

Today's Prelims Topics

Houthis of Yemen

Context

Recently Israel bombed multiple locations in Yemen, including Sana'a airport, targeting the Houthi militant group.

About Houthis

- The Houthis are an armed political and religious group representing Yemen's Shia Muslim minority, the Zaidis.
- Previously known as *Ansar Allah* (Partisans of God), they identify as part of the Iranian-led "Axis of Resistance" against **Israel, USA and the West**.
- The group originated in the 1990s and derives its name from its late founder, Hussein al-Houthi.
- Houthis control **Yemen's capital, Sana'a**, and the northwest of the country, including the **strategic Red Sea coastline**.
- Most of Yemen's population lives in these areas, and the Houthis run a **de facto government** which collects taxes and prints money.
- The **internationally-recognised government of Yemen** is based in the **southern port of Aden**.



Houthis Red Sea Attacks

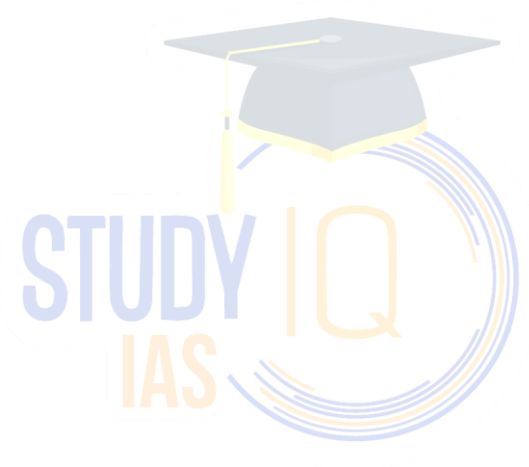
- In recent times Houthis have intensified attacks in the Red Sea, targeting commercial shipping routes and maritime operations.
- Their actions have disrupted shipping traffic through the **Bab-el-Mandeb Strait**, a critical chokepoint between the **Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden**.
- **Operations to Counter Houthi Red Sea Threats:**
 - **Operation Poseidon Archer (January 2024):** Launched by the United States, United Kingdom, and allies to degrade Houthi military capabilities.
 - **Operation Prosperity Guardian (December 2023):** A maritime security initiative to safeguard Red Sea shipping from Houthi attacks.

'Axis of Resistance'

- **Origin:** It was formed in the wake of the **Iranian Revolution of 1979** when radical Shia Muslim clerics rose to power in Iran.
- The term 'axis of resistance' is a response to former US President George W. Bush's reference to **Iran, Iraq and North Korea as an "axis of evil"** in his 2002 State of the Union address.
- **Objective:**
 - The coalition was established to expand Iran's political and military influence in a predominantly Sunni region.
 - To counter threats from Israel and the US, and oppose Western influence in the Middle East Region.
- **Key Groups in the 'Axis of Resistance':** Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) & Houthis.

Source:

- [Indian Express - Houthis](#)



Disposal of toxic waste from Union Carbide factory

Context

The Madhya Pradesh government has initiated the process to dispose of **337 tonnes of toxic waste** accumulated on the premises of Union Carbide India Ltd. (UCIL) in Bhopal.

About Disposal Process

- **Location of Disposal:** The waste will be transferred to a **Treatment, Storage, and Disposal Facility (TSDF)** in Pithampur, Dhar district, located around **250 km** from Bhopal.
- **Packaging process:** The waste is being packed in **airtight bags** and loaded into **12 specially designed airtight containers**.
- A dedicated **250-kilometer green corridor** is being prepared to ensure the secure and smooth transportation of the waste.
- **Supervisory Authorities:** The disposal process is being overseen by the **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)** and the **Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board (MPPCB)**.

Bhopal Gas Tragedy

- It occurred on December 3, 1984, in Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh), when **45 tons of toxic methyl isocyanate** gas leaked from a pesticide plant owned by **Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL)**.
- It was **India's first major Chemical (industrial) disaster**.
- The **toxic waste** at the UCIL premises remains largely untreated, with minimal progress in both waste disposal and reassessment.
- Numerous studies over the years have shown that **groundwater** in areas surrounding the factory is contaminated with **heavy metals** and **toxic substances** posing significant health risks, like **cancer**.

