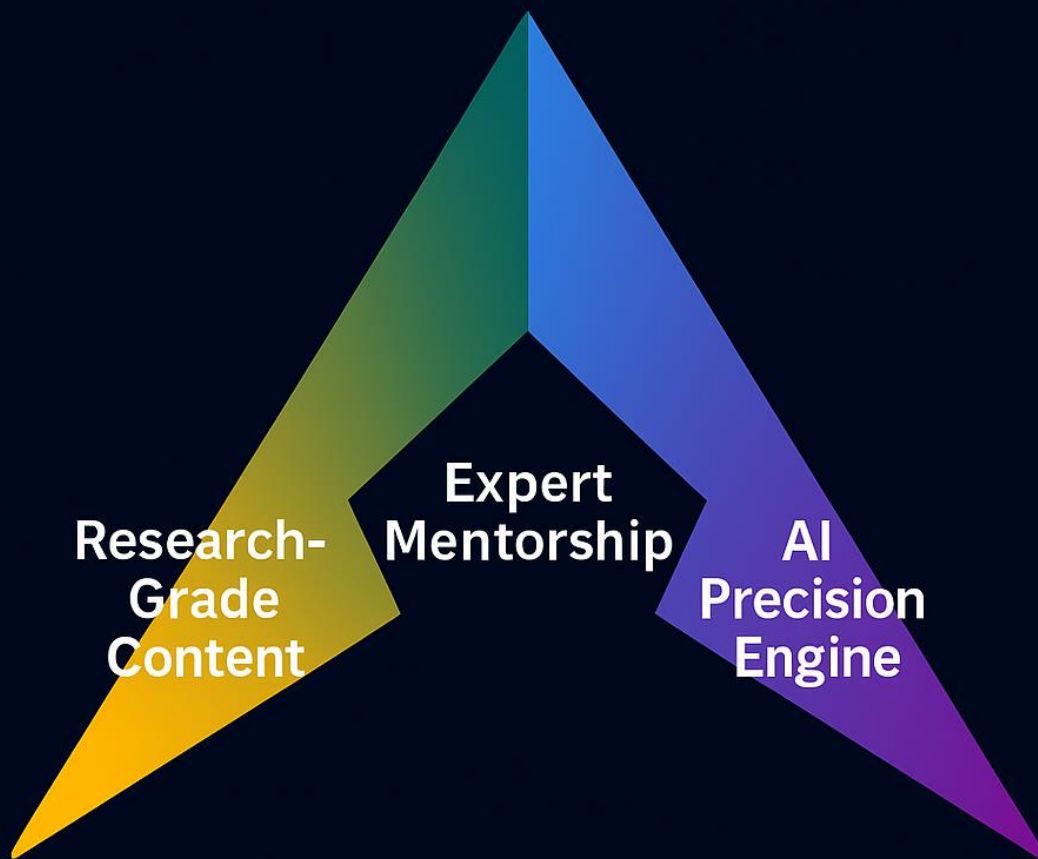


PrepAlpine

The Next-Generation UPSC Institution

Where Research Meets Mentorship & Precision



Preparation Meets Precision

A Next-Generation Learning Institution

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PrepAlpine — Where Research-Grade Content Meets Mentorship, and AI Makes It Personal

PrepAlpine is India's next-generation UPSC institution — built by educationists, retired bureaucrats, IITians, and experienced educators, and powered by a 500+-member technology firm specialising in AI-driven education infrastructure.

We're not another coaching platform — we're a complete preparation ecosystem that unites:

- **Research-Grade Content:**

Every content is crafted and reviewed by civil servants, educators, and scholars, and follows UPSC's Intro–Body–Conclusion format. Content is built from official reports, verified data, and visual pedagogy — flowcharts, frameworks, maps, and comparative tables.

- **Two-Tier Mentorship:**

Interview-qualified mentors and Subject-Matter Experts provide structured strategy, accountability, doubt-solving, and exam-aligned depth — bridging the gap between preparation and performance.

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Every PrepAlpine module is built not just to inform, but to transform — converting effort into precision and hard work into predictable progress.

We're reimagining UPSC preparation as a research-led, mentor-guided, AI-personalised journey that adapts to every aspirant.

PrepAlpine — From Aspirant to Authority. Lead the State, Not the Struggle.

