



Sanskriti IAS



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SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT EDITORIALS

11th Mar 2026

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- 1. Inside China, authority, conflict and strategic challenges**
(GS Paper II - International Relations)
- 2. Reevaluating the office of the Speaker**
(GS Paper II - Polity)
- 3. Facing down the spectre of energy crisis**
(GS Paper III - Economy)

DELHI CENTRE:
636, Mukherjee Nagar
New Delhi-110009

PRAYAGRAJ CENTRE:
1/1/8A, Stanley Rd,
Maharana Pratap Chauraha,
Civil Lines, Prayagraj, UP - 211002

 **9555-124-124**

 **sanskritiias.com**

1. INSIDE CHINA, AUTHORITY, CONFLICT AND STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

(GS Paper II - International Relations)

This editorial 'Inside China, authority, conflict and strategic challenges' was published in **The Hindu** on 11th Mar 2026, highlights how **apparent strength in Xi Jinping's China** may conceal internal conflict, weakening credibility and strategic uncertainty.

Power in Communist China and the Xi moment

- The editorial reads the progression from **Mao Zedong** to **Deng Xiaoping** to **Xi Jinping** as a story of how power is acquired, retained and exercised in Communist China.
- Between **1949** and **2026**, many leaders shaped China, but Mao, Deng and Xi are presented as the figures who left the deepest mark on its direction.
- Xi still appears outwardly powerful, yet the piece argues that judging China only by surface authority misses the deeper tensions beneath the **CPC** system.

The 'inner devils' and signs of elite conflict

- China's outward image as a monolith is contrasted with repeated **purges**, which the editorial reads as signs of internal contestation rather than seamless control.
- In the latest purge, senior figures such as **Gen. Zhang Youxia** and **Gen. Liu Zhenli**, along with several military lawmakers, are cited as casualties of this internal churn.
- The description of Zhang as a "**toxin**" in the People's Liberation Army Daily is treated as suggestive of inner-party struggle at the top.
- The piece draws a parallel with the **Liu Shaoqi** episode under Mao, implying that apparent ideological campaigns can also mask deeper power conflict.
- It argues that Xi's anti-corruption drive may no longer be read simply as consolidation, but as a possible response to weakening control and rising **trust deficit**.

From domestic strain to global dents

- The editorial links China's internal tensions with a less optimistic reading of the **Chinese economy** and growing problems in state institutions.
- It argues that China's apparent ineffectiveness in handling challenges beyond its near abroad has damaged its **global image**.
- **Venezuela** is presented as a test case where China could not counter U.S. influence despite major stakes there.
- In **West Asia**, China again failed to checkmate the U.S. or prevent an attack on Iran leading to the death of **Ayatollah Khamenei**.

- Such episodes, along with unfavourable comparisons between Chinese and Western weaponry, are said to have harmed China's credibility and perhaps intensified tensions within the ruling establishment.

A striking strategic reticence

- The editorial finds it notable that, except on **Taiwan**, China has lately avoided overt confrontation with the **U.S.**, and at times even deferred to it.
- It cites China's cargo passage through the **Arctic Ocean** in 2025 as an example of understated behaviour, with Beijing framing it merely as contributing to **supply chain stability**.
- This restraint appears surprising because China is simultaneously described as riding a wave of innovation in **electric vehicles**, pharmaceuticals, logistics and **Artificial Intelligence**.
- The piece suggests that such caution may reflect not confidence, but problems at the highest levels of the **CPC**, with internal instability offering the most plausible explanation.

Why China needs closer scrutiny

- The editorial notes a broad mood of **pessimism** sweeping China, for which no fully convincing explanation has yet emerged.
- Cracks in the party monolith and a possible atmosphere of fear are treated as signs that a deeper storm may be building.
- Given China's global position, the author argues that developments there require much better and more detailed **understanding**.
- The concluding concern is that events in China cast a shadow not only over **Asia** but much of the wider world.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

Implications for India and the global order

- **Heightened strategic uncertainty:** Internal strains in **China** can sharpen unpredictability, as even post-**Depsang-Demchok** disengagement India still faces a cautious security environment.
- **Mixed signals for border stability:** Elite conflict may not soften **India-China ties**, since the October 2024 border understanding restored patrolling but did not erase wider mistrust.

