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SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT EDITORIALS

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TOPICS:-

1. The key to India's multi-domain deterrence capabilities

(GS Paper III - Security)

2. Faiths and fences

(GS Paper II - Governance, GS Paper I - Society)

3. Tepid promises

(GS Paper III - Energy, Environment)

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1. THE KEY TO INDIA'S MULTI-DOMAIN DETERRENCE CAPABILITIES

(GS Paper III - Security)

This editorial 'The key to India's multi-domain deterrence capabilities' was published in **The Hindu** on 27th Mar 2026, highlights that India must **build enabling layers** and a stronger **defence-industrial base** to create credible deterrence against China.

China challenge and strategic choices

- China's military edge is widening, and India needs a robust **industrial strategy** to offset the **PLA** advantage.
- Rapid technological change makes choices on procurement, doctrine and force design harder and more consequential.
- A bold strategy would back new war-fighting technologies, but implementation failure could deepen India's **capability gap**.
- A conservative strategy would improve existing forces through **cyber, space** and electronic warfare, but may suit only short wars.
- The editorial favours a middle path that retains legacy platforms while building critical **enabling layers** for deterrence.

Industrial and procurement weaknesses

- India's core problem is not technological competence alone, but a weak **defence-industrial base** unable to deliver at speed and scale.
- **Missiles**, munitions, drones, ISR and C2 networks need urgent industrial expansion to meet evolving military requirements.
- Defence production must expand with **private industry**; otherwise constraints in scale, speed and continuity will persist.
- Incremental reform can still help through reduced red tape, **budgetary stability** and long-term contracts for specialised platforms.
- The procurement system must evolve the fighting force, not constrain it through slow adaptation and misaligned priorities.
- India must spend more, but also spend smarter by prioritising key **deterrent capabilities** over dispersed acquisitions.
- Military leadership must explain operational roles, trade-offs and costs of inaction to the political leadership.

Fixing the enabling layers

- India lacks a single decisive capability, so deterrence depends on operationalising layered **C2, ISR** and strike systems.
- Its fledgling **C4ISR** remains a concern because seeing the battlefield continuously is central to sustained combat.
- India needs cheap, numerous **ISR platforms** and superior **cyber**, space and electronic warfare to degrade adversary ISR.
- A layered C4ISR architecture should enhance India's surveillance capacity while limiting the enemy's ability to fight effectively.
- Missiles, aircraft and drones must be integrated as a strike layer to dislocate the enemy in depth.
- Tanks, guns and infantry vehicles remain necessary as a close-battle layer for front-line combat.
- A robust **logistics** layer integrating supply chains, infrastructure and installations is essential for any protracted war.
- India's **nuclear deterrent** also matters because it must offset deficits in conventional deterrence against a nuclear adversary like China.

Immediate priorities for India

- India must identify Chinese military vulnerabilities where it holds a relative **advantage** and build around them.
- It must incentivise selected parts of the **defence industrial base** through one-off budgetary allocations in key capabilities.
- China already has a large **missile inventory** and industrial depth to replenish losses rapidly during conflict.
- Even if India endures initial **PLA** strikes, a prolonged conflict would expose severe pressure on its surge capacity.
- This inventory gap creates a dangerous deterrence risk and may tempt China to prolong conflict.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

Building a whole-of-nation deterrence ecosystem

- **National security must extend beyond platforms:** Deterrence now depends on linking military power with industrial, technological and institutional depth, as seen in the **UP** and **Tamil Nadu Defence Corridors**.

- **Civil-military fusion is essential:** India needs tighter coordination among the armed forces, private firms, start-ups, academia and research labs, as shown by **iDEX** and **ADITI**.
- **Dual-use technology must be prioritised:** **Artificial Intelligence**, cyber tools, robotics and space systems will shape future military advantage, reflected in **Akashteer** and the Army's **AI Incubation Centre** with BEL.
- **Supply-chain resilience is critical:** Dependence on imported electronics, propulsion systems and precision components can weaken wartime readiness, which is why India is expanding domestic **defence manufacturing** corridors.
- **Innovation pipelines need acceleration:** Faster testing, prototyping and user feedback are necessary to shorten defence development cycles, with support from **DTIS** and the new Tamil Nadu **testing facility**.
- **Human capital must be strengthened:** Skilled engineers, technicians and strategic researchers are as vital as missiles, drones and ISR assets, which is why **iDEX** engages start-ups, MSMEs and technologists at scale.
- **Institutional continuity should support deterrence:** Stable funding, policy clarity and long-term R&D commitments are necessary for sustained capability building, visible in the 2025-26 **iDEX allocation** and ongoing **DAC** approvals.