About Methyl Isocyanate (CH₃NCO)

- It is a colorless, flammable liquid that reacts with water to produce **methylamine (MIC)** and carbon dioxide, along with heat.
- It is toxic when inhaled, ingested or exposed to the skin or eyes. It's also highly flammable and can be explosive when mixed with air.

Source:

- [The Hindu - M.P. govt. begins disposal of toxic waste from Union Carbide factory](#)

Avalanche

Context

Recently Defence Geoinformatics Research Establishment issued an orange alert for an avalanche at an altitude of over 3,000 metres in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district.

What are Avalanches?

- An avalanche is a rapid flow of snow down a slope, such as a hill or mountain.
- **Causes:** Avalanches can be triggered by wind, rain, warming temperatures, heavy snowfall, earthquakes and human activity such as snow sports and vibration etc.
- **Types of Avalanches:**
 - **Slab avalanches** made of tightly packed snow, triggered by a collapse of an underlying weak snow layer.
 - **Sluff avalanches** occur when the weak layer of a snowpack is on the top (Sluffs are less dangerous than slab avalanches).
 - **Cornices** are overhanging masses of wind-deposited snow that protrude from sharp terrain features like ridges or peaks.
 - **Powder snow avalanches** where snow grains are largely or completely suspended and moved by air in a state of fluid turbulence.

Defence Geoinformatics Research Establishment (DGRE)

- DGRE is a laboratory of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) that provides terrain-intelligent solutions to the Armed Forces.
- **Functions:**
 - Ensuring the safe mobility of troops in difficult terrains.
 - Evaluating the military potential of different types of terrains using modern techniques.
- DGRE was formed by merging the **Snow & Avalanche Study Establishment (SASE) in Chandigarh** and the **Defence Terrain Research Laboratory (DTRL) in Delhi**.

Source:

- [The Hindu - Orange alert for avalanche issued in Chamoli](#)

Small Savings Schemes: Possible Interest Rate Cuts Ahead

Context

According to experts, investors in **small savings schemes** should prepare for a potential **interest rate cut cycle** in 2025.

About Small Savings Scheme

- Small savings schemes are central government-managed savings instruments designed to encourage regular saving across all age groups.
- These schemes are attractive due to their higher returns compared to bank fixed deposits, sovereign guarantees, and tax benefits.
- These instruments can be categorized into **3 groups**:
 - **Postal Deposits**: Includes savings accounts, recurring deposits, time deposits with different maturities and the Monthly Income Scheme (MIS).
 - **Savings Certificates**: National Savings Certificate (NSC) and the Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP).
 - **Social Security Schemes**: Public Provident Fund (PPF) and the Senior Citizens' Savings Scheme (SCSS).
- **Reason for rate cuts**: Government Securities (G-Sec) Yields
 - G-Sec yields, to which small savings rates have been linked since 2016, have declined further since October 2024.
 - Interest rates on small savings schemes are now significantly higher than corresponding G-sec yields. The gap between small savings rates and G-sec yields creates room for cuts.

National Small Savings fund (NSSF)

- NSSF is a fund that **collects money from various small savings schemes**.
- It was established in 1999 within the Public Account of India.
- **Managed by**: Ministry of Finance, under the National Small Savings Fund (Custody and Investment) Rules, 2001 under **Article 283(1)** of the Constitution.
- The money held in the NSSF is used by the Centre and states to cover their fiscal deficits. and the remaining amount is invested in central and state government securities.
- Loans taken from NSSF are **more expensive** than market borrowings.

Source:

- [The Hindu - 2025 may ring in small savings rate cuts](#)

News in Shorts

Makaravilakku festival

- It is a **7-day** annual festival of Kerala, held at **Sabarimala Ayyappa temple** on **Makara Sankranti**.
- The festival is part of a religious ritual practiced for hundreds of years by the **Malayaraya tribe**.
- It begins with the Thiruvabharanam procession and ends with the Guruthi ritual.
- **Different names Makar Skaranti festivals across India:**
 - **Pongal** - Tamil Nadu
 - **Uttarayan** - Gujarat
 - **Maghi & Lohri** - Punjab
 - **Bihu** - Assam

Source:

- [The Hindu - Sabarimala temple reopens for Makaravilakku festival](#)

150 year old coffee tree at Idukki church

- Pallikkunnu St. George CSI Church is in Kerala's Idukki district. It was constructed in 1869 by the Church Missionary Society (CMS).
- Coffee was planted on the church's grounds by the British during the early plantation era.
- In the church premises there is a **150 year old coffee tree**.