- **Limits to China's global leadership:** If internal distrust deepens, Beijing's **great-power** claim weakens, as the EU's 2025 line still stresses China-related de-risking and systemic distortions.
- **Openings for India's diplomacy:** China's strategic caution can create space for **India**, as New Delhi has expanded Global South outreach through India Stack partnerships and new funding support.
- **Regional balance may shift:** Unease within the **CPC** could affect China's influence, while India is simultaneously strengthening its Indian Ocean and neighbourhood partnerships.
- **Need for sharper China analysis:** India must invest in better **China-watching**, since surface calm can coexist with unresolved border, military and geopolitical complexities.
- **Global spillovers remain significant:** Any instability in **China** can hit trade, chips and supply chains, as both the U.S. and EU now treat China-linked dependencies as strategic risks.

2. REEVALUATING THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

(GS Paper II - Polity)

This editorial 'Reevaluating the office of the Speaker' was published in **The Hindu** on 11th Mar 2026, highlights how the recent **no-confidence motion** has revived concerns about the Speaker's **impartiality, accountability** and institutional **credibility** in Parliament.

Why the office matters

- The motion against **Om Birla** has reopened debate not merely on removal, but on the constitutional position and accountability of the **Speaker of the Lok Sabha**.
- The Speaker is presented as a central pillar of India's **parliamentary democracy**, expected to ensure orderly debate, enforce procedure and balance government authority with Opposition rights.
- The Constitution envisages the office as an **impartial arbiter** who rises above party politics after election.
- Because the Speaker also decides on recognition of members, procedural interpretation, disciplinary action and **Money Bill** certification, the office strongly shapes legislative outcomes.

Why removal is difficult

- The editorial notes that the removal process is deliberately stringent under **Article 94(c)**, requiring a resolution passed by a majority of all Lok Sabha members, not merely those present and voting.
- The process begins with written notice to the **Secretary-General**, followed by at least **14 days' notice** before the motion can be taken up.
- Once admitted, the motion needs support of at least **50 members** to proceed in the House.
- During such debate, the Speaker may participate as a member and vote in the first instance, but cannot exercise a casting vote in case of a tie.
- This high threshold is framed as a safeguard for the stability and dignity of the office, protecting it from routine political pressure.

Rarity does not reduce significance

- No-confidence motions against the Speaker have been extremely rare in India's **parliamentary history**.
- The editorial cites only three such earlier attempts, against **G.V. Mavalankar** in 1954, **Hukam Singh** in 1966 and **Balram Jakhar** in 1987.
- All three failed, showing both the procedural and political difficulty of removing a Speaker.
- Yet the present motion still carries institutional significance because it tests how far the office continues to command the legislature's **collective confidence**.

The larger institutional concern

- The piece argues that even if the current motion does not succeed, it raises broader questions about the Speaker's **credibility** and public trust in parliamentary functioning.
- The authority of the office depends heavily on the perception of **impartiality**, and allegations of partisan conduct can weaken faith in Parliament itself.
- Recent decisions under the **anti-defection law** and over **Money Bills** have often been viewed through a partisan lens, deepening the perception of politicisation.
- Frequent confrontations between ruling party and Opposition have also produced procedural deadlock, making consensus-building harder when the neutrality of the presiding officer is under doubt.
- The editorial further suggests that **parliamentary conventions**, once guiding impartial conduct, have weakened under sharper political competition.

What institutional repair requires

- The first need is to reinforce **institutional conventions**, with political parties collectively reaffirming that the Speaker must act above party lines once elected.
- Greater **transparency** in procedural rulings, especially on major decisions such as rejecting discussions or certifying Bills, could reduce allegations of bias.
- The editorial also stresses dialogue between government and Opposition, including structured consultations on parliamentary procedures and reforms.
- Finally, codifying best practices around the Speaker's **discretionary powers** may help clarify ambiguities and reduce disputes over interpretation.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

