Headlines

EXERCISE INDRA – Prelims Fact
China hits back - Page No.1 , GS 3
Waqf Bill - Page No.1 , GS 2
Modi and Yunus - Page No.1 , GS 2
Global South - Page No.6 , GS 2
Taken to task - Page No.6 , GS 2
Transgender - Page No.6 , GS 1,2

Join me on Telegram :- Prashant Tiwari
Username:- UPSCwithPrashant

Be so good they can't ignore you.

— Steve Martin

Exercise INDRA

- **The bilateral Naval Exercise INDRA 2025 between Indian and Russian navies was held from 28 Mar to 02 Apr 2025.**

- **This 14th edition of the exercise included a wide range of activities and structured drills designed to enhance interoperability towards countering common maritime threats.**

- **The operations involved complex coordinated manoeuvres and simulated engagements showcasing the combined combat power of the participating navies.**

- **The exercise achieved its aim of enhanced jointmanship and reinforced the shared commitment to upholding the principles of maritime order, promoting global peace and stability.**

- **The INDRA series of exercises have been a cornerstone of India-Russia Defence relations since its inception in 2003 and both countries recognise the importance of maritime security and the need for a collaborative approach to counter common threats and concerns.**

China hits back with 34% tariff on all U.S. products

Page No. 1, GS 3

Beijing retaliates after Trump's 'Liberation Day' tariff hike of 34% on Chinese exports; Commerce Ministry to control exports of rare earth elements, vital for production of high-tech products

Associated Press
Reuters
BEIJING

China announced on Friday that it will impose a 34% tariff on imports of all U.S. products beginning April 10, part of a flurry of retaliatory measures following U.S. President Donald Trump's "Liberation Day" slate of double-digit tariffs.

The new tariff matches the rate of the U.S. "reciprocal" tariff of 34% on Chinese exports that President Trump ordered this week.

The Commerce Ministry in Beijing also said in a notice that it will impose more export controls on rare earth elements, which are materials used in high-tech products such as computer chips and electric vehicle batteries. Included in the list of minerals subject to controls was samarium and its compounds, which are used in aerospace manufacturing and the defence sector. Another element called gadolinium is used in MRI scans.

U.S. revises tariff on all Indian imports to 26%

NEW DELHI
The U.S. has revised the import duties to be imposed on India from 27% to 26%, as per a White House document. This will come into force from April 9. Experts said 1% would not have much of an impact.

Trump slams China

In his response, Mr. Trump slammed Beijing. "China played it wrong, they panicked – the one thing they cannot afford to do!," Mr. Trump wrote in all caps in post on his social media platform.

China's customs administration said it had suspended chicken imports from some U.S. suppliers after it detected furazolidone, a drug banned in China, in shipments from those companies.

Separately, it said it had found high levels of mold in the sorghum and salmonella in poultry meat from some of the companies. The announcements affect one company exporting sorghum, C&D Inc., and four poultry companies.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 8

Fact

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Fact

- **The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) is an independent statutory body established to protect and promote human rights in India.**
- **It is responsible for reviewing and addressing human rights violations and making recommendations for the protection and promotion of human rights.**
- **NHRC was established under the Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993.**
- **It is an embodiment of India's concern for the promotion and protection of human rights.**
- **It is established in conformity with the Paris Principles (1991), adopted at the first international workshop on national institutions for the protection of human rights.**

Fact

- **What United States President Donald Trump did to global trade on April 2 in Washington closely mirrors a disruptive precedent set by President Richard Nixon in 1971. On August 15, Nixon stunned the world by announcing the “temporary suspension” of the U.S. dollar’s convertibility into gold.**

- **The U.S. is the world’s largest importer of manufactured goods, accounting for about 13% of global imports in 2023. The new tariffs will reroute supply chains and force countries to diversify their export strategies.**

- **In the immediate term, the cost of imports will rise for American consumers, leading to reduced demand.**

- **The ripple effects will be global, causing production slowdowns as exporters scramble to find alternative markets.**

