
Prelims Exam Topics

ICGS AJIT

Context

Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) has handed over ICGS Ajit, a new Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV), to the Indian Coast Guard.

About ICGS Ajit

- **Type:** Fast Patrol Vessel designed for coastal and offshore maritime security.
- **Builder:** Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL).
- **Indigenous Content:** More than 65% indigenous content, supporting Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence shipbuilding.
- **Propulsion:** Powered by twin marine diesel engines with Controllable Pitch Propellers (CPP), a first for this class of FPV.
- **Performance:** Maximum speed of over 27 knots with an endurance range of about 1,500 nautical miles.
- **Technology:** Equipped with an Integrated Machinery Control System for improved operational efficiency.
- **Roles:** Undertakes EEZ surveillance, coastal patrolling, fisheries protection, anti-smuggling, anti-piracy and search-and-rescue operations.

PRO-ACTIVE GOVERNANCE AND TIMELY IMPLEMENTATION (PRAGATI) PLATFORM

Context

The Prime Minister recently chaired the 53rd meeting of the PRAGATI platform.

About PRAGATI Platform

- **Purpose:** Enables real-time review of projects, schemes and public grievances by the Prime Minister in coordination with Union Ministries and State Governments.
- **Technology:** Developed by the PMO with NIC, combining digital data management, video conferencing and geospatial technology.

- **Three-Tier System:** Brings together the **PMO, Union Government Secretaries and State Chief Secretaries**.
- **PM-led Review:** The Prime Minister directly reviews selected **projects, schemes and grievances** using updated data, documents and visuals.
- **Issue Selection:** Matters are identified from databases covering **public grievances, ongoing programmes and pending projects**.
- **Follow-up Mechanism:** Decisions are tracked through multiple levels; **Cabinet Secretariat monitors projects**, while Ministries review schemes and grievances under PMO oversight.

SMART TECHNOLOGY FOR ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE DIAGNOSIS

Context

Scientists at **Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR)** have developed **TZ-48**, a fluorescence-responsive probe, and **ADxFluor**, a smartphone-based platform for detecting the **amyloid- β ($A\beta$)** biomarker of Alzheimer's disease.

About the Technology

- **TZ-48 Probe:** A small molecule whose **fluorescence changes on interacting with $A\beta$** , enabling detection of amyloid plaques and fibrils.
- **ADxFluor:** Smartphone-integrated system that captures and quantifies the fluorescence response of TZ-48 in **blood and cerebrospinal fluid (CSF)**.
- **Developer:** Developed by scientists at **JNCASR**, an autonomous institute under the **Department of Science and Technology**.

How Does It Work?

- **Biomarker Detection:** TZ-48 binds to **$A\beta$ fibrils**, producing a measurable change in fluorescence.
- **Fluorescence Analysis:** The fluorescence response is quantified using a **smartphone application**, enabling portable detection.
- **Disease Assessment:** The platform can help detect and quantify **$A\beta$ burden**, supporting potential screening and staging of Alzheimer's disease.

Why $A\beta$ Matters?

- **Alzheimer's Pathology:** Misfolded **$A\beta$ proteins** aggregate into **fibrils and extracellular plaques**, contributing to neuronal damage and cognitive decline.

- **Early Biomarker:** $A\beta$ is an early and relatively specific biomarker of Alzheimer's disease.
- **Existing Limitations:** PET and MRI are expensive and require specialised infrastructure, while blood-based biomarker tests can also be costly and complex.

Significance

Accessible Diagnosis: TZ-48 and ADxFluor could provide a **portable, low-cost and user-friendly approach** for Alzheimer's screening and biomarker detection.

NATIONAL SHIPPING BOARD (NSB)

Context

The **National Shipping Board (NSB)** held its first 'Sagar Samvad' and discussed a **five-pillar roadmap** to add **100 vessels to India's merchant fleet in five years**.

About National Shipping Board

- **Statutory Body:** The NSB is a statutory advisory body constituted under **Section 4 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025**.
- **Legal Framework:** The **Merchant Shipping Act, 2025** came into force on **15 March 2026**, replacing the earlier 1958 framework.
- **Nodal Ministry:** **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways**.
- **Purpose:** Advises the Government on **shipping policy, merchant fleet development, seafarer welfare and maritime development**.