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS DATED 24.11.2025

GS Paper III: Economics

1. The Four Labour Codes: A Cohesive Framework For India's Labour Reform

a. Introduction

India's labour system evolved through more than seventy years of piecemeal legislation. This created twenty-nine central laws—dense, overlapping and often inconsistent. As economic structures changed, informalisation grew, and new forms of work emerged, this fragmented system began to constrain both worker protection and industrial productivity.

The Four Labour Codes reorganise this entire landscape into a coherent framework centred on wages, industrial relations, social security, and workplace safety. The aim is to create a predictable and modern regime that supports inclusive growth, ease of doing business, and universal worker welfare.

b. Understanding the Four Labour Codes

The new labour regime is organised into four comprehensive codes that consolidate earlier legislations:

- i. Code on Wages
- ii. Industrial Relations Code
- iii. Code on Social Security
- iv. Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSHC) Code



Together, they attempt to build a uniform, simplified labour governance system that is easier for workers to access and simpler for employers to comply with.

c. Why a New Labour Framework Became Necessary

The earlier labour architecture was shaped by the needs of a mid-twentieth-century, manufacturing-oriented economy. Over time, new categories—gig workers, platform workers, small-enterprise workers—remained outside its protective net. Meanwhile, employers faced a maze of:

- Multiple registrations
- Conflicting definitions of “wages”
- Varied state-level rules
- High compliance costs

Reform was aimed at achieving three core objectives:

i. Simplification of Procedures

- Replace 29 laws with 4 codes.
- Promote single definitions and digitised compliance.

ii. Expansion of Social Protection

- Include informal, gig and platform workers.
- Strengthen provident fund and insurance coverage.

iii. Balanced Industrial Environment

- Encourage investment with reduced regulatory friction.

- Protect worker rights through transparency and predictability.

d. The Substance of Each Code

The Code on Wages

This code establishes a uniform wage system applicable across establishments.

i. National Floor-Level Wage

Acts as a baseline for all states. No state can set its minimum wage below this floor.

ii. Timely and Transparent Wage Payments

Mandates prompt payment and compulsory wage slips (physical or digital).

iii. Single Uniform Definition of Wages

Based on:

- Basic Pay
- Dearness Allowance
- Retaining Allowance

This simplifies calculations for provident fund, gratuity and other benefits, ensuring clarity for workers and consistency for employers.

The Industrial Relations Code

This code revises the framework governing employment contracts, industrial disputes and collective bargaining.

i. Fixed-Term Employment

Allows firms to hire for specific durations while giving workers benefits at par with permanent employees.

ii. Higher Threshold for Retrenchment/Closure Approval

Establishments employing up to 300 workers may retrench or close without prior government permission (earlier: 100 workers).

iii. Single Negotiating Union

A union with majority support becomes the sole negotiating agent, reducing fragmentation.

iv. Stricter Rules for Strikes

Fourteen days' prior notice is compulsory. Mass casual leave is considered a strike.

The Code on Social Security

This is the most wide-ranging attempt to universalise social protection.

i. Consolidation of Welfare Laws

Merges PF, ESI, maternity benefits, gratuity and other welfare laws.

ii. Recognition of New-Age Workers

First-ever legal recognition of:

- Gig workers
- Platform workers

A dedicated Social Security Fund is proposed, partly financed by aggregator platforms.

iii. **Expanded PF and ESI Coverage**

- PF applies to establishments with 20+ workers.
- ESI is extended nationwide.

iv. **Enhanced Benefits for Women Workers**

Including optional coverage for parents-in-law under certain conditions.

The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSHC) Code

This code unifies laws governing factory licensing, contract labour, safety standards and workplace welfare.

i. **Revised Thresholds for Licensing**

Modern rules for obtaining and renewing factory licences.

ii. **Clear Norms for Working Hours and Overtime**

Uniform rules for hours, rest, overtime pay and health check-ups.

iii. **Night Work for Women (With Protection)**

Permitted if safety conditions and consent requirements are met.

iv. **Higher Threshold for Contract Labour Regulations**

Applies when 50 or more contract workers are engaged (higher than earlier limits).

v. **Transparent Digital Inspections**

Reduces discretionary power and arbitrary interference.