Fact

- **Economies such as China, Japan, India and the European Union are likely to experience a temporary decline in economic growth.**
- **Today, China commands the largest share of global trade, at around 14%, while the U.S. has slipped to roughly 10%.**
- **The world's leading exporters of advanced technologies are now China and other Asian powers, including South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan.**
- **Thus, Mr. Trump's turn to protectionism — an attempt to regain American economic dominance — may well hasten the country's retreat from its hegemonic position.**

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1. The Hindu Playlist - https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLpuxPG4TUOR4VHsceopVQtj73aJ0idtpI

2. NCERT Playlist:- https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLpuxPG4TUOR5Q3pN6ivhc77yZ6HY9v7Ad

3. PIB Weekly:- https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLpuxPG4TUOR59OtRNhFu

Description

Page No. 1, GS 2

Rajya Sabha clears new Waqf Bill after 14 hours of debate

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Parliament, in the early hours of Friday morning, cleared the Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2025, after nearly 14 hours of debate in Rajya Sabha, with 128 members voting in favour and 95 against.

The government maintained that the law was not directed against the Muslims but only aimed to bring transparency in the administration of Waqf properties, while the Opposition alleged that it reduced Muslims to "second-class citizens" and questioned both its "intent and content".

The gap between the Treasury benches and the Opposition was much narrower in the Upper House compared to the Lok Sabha, where the Bill was cleared on Thursday by a margin of 56 votes. Earlier, an amendment opposing the clause on the inclusion of non-Muslim members in the Waqf Board and Central Waqf Council was moved by DMK MP Tiruchi Siva, but it was defeated.

Union Minister for Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju began his concluding remarks at 12.55 p.m.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 8
MORE REPORTS
» PAGE 9

Will crack down on 'Waqf land scam': Fadnavis

MUMBAI
Maharashtra government will soon tackle a "massive Waqf land scam that took place in the State between 2000 and 2014", Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has said. He also said the Waqf Bill had nothing to do with Hindutva. » PAGE 9

Content.

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- **Waqf: It refers to an endowment made by a Muslim for charitable or religious purposes, such as building mosques, schools, hospitals, or other public institutions. It is inalienable i.e., it cannot be sold, gifted, inherited or encumbered.**

Evolution of Waqf Law in India

Waqf Act, 1995

Defined powers of Waqf Council and introduced Tribunals

Amendments (1959-1984)

Focused on administration and accountability

Waqf Act, 1954

Established State Waqf Boards and Central Waqf Council

Mussalman Waqf Validating Act, 1930

Strengthened legal backing for family Waqfs

Mussalman Waqf Act, 1923

Introduced rules for accounting and transparency

Mussalman Waqf Validating Act, 1913

Allowed family-benefit Waqfs, improving management

Content.

- **Eligibility for Waqf Dedication: Only practicing Muslims (for at least five years) can dedicate their property to Waqf.**
- **Properties already registered with Waqf Boards will remain so unless disputed or identified as government land.**

- **Women's Rights in Family Waqf: Women must receive their inheritance before Waqf dedication, with special provisions for widows, divorced women, and orphans.**

- **Ending Arbitrary Property Claims: Section 40 of the original Waqf Act (1995) has been removed, preventing Waqf Boards from arbitrarily declaring properties as Waqf.**

- **Section 40 of the Waqf Act (1995) gives the Waqf Board the authority to decide whether a property is a Waqf property or not.**

- **Waqf Tribunals: The Waqf tribunals consist of 3 members i.e., a district judge, a state government officer (joint secretary level), and an expert in Muslim law and jurisprudence.**

- **Aggrieved parties can appeal directly to the concerned High Court within 90 days of receiving the Waqf tribunal's order.**

- **Government Land & Waqf disputes: An officer above the rank of Collector will investigate government properties claimed as Waqf to prevent any unwarranted claims.**

- **Technology & Central Portal: A centralized portal will automate Waqf property management, improving efficiency and transparency.**
- **Mutawallis (caretaker of a waqf) must register property details on the central portal.**
- **Diverse Representation: The Waqf Boards will include two non-Muslim members for inclusivity, and among Muslim members, at least two must be women.**
- **Representation from Shia, Sunni, Bohra, Aghakhani, and OBC Muslim communities is also mandated.**

Content.