Composition

- **Parliamentary Members:** Includes **6 Members of Parliament**, with 4 from Lok Sabha and 2 from Rajya Sabha.
- **Other Members:** Members may represent the **Central Government, ship-owners, seafarers and other relevant interests**.

Mains Exam Topics

PARLIAMENTARY DISRUPTIONS AND LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY

Context:

Frequent disruptions weaken Parliament's role as a forum for **debate, executive accountability and legislative scrutiny**. In the latest **Monsoon Session 2026**, Lok Sabha functioned for only **15%** and Rajya Sabha for **33%** of scheduled time. Question Hour functioned for just **1% in Lok Sabha and 12% in Rajya Sabha**. Yet **11 Bills were passed**, including nine in Lok Sabha without any MP other than the Minister speaking.

What are the major causes of parliamentary disruptions in India?

- **Limited Discussion on Urgent Issues:** Disruptions arise when the Opposition feels that important public issues are not being given adequate time for discussion.
- **Government–Opposition Deadlock:** Disagreement over the priority of parliamentary business can turn political differences into repeated obstruction.
 - e.g., The government may seek to proceed with **scheduled Bills**, while the Opposition demands that a pressing public issue be discussed first.
- **Limited Space for Opposition:** Fewer opportunities for Opposition-led debates and motions can encourage disruption as an alternative way to raise issues.
- **Demand for Executive Accountability:** Opposition parties may resort to disruption when they believe the government is unwilling to discuss sensitive issues or accept stronger scrutiny.
 - e.g., Demands for a **Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC)** on a major controversy can become a source of disruption when the government does not agree to the demand.
- **Political and Media Incentives:** Visible protests inside Parliament can attract greater public attention than lengthy legislative speeches, making disruption politically attractive.
 - e.g., **Slogans, placards and protests in the Well of the House** often receive extensive media coverage, increasing their political visibility.

What are the consequences of frequent disruptions of Parliament in India?

- **Loss of Parliamentary Time:** Disruptions reduce the time available for debate, questions and other parliamentary work.

- e.g., In the **Monsoon Session 2026**, Lok Sabha functioned for only **15% of scheduled time**, showing the scale of time lost to repeated adjournments.
- **Weak Executive Accountability:** Disruptions reduce MPs' opportunities to question ministers about government policies and implementation.
 - e.g., During the Monsoon Session 2026, Lok Sabha's Question Hour lasted only nine minutes in the entire session, with ministers answering just two questions orally, limiting parliamentary scrutiny of the executive.
- **Reduced Legislative Scrutiny:** When floor time is lost, Bills may receive very little discussion before voting.
 - e.g., In the Monsoon Session 2026, **nine of the 11 Bills passed by Lok Sabha had no MP other than the Minister speaking**, directly limiting floor-level scrutiny.
- **Weaker Opposition Scrutiny:** Disruption can also remove the institutional opportunities through which Opposition MPs raise concerns, question policies and propose alternatives.
- **Erosion of Deliberation:** Repeated disruption can shift Parliament from a forum for discussion and negotiation towards a forum focused mainly on voting.
 - e.g., The **MSME Development (Amendment) Bill** was passed by Lok Sabha in only **three minutes with no MP other than the Minister speaking**, illustrating how limited deliberation can accompany disrupted proceedings.

What are the existing mechanisms for dealing with disruptive behaviour by MPs?

- **Withdrawal from the House:** The Speaker can immediately remove a member whose conduct is grossly disorderly for the remainder of the day's sitting.
 - e.g., Under **Rule 373**, the Speaker can direct a disorderly member to withdraw, and the member must remain absent for the rest of that sitting.
- **Naming and Suspension:** A member who repeatedly and wilfully obstructs the House can be named by the Speaker and suspended through a motion of the House.
 - e.g., Under **Rule 374**, a member who disregards the authority of the Chair or persistently obstructs business can be suspended for up to the **remainder of the session**.
- **Automatic Suspension:** In cases of grave disorder, suspension can follow automatically once the member is named by the Speaker.

