount of money made from goods and services in a country in one year.
Fiscal Consolidation	Policies aimed at reducing government deficits and debt accumulation.	Efforts to reduce government debt and spending.
Private Consumption	The value of goods and services consumed by households.	The amount of money households spend on goods and services.
Union Budget	The annual financial statement presented by the government of India, detailing its revenues and expenditures.	The government's yearly plan on how it will earn and spend money.
Goods and Services Tax (GST)	An indirect tax used in India on the supply of goods and services.	A tax on most goods and services sold in India.
Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)	An investment made by a firm or individual in one country into business interests located in another country.	When companies or individuals from one country invest in businesses in another country.
Inflation	The rate at which the general level of prices for goods and services rises, causing purchasing power to fall.	The increase in prices of goods and services over time, making money worth less.
Monetary Policy	The process by which the central bank controls the supply of money, often targeting an inflation rate or interest rate to ensure stability and growth.	How the central bank manages money supply and interest rates to keep the economy stable and growing.
Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA)	An agreement between countries to enhance economic cooperation and reduce tariffs and barriers to trade.	A deal between countries to work together economically and lower trade barriers.
Catastrophic Costs	Costs that are extremely high and can lead to significant financial hardship.	Very high expenses that can cause serious financial trouble for people or businesses.





Public Capex	Capital expenditures by the government for developing infrastructure and other long-term assets.	Government spending on building infrastructure and long-term projects.
Gross Value Added	The measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy.	The total value of goods and services produced in a specific area, industry, or sector.
Viability Gap Funding	A government grant to support projects that are economically justified but fall short of financial viability.	Government money given to projects that are worthwhile but don't have enough funding.
Non Scheduled Banks	Banks which are not listed in the Second Schedule of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.	Smaller banks in India that are not regulated as strictly as major banks.
Minimum Support Prices	A price at which the government buys crops from the farmers, irrespective of the price for the crops.	The lowest price that the government pays farmers for their crops to ensure they make a profit.
Revenue Sharing Model	A model in which revenue generated by a business or product is shared between stakeholders or contributors.	A business arrangement where earnings are split among partners or participants.
Angel Tax	A tax levied on funding received by startups from an external investor.	Tax imposed on the investment that startups receive from individual investors.
Limited Liability Partnership	A partnership in which some or all partners have limited liabilities.	A business structure where the partners have limited personal liability for the company's debts.
Gross Value Added	The measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy.	The total value of goods and services produced in a specific area, industry, or sector.
Ways and Means Advances	Temporary advances given by the Reserve Bank of India to the government to meet short-term financial needs.	Short-term loans given by the central bank to the government.
Special Drawing Facility	A line of credit provided to member countries by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).	A special loan that countries can use from the IMF.
Wilful Defaults	When a borrower does not repay a loan despite having the ability to pay.	Borrowers who refuse to repay loans even though they can.
Plug and Play Infrastructure	Ready-to-use facilities provided to businesses, often with the necessary infrastructure already in place.	Fully prepared facilities that businesses can start using immediately.
Insider Trading	The illegal practice of trading on the stock exchange to one's own advantage through having access to confidential information.	Buying or selling stocks using confidential information not available to the public.





Mini Ratna	A status given to certain public sector enterprises in India that gives them greater autonomy and financial powers.	Public companies in India that get special privileges for being financially stable.
Water Credit	A microfinance tool used to provide loans for water and sanitation solutions to communities.	Loans given to communities to improve their water and sanitation facilities.
Functional Literacy	The ability to read, write, and do basic math necessary for everyday life.	Being able to read, write, and do math well enough to manage daily tasks.