- **Adjournment sine die means terminating a sitting of Parliament for an indefinite period i.e. without naming a day for reassembly.**
- **The power of adjournment sine die lies with the presiding officer of the House.**
- **He can also call a sitting of the House before the date or time to which it has been adjourned or at any time after the House has been adjourned sine die.**

Modi and Yunus set aside differences, discuss minorities, situation at border

Page No. 1, GS 2

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Setting aside the tensions of the past eight months in their first meeting since the regime change in Dhaka, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladesh's Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus held talks on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC regional summit in Bangkok on Friday.

While both leaders raised contentious issues – including India's call for the protection of minorities in Bangladesh, Dhaka's demand for the extradition of former Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina, and border security issues – during the meeting that lasted about 40 minutes, they met on cordial terms and exchanged commitments to bilateral ties. Bangladesh will host the BIMSTEC summit next year, and Mr. Modi congratulated Mr. Yunus for assuming its chairmanship.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Bangladesh Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus. ANI

The Modi-Yunus meeting on Friday was held just after the conclusion of the sixth summit of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), a seven-nation grouping that links South Asia and South East Asia.

Meets Myanmar leader

Mr. Modi also met with Myanmar junta commander and PM General Min Aung Hlaing for the first time since the military came to power in 2021, and Nepal PM K.P. Sharma Oli, who took office in July 2024, on the sidelines of the meeting. All three leaders have chosen to visit China, while New Delhi has not issued invitations to them, due to tensions over a number of issues, and concerns over the legitimacy of the governments in Dhaka and Naypyitaw.

Mr. Modi expressed India's support for a "democratic, stable, peaceful, progressive and inclusive Bangladesh", and "urged that rhetoric that vitiates the environment is best avoided", according to a statement on the meeting issued by the Ministry of External Affairs.

During talks with Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, the Prime Minister "underlined the importance of early restoration of the democratic process in Myanmar, including through credible and inclusive elections", the MEA said.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 8

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BIMSTEC

Bay of bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical & Economic Cooperation

Bangladesh

Sri Lanka

India

Nepal

Bhutan

Thailand

Myanmar

Stands for **The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation**

Founded in 1997 through **Bangkok Declaration**

7 MEMBER COUNTRIES

Importance of BIMSTEC

- Accounts for **22%** of the world's population
- Combined GDP of **$2.7 trillion**
- One-fourth of the world's traded goods cross the Bay every year
- Six focus areas- trade, technology, energy, transport, tourism and fisheries

A case for the Global South in securing Ukraine peace

Page No. 6, GS 2

As the devastating war in Ukraine edges toward a fragile ceasefire, recently reinforced by maritime and energy truces brokered in Riyadh, the question of a more enduring peace looms large, along with a related question: who will oversee its implementation?

Peace seems to be in prospect, as both sides appear weary of a long-drawn out attritional conflict. The recent Black Sea deal follows talks initiated by United States President Donald Trump, who has vowed to swiftly end the war that has now entered its fourth year.

While western leaders, notably France's President Emmanuel Macron and Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer, have floated the idea of a European-led peacekeeping force, this proposition is rife with challenges and contradictions. Russia has made it clear that no troops from North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member-countries would be welcome, and most of Europe is already in NATO. A peacekeeping force whose very presence would be seen as a *casus belli* is evidently a non-starter.

It is time for the Global South – a coalition of nations from Africa, Asia, and Latin America – to rise to the occasion and offer to lead a United Nations-backed peacekeeping mission in Ukraine. Doing so would not only ensure credibility and neutrality but also symbolise the emergence of the Global South as an indispensable force in shaping global stability.