- e.g., Under **Rule 374A**, a member who enters the **Well of the House** or persistently obstructs proceedings through slogans or similar conduct can be automatically suspended for **five consecutive sittings or the remainder of the session, whichever is less**.
- **Adjournment of the House:** When disorder becomes too severe for proceedings to continue, the Speaker can temporarily stop the sitting.
 - e.g., **Rule 375** empowers the Speaker to **adjourn the House or suspend the sitting** in case of grave disorder.
- **Expunction of Remarks:** The Speaker can remove unparliamentary or objectionable expressions from the official record, preventing them from becoming part of the published proceedings.
 - e.g., **Rules 380–381** provide for the expunction of words or expressions considered objectionable from the official record.

What are the implications of passing Bills with limited parliamentary discussion in India?

- **Lower Quality of Laws:** Limited debate reduces opportunities to identify drafting problems and unintended consequences before a Bill becomes law.
 - e.g., The **Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026** was passed by Lok Sabha in **12 minutes without any MP other than the Minister speaking**, leaving very limited floor time to examine its provisions.
- **Reduced Committee Scrutiny:** When Bills bypass committees, Parliament loses a forum for detailed clause-by-clause examination.
 - e.g., Only **21% of Bills introduced in the 18th Lok Sabha had been referred to parliamentary committees** by the end of the Monsoon Session 2026.
- **Less Expert Examination:** Committee scrutiny allows Parliament to hear from experts, officials and stakeholders before finalising complex legislation.
- **Higher Implementation Risk:** Limited discussion can leave practical difficulties and competing interpretations insufficiently examined before implementation.
 - e.g., In contrast, the **Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026** received nearly **11 hours of discussion in Lok Sabha with 48 MPs participating**, providing much greater scope to examine its provisions before passage.
- **Lower Democratic Legitimacy:** Legislation gains greater democratic legitimacy when different political viewpoints are heard before a decision is taken.

- e.g., During the Monsoon Session 2026, **nine Bills were passed in Lok Sabha without any MP other than the Minister speaking**, sharply limiting visible parliamentary deliberation.

Way Forward

- **Fix a Parliamentary Calendar:** Parliament should follow a predictable annual calendar with adequate sitting days for legislation, scrutiny and constituency-related work.
 - e.g., The **NCRWC recommended around 120 sittings for Lok Sabha and 100 for Rajya Sabha**, which would reduce uncertainty over parliamentary time.
- **Guarantee Opposition Time:** A fixed share of parliamentary time should be reserved for Opposition-led discussions to reduce the need to use disruption for agenda-setting.
 - e.g., The **UK's Opposition Days** provide Opposition parties with designated days to raise and debate issues of their choice.
- **Protect Question Hour:** Question Hour should continue even when other proceedings are disrupted, as it is a key mechanism of executive accountability.
 - e.g., Disrupted questions can be **shifted to another scheduled period or answered through time-bound written responses**, preventing disruption from completely eliminating ministerial accountability.
- **Strengthen Pre-Legislative Consultation:** Bills should generally undergo meaningful public consultation before being introduced, giving stakeholders an opportunity to flag legal and implementation concerns.
 - e.g., A strengthened **Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy, 2014** can require publication of draft Bills along with their financial, constitutional and federal implications.
- **Adopt Graded Discipline:** Disciplinary action should be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the disruption rather than treating all forms of protest alike.
 - e.g., A **warning for verbal interruption**, followed by withdrawal or suspension for persistent obstruction, creates a predictable escalation of penalties.
- **Strengthen Speaker's Neutrality:** The credibility of the Chair depends on consistent application of rules and transparent handling of procedural disputes.
 - e.g., **Reasoned rulings on important procedural questions** and timely election of the Deputy Speaker can strengthen confidence in the neutrality of the House.

- **Track Parliamentary Performance:** Publicly measuring parliamentary functioning can make disruptions and weaknesses in legislative scrutiny more visible.
 - e.g., A **Parliamentary Productivity Index** could track sitting hours, Question Hour performance, committee referrals, debate time on Bills and private members' business.