Need for institutional safeguards to ensure neutrality

- **Reinforce post-election impartiality:** Once elected, the **Speaker** must rise above party lines, as **Articles 93-94** create a constitutional office, not a party post.
- **Increase transparency in rulings:** Major **procedural decisions** should record reasons, as **Money Bill** certification can affect the Rajya Sabha's constitutional role.
- **Set timelines for key decisions:** Matters like **disqualification** need prompt disposal, as **Keisham Meghachandra** pushed for decisions within a reasonable period.
- **Clarify discretionary powers:** Ambiguities in the Speaker's **discretion** should be narrowed, as **Nabam Rebia** rejected any "super-constitutional" position for presiding authorities.
- **Strengthen all-party consultation:** Greater **government-Opposition dialogue** can reduce confrontation, as parliamentary democracy rests on debate, persuasion and accommodation.
- **Codify best parliamentary practices:** Stronger **conventions** are needed, as repeated disputes over certification and defection rulings show reliance on convention alone is weakening.
- **Protect Parliament's credibility:** Safeguarding the Speaker's **neutrality** is essential, as partisan rulings can weaken public faith in Parliament and the federal balance.

3. FACING DOWN THE SPECTRE OF ENERGY CRISIS

(GS Paper III - Economy)

This editorial ‘Facing down the spectre of energy crisis’ was published in **The Indian Express** on 11th Mar 2026, highlights how the **Middle East conflict** is disrupting **oil and gas markets**, exposing India’s energy vulnerability and demanding careful economic management.

Market disruption and India’s exposure

- The **Middle East conflict** has triggered major dislocation in energy markets and sharp price gyrations.
- **Brent crude** reportedly surged close to **\$120 per barrel** before easing, and is now hovering around **\$87 per barrel**.
- Gas markets are also under strain, as roughly **one-fifth of global LNG flows** pass through the **Strait of Hormuz**.
- India’s vulnerability is high because around **50%** of its natural gas requirement and over **60%** of its **LPG** demand are imported, much of it from this region.

Supply stress within the domestic economy

- The demand-supply mismatch is already affecting industrial users of **LNG** and **LPG**, including tile and ceramic makers in **Gujarat**.
- Commercial users such as restaurants in cities like **Bengaluru** and **Mumbai** are also facing shortages.
- The ripple effects of the conflict are thus no longer external alone, but are being felt across multiple domestic sectors.

Government’s immediate response

- The government has invoked the **Essential Commodities Act** to secure natural gas supply for priority sectors.
- Highest priority has been given to **piped natural gas** for households, **compressed natural gas** for transport and **LPG production**.
- **Fertiliser units** form the second category and will receive **70%** of their average consumption of the last six months.
- Tea industries, manufacturing and other industrial and commercial consumers of gas distribution companies fall lower in the priority chain.

Wider macroeconomic risks

- The editorial warns that there is little clarity on how soon the conflict will end.
- India's dependence on the **Gulf region** heightens its vulnerability to a prolonged disruption.
- Higher energy prices will impose broader costs, while any extended conflict or closure of the **Strait of Hormuz** could worsen **inflation**, growth and **twin deficits**.
- The concluding stress is that this phase will require deft **economic management** to balance multiple pressures.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

Need for long-term energy resilience

- **Diversify import sources:** India must widen **energy sourcing**, as Gulf dependence remains high and West Asia shocks repeatedly expose supply risks.
- **Strengthen strategic reserves:** Larger **petroleum reserves** can cushion shocks, as **ISPRL** already maintains 5.33 MMT capacity at Visakhapatnam, Mangaluru and Padur.
- **Deepen gas infrastructure:** India needs stronger **LNG and pipeline** systems, as operational gas pipelines crossed 25,400 km by mid-2025.
- **Accelerate renewable transition:** Expanding **solar, wind and storage** can cut import vulnerability, as India is targeting 500 GW **non-fossil** capacity by 2030.
- **Improve energy efficiency:** Lowering **energy intensity** can reduce external exposure, as India's broader transition strategy links efficiency with energy security and net-zero goals.
- **Support domestic alternatives:** India should expand **biofuels** and domestic gas, as ethanol blending reached about 19% in 2025 and E20 has been achieved in the current supply year.
- **Align energy policy with macro stability:** Energy security must be treated as a **strategic-economic priority**, as oil and gas shocks affect inflation, growth and the current account together.