Shashi Tharoor

is a fourth-term Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), Congress party, and is the award-winning author of 26 books, including 'Pax Indica: India and the World of the 21st Century'. As a senior United Nations official, he led the team responsible for peace-keeping operations in the former Yugoslavia

E.D. Mathew

is a former United Nations spokesperson. He has been part of the United Nations peacekeeping missions in Timor-Leste and Liberia

The perils of a European peacekeeping force

Europe's enthusiasm for spearheading peacekeeping in Ukraine appears, at first glance, logical – its proximity to the conflict and its strategic stake in the region make it a natural candidate. While promoting a "coalition of the willing", Mr. Starmer has already promised to send British troops as part of any post-war peacekeeping operation. Yet, this logic crumbles under the weight of Russia's vehement opposition. Moscow views a European-led force as a NATO Trojan horse, a thinly veiled ploy to expand the alliance's reach into Ukraine. Such a deployment would not only exacerbate tensions but also risk transforming peacekeepers into catalysts for further conflict. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov declared during a recent visit to Qatar that it would only "further fuel the conflict and stop any attempts to calm it down".

Moreover, European public opinion is far from aligned with the ambitions of its leaders. Polls reveal widespread resistance to deploying troops in what would undoubtedly be a perilous theatre of operations. When Mr. Macron first suggested French troops for such an endeavour earlier this year, opinion polls showed an overwhelming majority of French citizens opposing the idea. Even if political will is mustered, the logistical realities of sustaining such a mission without heavy reliance on U.S. support – which, in the Trump era, may or may not be available – would expose Europe's limitations. In a conflict fraught with delicate balances, the stakes are too high to gamble on an arrangement perceived as partial and provocative.

> The Ukraine war is a chance for the Global South to emerge as a force that is credible and neutral in shaping global stability

The Global South has the credentials

The presence of NATO troops along the front line with Russian forces, even in a peacekeeping capacity, heightens the chances of a broader confrontation, a risk the international community can ill afford. In stark contrast, the Global South offers a compelling alternative. Unlike Europe, nations from Africa, Asia, and Latin America have largely maintained a principled neutrality in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. This impartiality – symbolised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi hugging both Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow and Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv, two weeks apart – grants them the moral high ground, making them uniquely positioned to maintain the trust of both Kyiv and Moscow. A peacekeeping mission led by the Global South would not only de-escalate tensions but also inject a much-needed sense of fairness into the proceedings.

The Global South's credentials are far from theoretical. The African Union (AU)'s record of peacekeeping, whether in Sudan, Somalia, or the Central African Republic, speaks volumes about its ability to navigate volatile environments. Similarly, BRICS member countries such as Brazil, India, South Africa and Indonesia have demonstrated their diplomatic acumen and operational expertise in UN peacekeeping missions. Even smaller nations such as Chile bring specialised skills, such as demining, which are crucial for Ukraine's reconstruction. Their track record in UN peacekeeping missions strengthens their credibility as potential leaders in Ukraine's stabilisation efforts.

For a Global South-led peacekeeping mission to succeed, several conditions must be met. A robust and well-defined ceasefire agreement is, of course, a prerequisite. Equally critical is the demarcation of a clear front line, a task demanding meticulous negotiations. Financial and logistical support from western nations, particularly the European Union, would bolster the mission's capacity. All of these would be available if the operation was authorised by the United Nations Security Council and enjoyed the approval and co-operation of both parties to the conflict. Crucially, excluding NATO troops entirely would assuage Russian concerns and underscore the mission's neutrality. Finally, as India demonstrated in Liberia, the inclusion of female peacekeepers, whose presence has been shown to foster community trust and address gender-based violence, a persistent issue in conflict zones, would further enhance the initiative's legitimacy.

