

CURRENTLY - FROM NEWS TO NOTES

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

The Hindu & The Indian express

Headline	Source
23 dead after rain triggers landslides in West Bengal	The Hindu, p.1 • Subjects: Disaster Management, Geography, Governance
Telangana tops States in UPI transaction intensity: RBI paper	The Hindu, p.7 • Subjects: Economy, E-Governance
Why is ADR crucial for India's courts?	The Hindu, p.8 • Subjects: Polity, Judiciary, Ethics

Headline	Source
Drug makers must comply with revised norms: govt.	The Hindu, p.12 • Subjects: Science & Tech, Health, Prelims (Schedule M, Diethylene Glycol)
Russian drones, missiles and guided bombs strike Ukraine, killing five	The Hindu, p.14 • Subjects: International Relations
Balod district declared child-marriage free	(Mains Enrichment) • Subjects: Social Issues, Women & Child Development

23 dead after rain triggers landslides in West Bengal

Road connectivity to Mirik and Darjeeling badly affected; thousands of tourists stranded, CM urges them to stay put till safe rescue; part of a bridge across the Balasan river collapses

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

At least 23 persons were killed as torrential rain lashed Darjeeling and other northern parts of West Bengal on Saturday night and Sunday morning. Landslides triggered by the rain at various places in Mirik and Darjeeling sub-divisions led to the loss of lives.

Officials of the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration, the regional autonomous body that administers the Darjeeling hills, said that 11 people were killed in Mirik and 12 deaths were reported in Darjeeling.

Road connectivity to Mirik and Darjeeling was badly affected. On Saturday night, a part of the Dudiya iron bridge across the Balasan river collapsed, cutting off communication between Siliguri and Mirik.



Disaster strikes: A video grab of a portion of the Dudiya iron bridge which collapsed in heavy rain in Darjeeling on Saturday night. ANI

Several roads connecting the Darjeeling hills and Siliguri in the plains were affected.

According to GTA members, the tragedy struck the hills during the Dasai festival and the casualties include relatives of the local people who had come from outside, including Nepal.

The GTA has issued an advisory for suspension of all tourism activities in the Darjeeling hills. Thousands of tourists visiting Darjeeling for Puja vacations have been left stranded as the rain has affected road connectivity.

The India Meteorological Department has issued a red alert for extremely heavy rain in sub-Himalayan West Bengal, including Darjeeling and Kalimpong, till October 6, warning of more landslides and road blockages due to saturated soil conditions.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee advised tourists in north Bengal to stay put till they were evacuated safely. "Rescue costs are ours and tourists need not be anxious," she said.

Red alert issued

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23 dead after rain triggers landslides in West Bengal

Source: The Hindu | Page: 1

GS Paper: GS-3 (Disaster Management), GS-2 (Governance: Regional Autonomy)

Context

- Torrential rains in Darjeeling and Mirik triggered massive landslides.
- 23 deaths, thousands stranded; Dudiya Iron Bridge over Balasan River collapsed.
- Road connectivity between Siliguri-Mirik-Darjeeling severely disrupted.

Strategic Relevance: Link to the Siliguri Corridor

- Siliguri Corridor (also called Chicken's Neck) – a 22 km-wide stretch of land connecting mainland India with its Northeastern states.
- It lies just south of Darjeeling and Mirik, making the region strategically critical for:



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- Military logistics, trade routes, and supply chains to the Northeast.
- Connectivity to Nepal, Bhutan, and Ba

Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA)

Nature:

The GTA is a semi-autonomous administrative body created to govern the Darjeeling and Kalimpong hill areas of West Bengal. It replaced the earlier Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) in 2012.

Legal Basis:

Formed under the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration Act, 2011, passed by the West Bengal Legislative Assembly.

Powers & Structure:

- Headed by a Chief Executive and a GTA Sabha (like a local legislative body).
- Has administrative control on subjects such as education, health, agriculture, forests, and tourism – but not law and order or land revenue (these remain with the state government).





Security drills: Indian Navy and Royal Navy personnel participate in the inaugural day of Exercise KONKAN-25 on Sunday. PTI

Telangana tops States in UPI transaction intensity: RBI paper

Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi and Maharashtra also recorded high UPI usage intensity

DATA POINT

The Hindu Data Team

The usage intensity of Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions – measured in per capita volume terms – is highest in Telangana among all the States, according to a recent paper published in the Reserve Bank of India's bulletin. The study used PhonePe transaction data as a proxy to assess UPI intensity. Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi and Maharashtra also recorded high UPI usage intensity.