e. Anticipated Benefits of the New Framework

i. **Benefits for Workers**

- Greater wage protection and uniform standards.
- Inclusion of gig and platform workers under social security.
- Fixed-term employees receive benefits equal to permanent workers.
- Safer, more regulated workplaces through unified safety norms.

ii. **Benefits for Employers**

- Simpler compliance through uniform definitions and consolidated laws.
- Predictable wage calculations and reduced paperwork.
- More flexibility in hiring and downsizing.
- Digital inspections reduce transactional friction.

f. Key Concerns and Points of Debate

i. **Concerns of Workers and Trade Unions**

- Higher retrenchment threshold may weaken job security.
- Stricter strike procedures may reduce bargaining power.
- Rise of fixed-term contracts could reduce stable employment.

ii. **Concerns of Employers**

- Social-security contributions for gig platforms could increase costs.
- Variations in implementation across states may create uncertainty.

Conclusion

The Four Labour Codes represent India's most ambitious attempt to modernise labour governance. Their central purpose is to balance worker protection with industrial flexibility and replace an outdated, cumbersome system with a transparent, technology-enabled and unified framework.

However, their success will depend on effective implementation by states, digital readiness, and continuous dialogue between workers and employers. If executed well, the codes can enhance both worker welfare and India's economic competitiveness, creating a labour ecosystem suited to a rapidly evolving economy.

GS Paper III: Environment

2. COP30 and the Renewed Global Emphasis on Adaptation

a. Introduction

When countries met in Belém, Brazil for COP30, a noticeable shift occurred in global climate negotiations. While reducing greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) remained essential, nations collectively acknowledged a hard truth: climate impacts are already unfolding, affecting economies, ecosystems and vulnerable communities.

As a result, adaptation—the effort to prepare for, cushion and withstand the effects of climate change—moved to the core of discussions. Rising heat, erratic rainfall, repeated floods and cyclones have made it clear that mitigation shapes the planet's future, but adaptation determines whether people can survive and thrive today.

b. Why Adaptation Became the Central Priority

Developing countries face worsening climate impacts—heatwaves, crop failures, coastal erosion and intense rainfall—but receive only a small share of climate finance for adaptation. Most funds still flow to mitigation because it offers revenue-producing projects like solar plants or EV infrastructure.

Adaptation, by contrast, involves investments such as:

i. Community-level safety and resilience

Cyclone shelters, flood barriers, rainwater harvesting.

ii. Agricultural and livelihood protection

Drought-resistant seeds, resilient cropping systems.

iii. Disaster preparedness

Early-warning systems, robust water management.

These are vital but rarely profitable, so private finance remains limited. COP30 recognised that mitigation without adaptation leaves the poorest dangerously exposed, even if emissions fall globally.

c. Core Outcomes of COP30

i. Commitment to Substantially Increase Adaptation Finance

COP30 produced one of its strongest signals on finance: countries agreed that adaptation funding must at least triple by 2035. This would allow:

- Greater investment in climate-resilient agriculture.
- Strengthening water systems and flood management.
- Constructing coastal defences and urban resilience infrastructure.
- Expanding nationwide early-warning networks.

Reasons COP30 Aligned with Global South Priorities



This decision reflects a clear shift toward protecting lives, livelihoods and development gains.

ii. Two-Year Work Programme on Climate Finance Architecture

Delegates agreed to a two-year exercise to examine how global climate finance should be:

- Structured
- Delivered
- Balanced between mitigation and adaptation

The findings will inform the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG), the successor to the earlier USD 100 billion annual pledge. Developing nations view this as progress toward predictable and equitable financing.

iii. Advancing a Framework for a Just Transition

COP30 emphasised that climate action must not deepen social or regional inequality. The proposed Just Transition Mechanism focuses on:

- Worker protection and retraining
- Social safety nets during energy transitions
- Support for regions dependent on coal and carbon-intensive industries

The goal is to help economies shift without leaving communities behind.

iv. Integrating Trade and Climate through Structured Dialogue

To address concerns about border carbon taxes and green trade barriers, COP30 launched a formal dialogue with:

- World Trade Organisation (WTO)
- UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- International Trade Centre (ITC)

This aims to create fair, development-friendly linkages between climate ambition and global trade rules so that low-carbon measures do not penalise developing exporters.

v. No Hard Timeline for Phasing Out Fossil Fuels

Countries failed to agree on a universal timeline for phasing out coal, oil and gas. Differences were rooted in national circumstances:

- Developed nations pushed for rapid, time-bound phase-out.
- Developing nations sought flexibility to meet development needs, expand energy access and sustain growth.