India, with its storied legacy in UN peacekeeping, is especially well-placed to take a leadership role. Having contributed over 2,90,000 peacekeepers to more than 50 UN missions, India's experience is unparalleled. Currently, more than 5,000 Indian peacekeepers are deployed in nine of the 11 active peace operations. In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an all-women police contingent to a peacekeeping mission, in war-torn Liberia. More than 160 Indian peacekeepers have paid the ultimate price serving under the UN flag so far – the highest number for any troop-contributing country.

It was no accident that then UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali turned to India to lead the UN peace-keeping operation in the former Yugoslavia in 1992. As in that situation, India's neutral stance in the Ukraine conflict and its balanced relationships with Russia, the West, and Ukraine make it a natural choice to spearhead this effort. There is a strong case for India to shed its reticence and step forward with the assertiveness the moment demands.

Meanwhile, China has been far more proactive, positioning itself as a potential peacemaker despite its close ties to Moscow. Beijing has also appointed a seasoned diplomat as its special envoy for Ukraine, whereas India has yet to take comparable steps.

The broader imperative

A peacekeeping mission in Ukraine under the auspices of the United Nations offers more than just a pathway to stability in Eastern Europe. It is an opportunity for the Global South to assert its rightful place at the high table of international diplomacy. For decades, this grouping – still too inchoate to be termed a bloc – has been relegated to the margins of global decision-making, its voice often drowned out by the cacophony of western powers. Taking the lead in Ukraine would signal a shift, a bold declaration that the Global South is not merely a passive observer but an active shaper of the world order.

As we stand at this historic juncture, the choice is clear. The task of securing peace in Ukraine cannot be left to actors whose partiality risks undermining the very truce they are meant to protect. It is time for the Global South to seize the mantle of leadership, offering a vision of peace that is inclusive, credible, and enduring. A peacekeeping mission in Ukraine under the UN. banner would provide the global body with a crucial opportunity to reaffirm its role in maintaining international peace and security. For India, active participation in such an effort would not only cement its standing as a global power but also affirm its growing influence in shaping international diplomacy.

Content.

- **The Ukraine war is a chance for the Global South to emerge as a force that is credible and neutral in shaping global stability**

- **Peace seems to be in prospect, as both sides appear weary of a long-drawn out attritional conflict. The recent Black Sea deal follows talks initiated by United States President Donald Trump, who has vowed to swiftly end the war that has now entered its fourth year.**

- **While western leaders, notably France's President Emmanuel Macron and Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer, have floated the idea of a European-led peacekeeping force, this proposition is rife with challenges and contradictions.**

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Taken to task

The Supreme Court is right in pushing Speakers to act decisively on defections

The issue of defections in Legislative Assemblies has become a vexed one in public life in recent years. Ruling parties – the Bharatiya Janata Party in particular – have adopted an unabashed approach to augment their legislative support by encouraging defections. A commonly used modus operandi – used egregiously in Manipur in the late 2010s and later in Maharashtra – involves the Speaker, invariably from the ruling party, sitting on disqualification petitions from Opposition parties against legislators who have defected. Some defectors have even been sworn in as Ministers, pending adjudication on their party-switching by the Speaker. Many States have seen the unedifying sight of mass defections to the ruling party just after elections, making a mockery of the democratic exercise. The latest is the situation in Telangana where the petitions filed by the Bharat Rashtra Samiti (BRS) in March-April 2024, to disqualify 10 of its legislators who defected to the Congress, were notified by the Speaker only in January this year. The Supreme Court, hearing a petition by the BRS seeking timely action by the Speaker, has rightly observed that it was not "powerless" if a Speaker chose to remain indecisive. Justice B.R. Gavai's observation that the courts cannot tell a Speaker how to decide, but that they could ask the Speaker to decide within a reasonable period, is a rational one.