Source:

- [The Hindu - 150-year-old coffee tree at Idukki church](#)

India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) Performance

- **Trade Utilisation of ECTA:** Trade Utilisation indicates the extent to which businesses benefit from an FTA and whether its procedures are easily accessible or burdensome for users.
 - **Export Utilisation: 79%** after two years of ECTA implementation.
 - **Import Utilisation: 84%** within the same period.
 - **Key Growth Sectors:** Textiles, Chemicals & Agriculture.

- **Emerging Export Categories:** Gold studded with diamonds & Turbojets
- Also negotiations for **India-Australia Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)** are in progress.

Source:

- [Indian Express - After 2 years of India Australia trade deal](#)

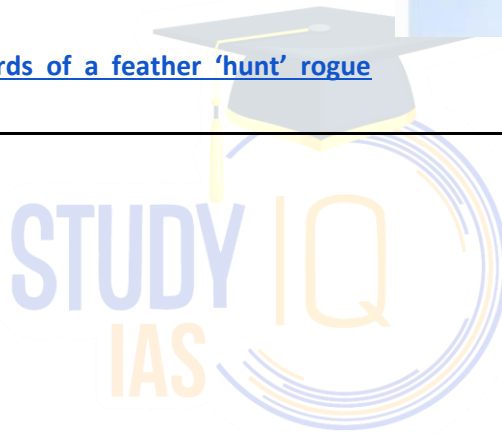
In Telangana, birds of a feather 'hunt' rogue drones together

- Telangana Police has introduced the **Garuda Squad**, a unique team of birds of prey trained to intercept and neutralize **rogue drones**, especially in **no-fly zones** during VIP movements.
- **Primary role:** Secure **no-fly zones** and counter rogue nano and micro drones (weighing between **250 grams to 2 kilograms**).
- Birds are trained to deploy nets to **ensnare drones** and drag them to **secure locations**.
- Training also emphasizes **safety of birds** by avoiding direct contact with drones' spinning propellers.



Source:

- [Indian Express - birds of a feather 'hunt' rogue drones together](#)



Editorial Summary

The challenge of holding judges accountable

Context

- Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav of the Allahabad High Court delivered a speech that displayed alleged biases against the Muslim community at an event organized by the legal cell of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad.
- This has brought renewed attention to the lack of an effective mechanism to hold higher judiciary judges accountable for misconduct.

Previous Instances and Charges

- **Justice V. Ramaswami:**
 - **Charges:** Extravagant spending on his official residence, including improper purchases of air conditioners, furniture, and ceremonial maces, without following due process.
 - **Outcome:** Found guilty of misbehavior by a three-member panel. However, impeachment failed in the Lok Sabha due to abstentions by the ruling government, allowing him to continue without duties until his retirement.
- **Justice Soumitra Sen:**
 - **Charges:** Misappropriation of ₹33.23 lakh as a court-appointed receiver in 1983 and misrepresenting facts to a Calcutta court.
 - **Outcome:** Voted for removal by the Rajya Sabha, but he resigned before the Lok Sabha vote.
- **Chief Justice P.D. Dinakaran:**
 - **Charges:** Accused of grabbing over 300 acres of land from farmers in Tamil Nadu and other misconduct.
 - **Outcome:** Resigned before a three-member panel could complete its investigation.