The rise of UPI is likely a major factor driving the decline in cash demand in the economy, the paper notes. This shift is evident in the steady fall in ATM cash withdrawals as a percentage of GDP (Chart 1). The growing use of UPI for low-value, everyday transactions is reflected in the rising share of peer-to-merchant (P2M) payments, while the average value of a single UPI transaction – or the 'ticket size' – has been declining over time (Chart 2). The bulk of peer-to-merchant (P2M) transactions by volume fall within the sub-₹500 value range (Chart 3).

The RBI paper used data from PhonePe – a payment service that accounts for 58% of total UPI transaction volume (Chart 4) and 53% of the total transaction value (Chart 5). As noted earlier, UPI usage intensity is highest in several southern and western States, and in Delhi. The paper attributes this to the presence of urban centres, economic hubs, and high levels of employment-driven migration in these regions.

Cash withdrawal intensity remains higher in many northeastern States, as well as in Kerala and Goa. Delhi features on this list too. According to the paper, this could be due to factors such as tourism and service-led cash usage, remittance inflows, the continued cash dependence of rural areas, and limited digital infrastructure.

Digital dominance

The charts were sourced from an article published in the Reserve Bank of India's September 2025 bulletin titled, 'Impact of UPI on Cash Demand – Evidence from National and Subnational Levels,' authored by Sakshi Awasthy and Subrat Kumar Seet. Data were taken from the RBI, the National Payments Corporation of India, and the National Statistics Office



Chart 1: The number of cash withdrawals in India as a share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (in %)

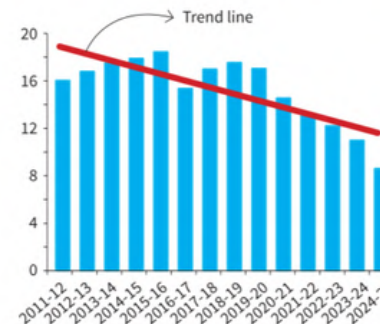


Chart 3: The share (in %, right axis) of PhonePe transactions in the total UPI transaction volume over time (in crore, left axis)

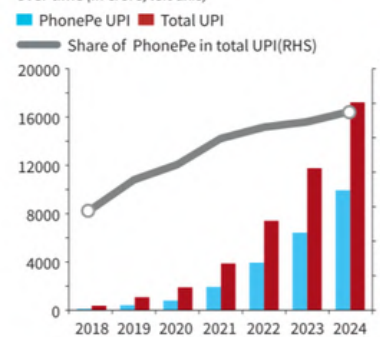


Chart 2: The number of P2P and P2M transactions (in billion, left axis). The average value of a single UPI transaction or the 'ticket size' (in ₹, right axis)

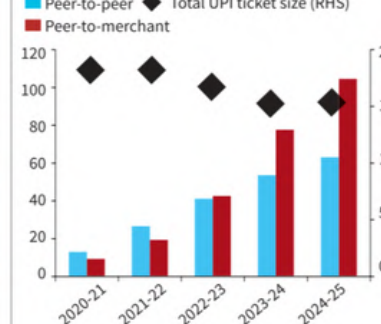


Chart 4: The share (in %, right axis) of PhonePe transaction amounts in total UPI transactions amounts over time (in ₹ lakh crore, left axis)

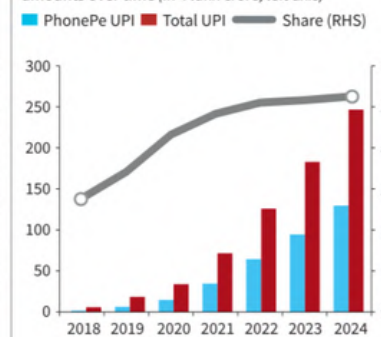
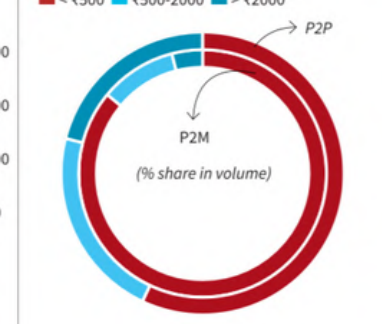
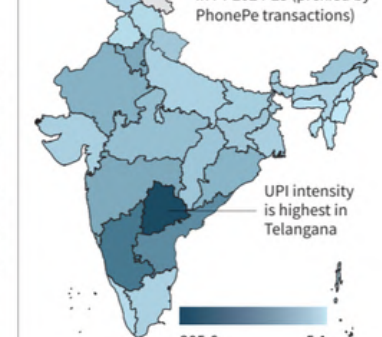


Chart 5: The chart shows the ticket-wise UPI value bands. Inner and outer circles pertain to P2M and P2P transactions, respectively



Map 6: State-wise UPI volume intensity per capita in FY 2024-25 (proxied by PhonePe transactions)



Telangana tops States in UPI transaction intensity: RBI paper

Source: The Hindu | Page: 7

Section: Data Point / UPI data analysis

Context

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Bulletin – September 2025 published a study titled "Impact of UPI on Cash Demand".
- It analysed UPI (Unified Payments Interface) data using PhonePe transactions as a proxy.
- Telangana recorded the highest UPI intensity (per capita volume), followed by Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, and Maharashtra.
- The study shows how digital payments are replacing cash usage in daily transactions.