A five-judge Constitution Bench, in May 2023, had reposed its faith in the Speaker's "propriety and impartiality" to decide on defections, but "within a reasonable period". Flowing from this judgment, the Court had, in October 2023, fixed a deadline for the Maharashtra Speaker to decide defection pleas from the Opposition after the undue delay by him in hearing them. Yet, the issue is persistent. This is inevitable as Speakers are invariably elected from ruling parties and rarely act in a non-partisan manner, despite the expectation that they will do so. In 2020, the Court had asked Parliament to amend the Constitution to strip Legislative Assembly Speakers of their exclusive power to decide upon whether legislators should be disqualified or not under the Tenth Schedule which frames the anti-defection law. It had also asked for an independent tribunal, instead of the Speaker, to be appointed for the task. No such action has been taken by Parliament since then and the problem of defections going unaddressed by Speakers within a reasonable time frame persists. If the Court forces the hand of the Speaker in Telangana, it might be one more blow for decisive action. But the scourge of defections and how it is dealt with will remain as long as voters do not punish those who indulge in such practices.

Page No. 6, GS 2

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A people still waiting to move out of the margins

Page No. 6, GS 1,2

International Transgender Day of Visibility, which is observed on March 31, highlights the challenges that transgender individuals face. Despite legal advancements such as the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, social stigma, economic exclusion and discrimination persist. There are barriers to education, employment and health care. Workplace biases and financial discrimination hinder economic empowerment, while bullying and unsupportive environments restrict education. Health-care systems fail to address transgender-specific needs, worsening marginalisation. True inclusion requires strong policy implementation, anti-discrimination enforcement, and societal change. Governments, businesses and communities must ensure financial inclusion, equal opportunities and support, fostering empowerment beyond mere visibility.

Vipin Benny

is Assistant Professor and Research Supervisor, Department of Commerce, St. Thomas College (Autonomous), Thrissur, Kerala

Legal recognition versus ground reality

Weak implementation of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, hampers access to welfare schemes. As of December 2023, the National Portal for Transgender Persons received 24,115 identity card applications. However, only 15,800 certificates were issued, with over 3,200 pending beyond the mandated 30-day period. In Delhi, despite a transgender population of approximately 4,200 (2011 Census), only 23 identity cards had been issued by April 2022. The Act's bureaucratic certification process delays recognition by contrasting global standards of self-determination. It also lacks provisions for addressing police harassment, family rejection, and social exclusion.

Economic empowerment remains a challenge in India due to systemic barriers in employment and entrepreneurship. A 2018 National Human Rights Commission of India (NHRC) report found that 92% of transgender individuals were excluded from economic activities, forcing many to engage in sex work. A 2022 study reported a transgender unemployment rate of 48%, far above the national average of 7%-8%.

Discrimination starts at hiring, where biases lead to exclusion, and those employed face workplace hostility, a lack of gender-neutral facilities, and resistance from colleagues. While Tata Steel has hired over 100 transgender employees, the industry-wide adoption of such policies is limited. In 2024, the Finance Ministry clarified that LGBTQ+ individuals could open joint bank accounts and nominate partners as beneficiaries, yet broader financial exclusion persists. There need to be workplace inclusion policies, diversity hiring, targeted financial programmes, and government-backed loans to ensure economic empowerment.

Hurdles in education, health-care access

Education is crucial for inclusion and the economic empowerment of transgender individuals in India, but systemic discrimination leads to significant disparities. The 2011 Census reported a transgender literacy rate of 56.1%, when the national average was 74.04%. In Kerala, 58% dropped out due to bullying, harassment, and unsupportive environments. But some States have introduced inclusive policies – Maharashtra has transgender cells in colleges and the University of Kerala has reserved seats and hostel facilities. However, nationwide policies remain weak. Ensuring equal opportunities requires gender-sensitive curricula, inclusive learning spaces, financial aid and vocational training.

Transgender individuals in India face major health-care challenges owing to systemic discrimination, financial barriers, and inadequate medical infrastructure. Despite the National Health Policy (2017) and the Ayushman Bharat, accessibility remains limited. A National Legal Services Authority survey found that 27% were denied health care due to their gender identity. Gender-affirming treatments remain costly (between ₹2 lakh to ₹5 lakh) with limited insurance coverage. While the 'Ayushman Bharat TG Plus' card offers ₹5 lakh annual coverage, implementation gaps persist. The lack of trained health-care professionals results in substandard care, and mental health support is severely inadequate. Solutions include mandatory transgender health-care training; inclusion of gender-affirming treatments in insurance; dedicated transgender health clinics, and expanded mental health services.