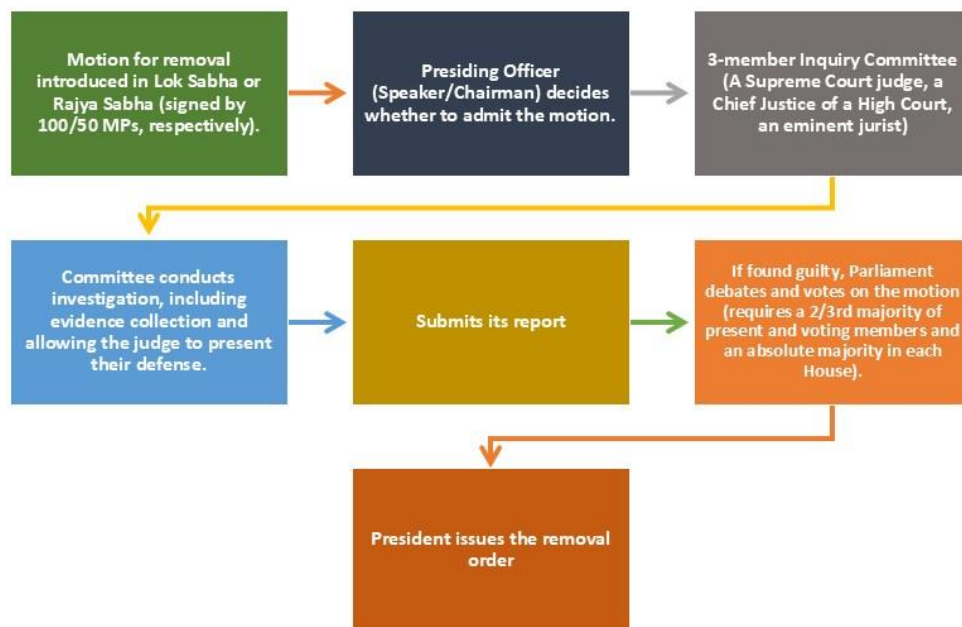
What are the Challenges in Holding Judges Accountable?

- **Complex Removal Mechanism:** Judges can only be removed for "proved misbehavior or incapacity" after an impeachment motion passes in Parliament with a two-thirds majority. This process is time-consuming and politically influenced.
- **Judges' Resignation to Avoid Accountability:** Judges like Soumitra Sen and P.D. Dinakaran resigned before the impeachment process could be completed, thereby avoiding formal accountability.
- **Limited Jurisdiction of Investigative Committees:** The resignation of a judge often leads to the termination of investigations, despite evidence of misconduct, as seen in Dinakaran's case.
- **Parliamentary Abstentions:** Political considerations often hinder impeachment motions, as evidenced in the case of Justice Ramaswami, where Congress abstained, leading to the failure of the motion.
- **Judicial Immunity:** Judges retain perks like pensions and post-retirement benefits even after being found guilty of misconduct, further limiting accountability.
- **Lack of Independent Oversight:** The Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968, does not provide for continuous monitoring or penalties post-resignation, leaving gaps in enforcing accountability.
- **Public Trust and Judicial Integrity:** Failure to act decisively undermines public confidence in the judiciary, creating a perception of impunity for those in high offices.

Articles Related to Removal of Judges

- **Article 124(4):** Deals with the procedure for the removal of a Supreme Court judge.
 - A judge of the Supreme Court can only be removed on the grounds of "proved misbehavior or incapacity."
 - The removal requires:
 - A motion to be passed in both Houses of Parliament with a **two-thirds majority** of the members present and voting.
 - An absolute majority of the total membership of each House.
- **Article 124(5):** Empowers Parliament to regulate the procedure for the investigation and proof of misbehavior or incapacity of a judge.
 - This provision is the basis for the **Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968**, which lays out the detailed mechanism for investigation and impeachment.
- **Article 217:** Relates to the appointment, conditions of office, and removal of High Court judges.
 - High Court judges are appointed by the President in consultation with the Chief Justice of India, the Governor of the state, and, in certain cases, the Chief Justice of the High Court.
 - Removal of High Court judges follows the same process as prescribed for Supreme Court judges (Article 124(4)).
- **Article 218:** Extends the provisions of Article 124 (relating to the impeachment of Supreme Court judges) to High Court judges.
 - Ensures that the procedure for removal is uniform across the judiciary.