Chart 1 – Cash Withdrawals (% of GDP):

- Shows a steady decline in cash withdrawals as a share of GDP.
- Indicates a shift from cash to digital payments, driven by rising UPI usage for daily low-value transactions.

Chart 2 – UPI Transactions & Ticket Size:

- P2P and P2M transactions have increased sharply year after year.
- The average ticket size (value per transaction) has fallen, showing UPI's growing role in small, everyday payments.

Why is ADR crucial for India's courts?

What is Alternative Dispute Resolution and how does it work in India? How long does it take to resolve disputes? What legal provisions support ADR and its processes? How can they reduce delays and court pendency effectively? Which States have the highest backlog of cases?

LETTER&SPIRIT

C.B.P. Srivastava

The story so far:

The Minister of Law and Justice recently reaffirmed the government's commitment to legal reforms rooted in India's civilisational ethos. Citing the doctrine of Panch Parmeshwar, which embodies the principle of collective consensus in dispute resolution, Arjun Ram Meghwal emphasised the need for global cooperation to strengthen Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms. The India Justice Report 2025 highlights significant challenges in India's justice system, particularly including access, delays, and accountability. According to the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), the total number of pending cases in India is 4,57,96,239. In the Supreme Court, the number of pending cases is 81,768, and in the High Courts, it is approximately 62.9 lakh. These delays often result in injustice, increasing the focus on ADR as a faster, cost-effective, and socially inclusive way to deliver justice.

What is the constitutional basis of ADR?

The constitutional basis of ADR in India is enshrined in Article 39A, which mandates the state to provide equal justice and free legal aid. Various ADR processes, such as arbitration, conciliation, mediation, and judicial settlement (Lok Adalat), are recognised under Section 89 of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.

To regulate processes, these have been incorporated into law. For example, under the Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996 (amended in 2021), civil and



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compoundable offences like theft, criminal trespass, and adultery are resolved through a binding award or resolution, respectively. The Arbitration Act, 2021, also mentions the establishment of an Indian Arbitration Council, giving legal backing to arbitration agreements.

The law fixes a maximum period of 180 days for dispute resolution, ensuring faster justice.

On many occasions, even after such a solution, if a party is dissatisfied, they can exit the process after two sessions of mediation. Pre-litigation mediation for resolving civil and commercial disputes will not increase the number of pending cases; it will also strengthen interpersonal relationships by increasing interaction at the social level.

How do Lok Adalats function?

Lok Adalats are governed by the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, inspired by Article 39A. Apart from Permanent Lok Adalat (Section 22-B of the Act), provisions of the National Lok Adalat and e-Lok Adalat are directly helpful in strengthening the justice system, provided awareness about such a system is made effective and widespread.

The first Lok Adalat in India was organised in Gujarat in 1999. The biggest feature of Lok Adalats is that their decisions shall be final and there is no possibility of appeal. This does not mean that the powers of these courts are absolute.

The reason for no appeal is that these courts resolve disputes before litigation. In order to prevent any possible

absoluteness, it is provided that the dissatisfied party can file a suit in a court.

Why is strengthening ADR crucial?

According to former Chief Justice of India Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, mediation is a tool for social change, where social norms are brought in line with constitutional values through the exchange of views and flow of information. Solutions arrived at through invaluable discussions during mediation ensure true justice for individuals and groups on their terms, in a language they understand, and provide a platform that protects their sentiments.

The India Justice Report also highlights inter-State disparities in terms of the backlog of cases. The report says that pending cases have exceeded five crore, and High Courts and district courts are facing vacancy rates of 33% and 21% respectively. Judges in Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala have workloads exceeding 4,000 cases.

A substantial number of cases in High Courts and subordinate courts have been pending for over 10 years. The NJDG provides real-time data on case pendency and disposal, offering a comprehensive view of the judicial system's performance across States and courts.

The India Justice Report ranks States based on their performance on various aspects of the justice system, including case pendency, with other factors like court infrastructure and judge availability.