The final outcome balanced ambition with equity and developmental realities.

d. Why Developing Countries Viewed COP30 Favourably

The conference aligned with the priorities of the Global South:

i. Adaptation was placed at the centre

Addressing their most urgent and immediate needs.

ii. Recognition of developmental constraints

No one-size-fits-all fossil fuel deadlines.

iii. Greater emphasis on fair trade rules

Preventing climate policies from harming exports.

iv. Stronger expectations for finance

Tripling adaptation finance, improving architecture.

For many developing nations, COP30 signalled a more balanced and realistic approach to global climate governance.

e. The Persistent Challenges Ahead

i. Weaknesses in Climate Finance Delivery

- Developed nations have previously fallen short of finance pledges.
- The promise to triple adaptation funding is not legally binding.

ii. Limited Private Sector Interest in Adaptation

- Adaptation projects lack clear revenue models.
- Heavy reliance on public and concessional financing continues.

iii. Slow Progress in Trade Negotiations

- Aligning trade rules with climate concerns will require complex multilateral cooperation.

These obstacles could hinder timely and equitable adaptation efforts.

Conclusion

COP30 marked a turning point by elevating adaptation from a background issue to a central pillar of climate governance. The conference recognised that climate impacts are already reshaping societies and that resilience-building is essential to protect development, economic stability and human well-being.

The task ahead is to convert these commitments into real, durable financial arrangements, strengthen institutional support and ensure that vulnerable nations have the capacity and resources to adapt with dignity. If implemented well, COP30's outcomes can help create a more resilient and equitable global climate order.

GS Paper III: Science and Technology

3. India's Proposal for a Global Compact on Artificial Intelligence

a. Introduction

Artificial intelligence is advancing at extraordinary speed, reshaping economic systems, public services, communication patterns and national security. While AI offers powerful opportunities—better healthcare, efficient agriculture, improved public service delivery—it also carries risks of misinformation, deepfakes, cybercrime, organised fraud, and manipulation of democratic processes.

Against this backdrop, India has proposed a Global Compact on Artificial Intelligence at the G20. The idea is to establish shared global principles, ensure inclusive governance, and create common commitments to safe, ethical, and development-oriented AI.

b. The Emerging Challenge

AI capabilities today are concentrated within a small group of technologically advanced countries and powerful corporations. This concentration shapes access to:

i. Critical inputs

- Large datasets
- Massive computing power
- Advanced frontier models

ii. Decision-making and standards

- Rules are emerging unevenly across countries
- Corporate self-regulation remains voluntary and limited

Meanwhile, harmful uses of AI are spreading rapidly:

- Deepfakes erode public trust
- AI-enabled fraud and cyberattacks strengthen criminal networks
- Automated propaganda influences public opinion at scale

These threats transcend borders. No country can protect itself alone—making collective governance unavoidable.

c. Why the World Needs a Global Compact

Artificial intelligence affects transboundary domains similar to climate change, nuclear safety or aviation security—areas already governed by global rules. But AI still operates under fragmented national regulations and voluntary corporate commitments.

A global compact becomes necessary because:

i. Risks are transnational

Malicious AI use travels across borders instantly.

ii. National regulations alone are insufficient

Countries regulate unevenly, creating loopholes.

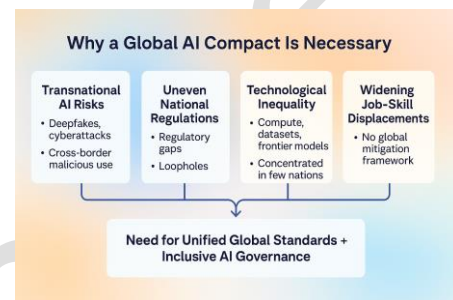
iii. Technological access is unequal

Developing countries risk being marginalised.

iv. Job displacement and skill gaps will widen

No global framework currently addresses these impacts.

A unified compact would establish minimum global standards, promote responsible AI, and ensure equitable participation, especially for the Global South.



d. India's Proposed Principles

i. Human Oversight

AI should assist—not replace—human judgment.