JUDGES (INQUIRY) ACT, 1968



Points To Remember

- **Applies to the judges of the Supreme Court** (including the Chief Justice of India) and **the High Courts.**
- The **motion for removal must be signed by:** At least **100 members of the Lok Sabha** or At least **50 members of the Rajya Sabha.**

Way Forward for Enhancing Judicial Accountability

- **Streamlining the Removal Process:** Simplify and expedite the impeachment mechanism by reducing procedural delays.
 - Introduce reforms to make the process less susceptible to political influences, ensuring it remains impartial.
- **Independent Oversight Body:** Establish an independent National Judicial Accountability Commission (NJAC) with powers to monitor, investigate, and act on complaints against judges.
 - This body should function autonomously, free from political and judicial interference.
- **Penalties Post-Resignation:** Amend laws to ensure that resignation does not absolve a judge from investigations or penalties.
 - Introduce provisions for disqualification from future public offices and forfeiture of pensions and benefits if found guilty.
- **Code of Conduct and Transparency:** Mandate the adherence to a strict judicial code of ethics like the "Restatement of Values of Judicial Life."
 - Increase transparency in judicial appointments and proceedings to restore public trust.
- **Public Awareness and Participation:** Educate the public on judicial accountability processes to foster trust and ensure greater scrutiny.
 - Allow mechanisms for citizens to lodge complaints, which can be vetted by an independent body.

UPSC PYQ

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The motion to impeach a Judge of the Supreme Court of India cannot be rejected by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha as per the Judges (Inquiry) Act 1968.
2. The Constitution of India defines and gives details or what constitutes 'incapacity and proved misbehaviour' of the Judges of the Supreme Court of India.
3. The details of the process of impeachment of the Judges of the Supreme Court of India are given in the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968.
4. If the motion for the impeachment of a Judge is taken up for voting, the law requires the motion to be backed by each House of the Parliament and supported by a majority of total membership of that House and by not less than two-thirds of total members of that House present and voting.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct? (2019)

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

Answer: C

Source: [The Hindu: The challenge of holding judges accountable](#)

How AI Shaped the Industry

Context

The period from late 2022 through 2024 marked significant advancements in AI technology. As companies continue to innovate while navigating challenges related to data quality and talent retention, the future of AI remains promising yet competitive.

How AI Provides Help and Replaced Platforms

- **Automation of Tasks:** AI agents handle repetitive and mundane tasks autonomously, such as:
 - Screening loan applications in banks.
 - Highlighting critical points in medical reports for doctors.
- **AI agents** are a type of artificial intelligence (AI) system that can understand and respond to customer inquiries without human intervention.
- Most importantly, AI agents can continuously improve their own performance through self-learning.
- This is distinct from traditional AI, which requires human input for specific tasks.
- **Co-pilot for Humans:** AI processes large datasets, offering insights through trend analysis, predictions, and visualizations, thus aiding decision-making. This allows humans to focus on creative and strategic work.
- **Dashboards:** Traditional dashboards are being replaced by GenAI tools that offer:
 - **Conversational analytics** with visualizations, trend lines, and predictions.
 - Easier accessibility of large data sets without advanced data skills.
- **Social Media Platforms:** Closed-group platforms are emerging, challenging the traditional bulletin board format of platforms like Facebook, X (Twitter), and Threads.
 - AI-powered algorithms enable more personalized and localized social media experiences.

Usage of Present AI Models

- Enhanced reasoning capabilities (OpenAI o3, Gemini 2.0).
- Focus on multimodal AI processing (Meta Llama 3.2).
- Integration into consumer devices for real-time applications (Apple, Qualcomm).
- Transparency and customization through open-source models (Mistral AI, Meta's Llama).
- Automation of complex tasks (Claude 3.5 Sonnet).

Future Outlook for AI

- **Mainstreaming of AI Agents:** AI agents will become central to both enterprise and consumer applications, taking over task-based workflows with minimal human input.
 - New industries and roles will emerge around the development, monitoring, and ethical use of AI.
- **Evolution of AI Hardware:** Next-gen AI-driven hardware (e.g., AI-integrated smartphones and laptops) will focus on solving niche problems rather than mimicking existing devices.
 - **E.g.,** AI-integrated hardware such as the potential "OpenAI phone" or "Perplexity laptop" could replace conventional app-driven or OS-based systems by utilizing AI agents for all functionalities.
- **Reinvention of Social Platforms:** AI will likely support the creation of new, less conventional social media platforms that focus on closed-group interactions and personalized experiences.