> Transgender individuals continue to face barriers to acceptance, education, employment and health care

Steps to help mainstream

Changing societal perceptions of transgender individuals in India requires genuine inclusion in the media, education, workplaces, and policies. While visibility has increased, portrayals often reinforce stereotypes. Deep-rooted prejudices in families, schools, and workplaces are another factor. Initiatives such as the 'I Am Also Human' campaign by the Humsafar Trust help, but broader efforts are needed. Gender sensitisation in schools, universities, and workplaces is essential. The media must depict transgender individuals in diverse roles, while cultural events such as Tamil Nadu's Koovagam Festival can promote acceptance.

International Transgender Day of Visibility underscores the need for policy reforms, social acceptance, and economic inclusion. Discrimination persists in employment, education, health care, and public spaces. Many face identity documentation issues, financial barriers, and workplace biases. Addressing these issues requires awareness campaigns, inclusive media representations, and gender sensitisation in schools and workplaces. Beyond symbolism, enforcing anti-discrimination laws, inclusive hiring, and supporting transgender entrepreneurs are also essential. True equality demands collective action to dismantle institutional barriers and to ensure dignity, empowerment, and integration.

Content.

- **International Transgender Day of Visibility, which is observed on March 31, highlights the challenges that transgender individuals face.**

- **Despite legal advancements such as the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, social stigma, economic exclusion and discrimination persist.**

- **There are barriers to education, employment and health care. Workplace biases and financial discrimination hinder economic empowerment, while bullying and unsupportive environments restrict education.**

- **Health-care systems fail to address transgender-specific needs, worsening marginalisation. True inclusion requires strong policy implementation, anti-discrimination enforcement, and societal change.**

- **Governments, businesses and communities must ensure financial inclusion, equal opportunities and support, fostering empowerment beyond mere visibility.**

Fact

- **Weak implementation of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, hampers access to welfare schemes.**
- **As of December 2023, the National Portal for Transgender Persons received 24,115 identity card applications. However, only 15,800 certificates were issued, with over 3,200 pending beyond the mandated 30-day period.**
- **In Delhi, despite a transgender population of approximately 4,200 (2011 Census), only 23 identity cards had been issued by April 2022.**
- **The Act's bureaucratic certification process delays recognition by contrasting global standards of self-determination.**
- **It also lacks provisions for addressing police harassment, family rejection, and social exclusion.**

Fact

- **Economic empowerment remains a challenge in India due to systemic barriers in employment and entrepreneurship.**
- **A 2018 National Human Rights Commission of India (NHRC) report found that 92% of transgender individuals were excluded from economic activities, forcing many to engage in sex work.**
- **A 2022 study reported a transgender unemployment rate of 48%, far above the national average of 7%-8%.**
- **Discrimination starts at hiring, where biases lead to exclusion, and those employed face workplace hostility, a lack of gender-neutral facilities, and resistance from colleagues.**

Fact

- **While Tata Steel has hired over 100 transgender employees, the industry-wide adoption of such policies is limited.**
- **In 2024, the Finance Ministry clarified that LGBTQ+ individuals could open joint bank accounts and nominate partners as beneficiaries, yet broader financial exclusion persists.**
- **There need to be workplace inclusion policies, diversity hiring, targeted financial programmes, and government-backed loans to ensure economic empowerment.**
- **Education is crucial for inclusion and the economic empowerment of transgender individuals in India, but systemic discrimination leads to significant disparities. The 2011 Census reported a transgender literacy rate of 56.1%, when the national average was 74.04%.**

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1. The Hindu Playlist - https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLpuxPG4TUOR4VHsceopVQtj73aJ0idtpI

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Description

Thank You!