States like Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar have a considerable number of pending cases. This urgently demands rapid disposal and necessitates the strengthening of the ADR for effective per capita justice delivery.

C.B.P. Srivastava is President, Centre for Applied Research in Governance, Delhi

THE GIST

India's justice system faces significant challenges, including access, delays, and accountability, with over 4.57 crore pending cases, and High Courts and district courts experiencing heavy vacancy rates and workloads.

Strengthening Alternative Dispute Resolution is crucial to address inter-State disparities, reduce court pendency, and ensure true justice through pre-litigation resolution, mediation, and finality of Lok Adalat decisions.

Why is ADR crucial for India's courts?

Source: The Hindu | Page: 8

GS Paper: 2 – Polity & Governance (Judicial Reforms, ADR)

Context:

India faces a massive judicial backlog – over 4.57 crore pending cases. To ensure speedy, accessible, and affordable justice, the government is focusing on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) – arbitration, mediation, conciliation, and Lok Adalats.

Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanism for settling disputes outside traditional courts, through mutual consent, negotiation, and mediation.

Forms:

1. Arbitration – neutral third-party decision binding on both sides.
2. Mediation – facilitated negotiation to reach mutual settlement.
3. Conciliation – informal process to bridge communication.
4. Lok Adalats – community-based justice system with binding awards.

Legal Framework:

- **Section 89, CPC 1908 – legalises ADR.**
- **Arbitration & Conciliation Act 1996 (Amended 2021) – max 180 days for resolution.**
- **Legal Services Authorities Act 1987 – governs Lok Adalats (decisions final, no appeal).**

Why ADR Matters:

- **Cuts pendency and court burden.**
- **Ensures quick, low-cost justice.**
- **Promotes social harmony – aligns with Panch Parmeshwar ethos.**
- **Former CJI Chandrachud: Mediation is a tool for social change.**
- **Essential amid vacancies and uneven state performance.**

Drug makers must comply with revised norms: govt.

Schedule M mandates enhanced quality systems; Centre warns licences of non-compliant units will be cancelled; move follows deaths of children in M.P., Rajasthan due to a 'toxic' cough syrup

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry has sought strict compliance by drug manufacturers with the revised Schedule M norms for pharmaceutical products in India.

Licences of non-compliant units would be cancelled, it has warned.

The direction comes after an emergency meeting with officials of the States and Union Territories on Sunday evening, following a report by the Tamil Nadu Drugs Control Department, which found above permissible levels of diethylene glycol (DEG) in samples of Coldrif, a cough syrup brand.

The revised Schedule M is an updated set of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and regulations for pharmaceutical products in India, a part of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.

It mandates enhanced quality systems, including the Pharmaceutical Quality System and Quality Risk Management, with a compliance deadline of December 31, 2025. The revisions



An elderly woman holds a bottle of the now-banned Coldrif cough syrup in Betul in Madhya Pradesh on Sunday. PTI

align Indian standards with international GMP guidelines, emphasising product quality and safety, and require new infrastructure, including computerised storage systems and equipment validation.

Children's death

Testing of cough syrup brands was initiated following the death of more than 10 children in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

Preliminary findings in the past week have ruled out common infectious dis-

eases, except for one positive case of leptospirosis. Nineteen medicine samples consumed by the children were collected from private medical practitioners and nearby retail stores. The chemical analysis so far indicates that out of the 10 samples analysed till date, nine met quality standards.

However, one of them, namely, the cough syrup Coldrif, contained DEG beyond the permissible limit.

Subsequently, regulato-

ry action has been taken by the Tamil Nadu Food and Drugs Administration against the unit, which is located in Kancheepuram. Cancellation of the manufacturing licence has been recommended by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation based on findings upon inspection. Criminal proceedings have also been initiated, the Ministry said on Sunday.

Tamil Nadu's Drugs Control Department issued an immediate stop production order to the manufacturer of the Coldrif cough syrup following an analysis by a government drug testing laboratory, which found a batch to be "not of standard quality" and "adulterated with diethylene glycol".

"The report from the Madhya Pradesh drug regulatory authority is still awaited," a senior Health Ministry official said.

Speaking on the outcomes of Sunday's emergency meeting called by the Union Health Ministry, sources in the Ministry said that maintaining quality and rational use of cough syrup had been reiterated.

Drug makers must comply with revised norms: govt.

Source: The Hindu | Page: 12

Category: Chemicals in News / Health Regulation

Context

- The Union Health Ministry has ordered strict compliance with revised Schedule M norms for drug manufacturing.
- Non-compliant pharmaceutical units will have their licenses cancelled.
- The move follows deaths of children in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh linked to a toxic cough syrup (Coldrif) contaminated with Diethylene Glycol (DEG).