- **Enhanced Computational Ecosystems:** Advanced processors like NVIDIA GPUs and quantum chips will power breakthroughs in AI models, enabling faster problem-solving and new use cases.
- **Focus on Responsible AI:** Regulatory frameworks and ethical guidelines will be critical to address issues of accountability, fairness, and security in AI-driven systems.
- **Integration Across Domains:** AI's role will expand into new areas such as personalized healthcare, precision agriculture, and climate modeling, enhancing efficiencies across sectors.

Future Challenges Related to AI

- **Economic Viability:** High investment in AI often does not yield immediate or significant returns, pushing companies to recalibrate deployment scales.
- **Data Complexity:** "Data wall" limits may hinder further improvements in AI model performance despite advanced computational capabilities.

"Data wall" Limits

- It refers to a critical juncture where the performance improvements of AI models begin to stagnate due to limitations in the quality and quantity of available training data.
- **Security Risks:** Increased reliance on AI raises vulnerability to data breaches and cyberattacks.
 - AI-powered systems need robust security to prevent misuse and protect sensitive information.
- **Social Impact:** AI-driven automation could displace jobs in repetitive and entry-level roles, requiring upskilling of the workforce.
 - Growing dependence on AI may widen the digital divide between tech-savvy users and others.
- **Sustainability:** Powering AI models demands significant energy resources, contributing to environmental concerns.
- **Deepfake Concern:** Deepfake technology uses AI to create highly realistic but fake audio, video, or images that manipulate reality. This poses significant challenges in terms of ethics, security, and societal trust.
 - **Example:** During elections, fake videos of candidates making controversial statements could influence voter perceptions and outcomes.

Sources:

- [The Hindu: From Gemini to Llama: how AI titans shaped the industry](#)
- [Indian Express: Looking at 2025, Tech: Rising above the AI line](#)

Detailed Coverage

Indian Aviation Sector

Context

- An Air India Airbus A320 aircraft bound for Hyderabad mistakenly entered a parallel taxiway instead of the main runway at Goa's Mopa airport.
- The crew had to reject the takeoff, an incident categorized as "runway confusion."
- The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is expected to blame the pilots, a recurring pattern in Indian aviation.

Historical Context of Runway Confusion in India

India has witnessed numerous incidents of runway confusion:

- **1993:** Jet Airways Boeing 737 landed at Sulur Air Force Base instead of Peelamedu Airport, Coimbatore.
- **2002:** Jet Airways Boeing 737 landed on a taxi track at Goa's Dabolim airport.
- **2007:** SpiceJet Boeing 737 landed on the wrong runway in Delhi.
- **2008:** SpiceJet Boeing 737 landed on a wrong runway in Kolkata.
- **2009:** JetLite CRJ landed on a wrong runway in Kolkata.
- **2018:** Air India Airbus A320 landed on an under-construction runway in the Maldives.
- **2020:** SpiceJet Boeing 737 made a hard touchdown short of the runway in Guwahati.

Runway Overrun and Landing Incidents in India

India has experienced frequent high-speed approaches and runway overruns since 2005:

- **2005:** Air Sahara Boeing 737 overran the runway in Mumbai.
- **2015:** SpiceJet DH8-D suffered damage during a runway excursion in Hubli.
- **2016:** Jet Airways Boeing 737 overran the runway in Goa after rejecting takeoff.
- **2019:** SpiceJet Boeing 737 overran the runway in Mumbai.
- **Mangaluru Crash (2010):** An Air India Express flight overran the runway, killing 158.
- **Kozhikode Crash (2020):** An Air India Express flight overran the runway, killing 21.

What is The Potential of the Aviation Sector In India?

- India's domestic airline capacity has nearly doubled, with an annual growth rate of 6.9% between 2014 and 2024.
- India is the 3rd-largest domestic aviation market in the world, after the United States and China.
- The sector will require substantial investments, with estimates suggesting over \$170 billion needed through 2030 to fund aircraft acquisitions and airport infrastructure enhancements.

April 2024 Ranking	Market
1	USA
2	China
3	India
4	Brazil
5	Indonesia

OAG

What are the Challenges Associated?

- **Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) Prices:** ATF constitutes a substantial portion of an airline's operating expenses.
 - In India, ATF prices are among the highest globally due to elevated base prices and state-level taxes.
 - Despite industry appeals, ATF remains outside the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime, leading to non-uniform taxation across states.

