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CURRENT AFFAIRS

For UPSC Civil Services Examination Aspirants



RESEARCH-DRIVEN
CONTENT



DAILY COVERAGE
WITH MAINS FOCUS



EXAM-READY
APPROACH

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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS DATED 31.07.2026

GS Paper II: Current Affairs

1. Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026

a. Introduction

Parliament has passed the Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, following concerns over the NEET-UG paper leak. It strengthens the 2024 law through higher penalties, fast-track courts, time-bound proceedings and provision for a Special Task Force.

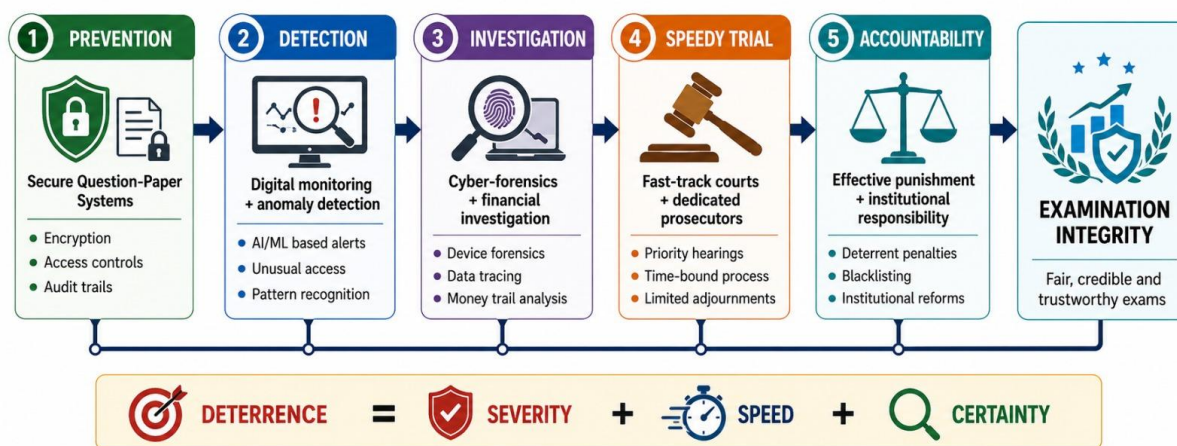
b. Key Changes

Offender	2024 framework	2026 Amendment
Individuals	3–5 years; fine up to ₹10 lakh	5–10 years; fine up to ₹50 lakh
Service providers	Fine up to ₹1 crore; 4-year debarment	Up to ₹5 crore; 8-year debarment
Guilty senior management	Minimum 3 years; ₹1 crore fine	Minimum 5 years; ₹5 crore fine
Organised crime	5–10 years; ₹1 crore fine	Minimum 7 years; ₹10 crore fine

Additionally:

- statutory backing for fast-track courts;
- five-month timeline for investigation and trial;
- Union government empowered to establish a Special Task Force (STF) for investigation.

FROM PAPER-LEAK CONTROL TO EXAMINATION INTEGRITY



💡 Deterrence of leaks is effective only when punishment is **SEVERE**, DELIVERED **SPEEDILY** and **CERTAIN**.

c. Analysis/ Observations

Why examination integrity is a governance issue

Public examinations perform a critical allocative function of the State—determining access to higher education and public employment. Paper leaks therefore go beyond individual cheating:

- undermine equality of opportunity and merit-based selection;

- disproportionately hurt students lacking resources for repeated attempts;
- erode trust in public recruitment and educational institutions;
- encourage organised criminal networks around examinations; and
- can convert youth frustration into a wider legitimacy crisis for public institutions.

Thus, examination security should be viewed as part of institutional integrity and good governance, rather than merely an education-sector issue.

Will Harsher Punishment Solve Paper Leaks?

- Higher penalties increase the cost of participation in organised examination fraud.
- Stronger liability for service providers and management improves institutional accountability.
- STF provision can facilitate specialised investigation of technologically sophisticated and inter-State networks.
- Time-bound trials can improve deterrence by reducing the gap between offence and punishment.

However, deterrence depends on certainty, not merely severity of punishment.

Paper leaks often originate from weaknesses in the examination ecosystem—printing, transportation, digital infrastructure, examination centres, outsourced agencies and insider access. Increasing sentences without improving detection, investigation and prosecution may therefore have limited impact.

Fast-Track Courts: Promise vs Capacity Constraint

The amendment assumes that specialised courts can deliver quicker justice. However, India's experience reveals an important limitation.

As of April 2026, India had 775 fast-track courts, including 398 exclusive POCSO courts. Yet about 2.45 lakh cases were pending in fast-track courts at the end of 2025.

This demonstrates that:

Fast-tracking by legislation does not automatically produce speedy justice without adequate judicial capacity.

A statutory five-month timeline could become difficult to meet if courts face shortages of judges, prosecutors, forensic capacity and investigation personnel.

Key Governance Challenge

The reform must therefore move from a punishment-centric approach to an examination-integrity architecture:

Prevention → Detection → Investigation → Speedy Trial → Accountability

Weakness at any stage reduces the deterrent effect of harsher penalties.

d. Way Forward

- Build secure-by-design examination systems, including encrypted question-paper transmission, access controls and audit trails.
- Conduct mandatory security audits of examination agencies and outsourced service providers.

- Develop specialised cyber-forensic and financial investigation capacity to dismantle organised leak networks.
- Provide fast-track courts with dedicated judges, prosecutors and administrative infrastructure rather than merely statutory timelines.
- Fix accountability across the entire examination chain, while ensuring procedural safeguards against arbitrary prosecution.

Conclusion:

The 2026 amendment strengthens the legal response to examination fraud, but severity of punishment cannot substitute for certainty of detection and institutional competence. Sustainable examination integrity requires combining strong deterrence with secure examination systems, professional investigation and adequately resourced judicial institutions.

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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