Diethylene Glycol (DEG):

- A toxic industrial solvent sometimes mistakenly or illegally used in place of glycerin or propylene glycol in syrups.
- Highly poisonous, especially to children.

Toxic effects:

- Kidney failure, liver damage, neurological symptoms, and metabolic acidosis.



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Russian drones, missiles and guided bombs strike Ukraine, killing five

Moscow fires 53 ballistic and cruise missiles and 496 drones, targeting nine regions across the country; Lviv, which was largely spared from the war so far, faces maximum wrath; NATO member Poland scrambles aircraft to ensure its air safety

Associated Press

Reuters

LVIV

Russia launched drones, missiles and guided aerial bombs across Ukraine early Sunday, killing five persons in a major nighttime attack that Ukrainian officials said targeted civilian infrastructure.

Moscow fired 53 ballistic and cruise missiles and 496 drones, Ukraine's air force said. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy reported that nine regions were targeted.

Four persons, including a 15-year-old, died in a



Dystopian land: People check the remains of a house following a Russian rocket strike on the outskirts of Lviv on Sunday. AP

combined drone and missile strike on **Lviv**.

It was the largest aerial assault on the **historic western city and surround-**

ing region since Russia's full-scale invasion on **February 24, 2022**, according to Maksym Kozytskyi, head of the local military admin-

istration. Earlier in the war, Lviv was seen as a haven from the fighting and destruction farther east.

In a Telegram post, Mr. Kozytskyi said Russia launched about 140 Shahed drones and 23 ballistic missiles across the region. At least six more persons were injured, according to a statement by Ukraine's police force.

The strike left two districts of Lviv without power and disrupted public transportation for a few hours early on Sunday.

In the southern city of **Zaporizhzhia**, an aerial assault killed a woman and wounded nine others, re-

gional head Ivan Fedorov reported. He said the strike destroyed residential buildings and left about 73,000 households in Zaporizhzhia and surrounding areas without power.

NATO member Poland said it scrambled aircraft early on Sunday to ensure its air safety after Russia launched airstrikes on Ukraine. Eastern-flank NATO members are on high alert after Poland shot down suspected Russian drones in its airspace in September and drone sightings and air incursions, including in Copenhagen and Munich, have led to chaos in European aviation.

Russian drones, missiles and guided bombs strike Ukraine, killing five

Source: The Hindu | Page: 14

Context

Russia launched a large-scale nighttime assault using drones, missiles, and guided bombs on nine regions of Ukraine, killing five civilians and severely damaging infrastructure in Lviv and Zaporizhzhia.

Important Locations:

1. Lviv:

- 1. A historic western Ukrainian city, near the Polish border.**
- 2. Known for its cultural heritage and had been relatively safe earlier in the war.**
- 3. Acts as a logistics and humanitarian hub for Western aid entering Ukraine.**





2. Zaporizhzhia:

1. Located in southern Ukraine, on the Dnieper River.
2. Site of Europe's largest nuclear power plant (Zaporizhzhia NPP)- under Russian control.
3. A frequent target due to its strategic industrial and energy signi

Nuclear power plants in Ukraine





Balod is India's first child marriage-free district, claims Chhattisgarh

News Desk

01 October 2025, 04:37 PM IST



The state government's release stated that all 436 gram panchayats and nine urban bodies within Balod district have been awarded formal certificates of child marriage-free status.



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Crucially, the district had reported zero cases of child marriage over the past two years, fulfilling the legal and administrative criteria for the declaration.



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Balod Collector Divya Umesh Mishra credited the achievement to a collective effort, emphasizing the participation of the district administration, public representatives, anganwadi workers, and the wider community.

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai affirmed the state's prioritization of this social issue, stating that the government's goal is to declare the entire state child marriage-free by 2028-29.

"This is not merely a government campaign, but a commitment to social transformation," the Chief Minister said, adding that the certification process for more panchayats and urban bodies across Chhattisgarh is being expedited.

Replication and Acknowledgment

The success appears to be spreading, as the release also noted that 75 gram panchayats in the neighboring Surajpur district have been similarly declared child marriage-free after maintaining a two-year record of no such incidents.

Women and Child Development Minister Laxmi Rajwade highlighted the collaborative nature of the success. She stated that Balod's achievement proves that social evils like child marriage can be eradicated "when society and government work together." The Minister also acknowledged the crucial contribution of the UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) through technical support, awareness programs, and monitoring mechanisms.