- **Airport Capacity:** Major airports, especially in metropolitan areas, face capacity constraints, leading to congestion and delays.
 - This congestion affects operational efficiency and passenger experience.
- **Regional Connectivity:** While initiatives like the UDAN scheme aim to enhance regional connectivity, challenges persist in terms of infrastructure development and the financial viability of operations to smaller airports.
- **Debt Burden:** Many Indian airlines operate under significant debt, affecting their ability to maintain safety standards and invest in growth.
 - The financial strain has led to the insolvency of major carriers in the past, raising concerns about the industry's stability.
 - **E.g.,** In May 2023, Go First (Formerly GoAIR) filed for bankruptcy, citing financial challenges exacerbated by engine supply issues.
- **Profitability Pressures:** Even leading airlines face profitability challenges due to rising expenses.
 - **E.g.,** IndiGo reported a profit decline attributed to increased operating costs, including a 23% surge in fuel expenses.
- **Pilot Fatigue:** Reports indicate that pilot fatigue is a significant concern, exacerbated by demanding schedules and insufficient rest periods.
 - Pilots face pressure to meet "On-Time Performance" (OTP) targets.
 - Fatigue and overworking lead to decision-making errors in critical situations.
 - **E.g.,** The Kozhikode and Mangaluru crashes, where captains disregarded co-pilot warnings due to time pressures.
- **Skill Shortages:** The rapid expansion of the aviation sector has led to a demand-supply gap in skilled personnel, including pilots, engineers, and ground staff.
 - **E.g.,** Airline training programs fail to adequately prepare pilots for real-world challenges, including proper runway markings and stabilized approach criteria.
- **Global Economic Factors:** Fluctuations in global oil prices, currency exchange rates, and geopolitical tensions can adversely impact the Indian aviation industry.

Government Initiatives for the Aviation Sector in India

- **National Civil Aviation Policy (2016)**
 - Aims to enhance the international footprint of Indian airlines.
 - Permits airlines to commence international operations if they deploy 20 aircraft or 20% of their total capacity (whichever is higher) for domestic routes.
- **UDAN Scheme (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik)**
 - Focuses on expanding air travel access to Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.
 - Encourages a shift in traffic patterns away from heavily saturated metro routes.
- **Open Sky Policy**
 - Liberalises the aviation sector by allowing private participation in airport development.
 - Currently, six airports are being developed under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode, managing 60% of airport traffic.
- **Open Sky Air Service Agreement**
 - Facilitates unlimited flights and seating capacities between India and partner countries.
 - Agreements have been signed with nations like the US, Greece, Japan, Finland, Jamaica, and Sri Lanka.
- **FDI Policies**
 - Allows 100% FDI under the automatic route for greenfield projects.
 - Permits up to 74% FDI under the automatic route for brownfield projects.
- **Tax and Duty Incentives**
 - Offers 100% tax exemption for airport projects for 10 years.
 - Exempts Indian aircraft Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) service providers from

customs and countervailing duties.

Way Forward

- **Fuel Diversification:** Promote the adoption of biofuels to reduce reliance on traditional Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) and mitigate the impact of high import taxes. Implement fuel hedging strategies to manage price volatility, drawing inspiration from international best practices.
- **Enhancing Revenue Streams:** Develop ancillary revenue sources such as cargo services, in-flight sales, and premium offerings to strengthen profitability.
- **Optimised Pricing Strategies:** Leverage advanced yield management systems to optimise pricing, ensuring profitability without engaging in harmful price wars. Strengthen customer loyalty programs to drive repeat business and reduce dependency on aggressive pricing tactics.
- **Regulatory Improvements:** Push for regulatory reforms that foster the entry of new players and curb monopolistic behaviors within the aviation sector.
- **Route Optimisation:** Encourage airlines to operate on under-served routes, enhancing competition and providing more travel options to passengers. Opt for aircraft leasing to maintain operational flexibility and reduce the financial burden of owning fleets.
- **Sustainable Practices:** Introduce carbon offset initiatives, such as the ICAO Carbon Emissions Calculator (ICEC), to monitor and mitigate the aviation industry's environmental impact.

Source: [The Hindu: Incidents on loop, but it's escape for regulator, airlines](#)