- Critical sectors like healthcare, policing, finance and public administration require accountable human supervision.
- The objective is to prevent harmful over-automation and protect rights.

ii. Safety Built into Design

Safety mechanisms should be embedded during development:

- Risk assessments and impact tests
- Secure data practices
- Built-in limits to prevent harmful or unpredictable behaviour

iii. Transparency and Auditability

Transparency enables public trust and regulatory oversight.

- Models should be explainable.

- Independent auditing must be possible.
- Decision-making processes should be traceable in sensitive applications.

iv. Prohibition of Harmful Uses

India proposes banning AI applications that directly undermine security or social stability:

- Deepfake-based misinformation
- Automated propaganda and manipulation
- AI-driven cybercrime
- Tools aiding extremist or terrorist activities

v. Open and Inclusive AI Ecosystems

India emphasises avoiding AI monopolies:

- Promote open-source models
- Expand access to computing resources
- Support innovation in developing countries
- Encourage multi-country participation, not exclusive control by a few actors

e. India's Broader Vision for Artificial Intelligence

India's strategy seeks to demonstrate how AI can drive inclusion, development and digital empowerment.

i. Domestic Priorities

- India-AI Mission to expand compute capacity
- AI tools for local languages
- Digital solutions for rural governance
- Large-scale skill development programmes

ii. Global Priorities

- Frameworks to facilitate skilled labour mobility
- Ensuring developing nations can adopt AI responsibly
- Preventing widening technological divides

f. India's Expanding Leadership Role

India will convene the AI Impact Summit in 2026, creating a platform for:

- Safe and ethical AI
- Digital public infrastructure
- Cooperation between advanced economies and the Global South

India's diplomatic engagements—collaboration with Brazil and South Africa, push for UNSC reforms, counter-terrorism efforts, and support for climate-resilient agriculture—reinforce its role as a champion of equitable technological development.

g. Global Significance of the Compact

The compact could:

- Reduce risks from malicious AI use
- Bridge global digital divides
- Build trust in AI-powered innovation

- Help developing countries adopt AI safely
- Promote predictable global digital governance

In essence, it would align AI deployment with public interest and global stability.

h. Obstacles to a Global Framework

i. Diverging National Priorities

Countries differ in laws, political values and regulatory cultures.

ii. Corporate Resistance

Technology firms may oppose strong oversight or transparency mandates.

iii. Geopolitical Rivalry

Strategic competition between major powers makes consensus difficult.

iv. Limited Capacity in Smaller Nations

Many lack technical and institutional resources to regulate AI effectively.

Despite these constraints, India argues that cooperation is essential because AI risks cross borders instantly.

Conclusion

India's call for a Global Compact on Artificial Intelligence reflects a clear philosophy: technological progress must align with human dignity, fairness and security. By advocating a human-centric, transparent and inclusive framework, India seeks to shape an international order where AI serves the public good rather than narrow interests.

This initiative, rooted in both ethical responsibility and developmental aspirations, represents an important contribution to twenty-first-century global governance—balancing innovation with accountability in an era of rapid technological change.

Reader's Note — About This Current Affairs Compilation

Dear Aspirant,

This document is part of the PrepAlpine Current Affairs Series — designed to bring clarity, structure, and precision to your daily UPSC learning.

While every effort has been made to balance depth with brevity, please keep the following in mind:

1. Orientation & Purpose

This compilation is curated primarily from the UPSC Mains perspective — with emphasis on conceptual clarity, analytical depth, and interlinkages across GS papers.

However, the PrepAlpine team is simultaneously developing a dedicated Prelims-focused Current Affairs Series, designed for:

- factual coverage
- data recall
- Prelims-style MCQs
- objective pattern analysis

This Prelims Edition will be released separately as a standalone publication.

2. Content Length

Some sections may feel shorter or longer depending on topic relevance and news density. To fit your personal preference, you may freely resize or summarize sections using any LLM tool (ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, etc.) at your convenience.

3. Format Flexibility

The formatting combines:

- paragraphs
- lists
- tables
- visual cues

—all optimised for retention.

If you prefer a specific style (lists → paras, paras → tables, etc.), feel free to convert using any free LLM.

4. Monthly Current Affairs Release

The complete Monthly Current Affairs Module will be released soon, optimized to a compact 100–150 pages — comprehensive yet concise, exam-ready, and revision-efficient.

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