2. FAITHS AND FENCES

(GS Paper II - Governance, GS Paper I - Society)

This editorial 'Faiths and fences' was published in **The Hindu** on 27th Mar 2026, highlights that **limiting Scheduled Caste reservation benefits** to Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist communities remains legally valid under the current constitutional scheme.

Court ruling and legal basis

- The **Supreme Court** reaffirmed that **SC** protections apply only to those practising Hinduism, Sikhism or Buddhism.
- The ruling arose from a Christian pastor seeking protection under the **SC/ST Act** in Andhra Pradesh.
- The Court upheld an **Andhra Pradesh High Court** view that conversion out of the three specified religions ends SC status.
- The legal basis lies in the **Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950**, issued under **Article 341**.

- Any change in this position must come through the **legislative route**, not judicial reinterpretation.

Historical evolution of SC status

- The original SC definition covered only **Hindus**, reflecting the view that untouchability was specific to Hindu society.
- Political and social change later extended SC status to **Sikhs** in 1956 and **Buddhists** in 1990.
- India's founding leadership, including **Jawaharlal Nehru**, treated untouchability as a distinct social form within Hindu society.
- Yet social realities complicated this view as many SC communities used **religious conversion** as assertion and autonomy.
- **B.R. Ambedkar's** conversion to Buddhism symbolised this politics of dignity; he converted in 1956.
- The same year, SC communities practising **Sikhism** were brought under special provisions, including reservation.

Constitutional and theological arguments

- One justification is that **Christianity** and **Islam** lack theological sanction for caste-based discrimination.
- Another argument treats **Sikhism** and **Buddhism** as part of the broader civilisational universe of Hinduism.
- This claim gained support through **Explanation II to Article 25(2)**, which includes Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains within Hindu definition for that purpose.
- Yet neither the theological nor the constitutional exclusion of Christian and Muslim converts is fully watertight.
- The editorial notes that the issue persists because legal logic and social experience do not fully align.

Unresolved social and political contestation

- Christian and Muslim converts may still face **discrimination**, including untouchability, within new religious settings.
- After conversion, such discrimination lacks formal **theological sanction**, but social exclusion may continue empirically.
- Inclusion of such converts within the reservation framework remains a politically charged issue.
- A commission headed by former Chief Justice **K.G. Balakrishnan** is examining the matter.

- Many **Dalit activists** oppose including converts within the existing reservation quantum.
- Many SC converts already receive benefits meant for **Socially and Educationally Backward Classes** under **Article 15(4)**.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

Reconciling formal law with lived caste realities

- **Legal categories remain limited:** The **1950 Order** links SC status to specified religions, but formal legal classification may still fail to capture continuing caste-based discrimination fully.
- **Exclusion may survive conversion:** The **Soosai** case itself reflected the argument that caste stigma can continue after conversion, even where the new religion rejects such hierarchy doctrinally.
- **Evidence must guide reform:** The **K.G. Balakrishnan Commission** underlines that any future policy change must rest on credible social evidence, not on sentiment alone.
- **History resists neat boxes:** Groups such as Punjab's **Ad Dharmis** show that caste identity and religious self-assertion have often overlapped in complex ways.
- **Judicial limits are clear:** Under **Article 341**, courts may interpret the constitutional position, but any expansion of the SC list requires legislative action.
- **Quota equity needs attention:** Any inclusion debate must also address fears that existing **Scheduled Caste** beneficiaries may face dilution within the current reservation framework.
- **Justice remains the core test:** The larger constitutional question is whether **formal status** and substantive social equality continue to diverge in actual lived experience.

3. TEPID PROMISES

(GS Paper III - Energy, Environment)

This editorial '**Tepid promises**' was published in **The Hindu** on 27th Mar 2026, highlights that India's updated climate targets are achievable but insufficient without stronger battery storage and grid capacity.

India's updated NDCs and targets

- India updated its **Nationally Determined Contributions** for **2035** after being among the last **G-20** countries to do so.
- The update followed India's **COP30** commitment to revise targets by the end of 2025.
- India now commits to **60% installed electric capacity** from non-fossil sources by 2035.
- It also promises a **47% reduction** in emissions intensity of GDP by 2035.
- The revised target raises the **carbon sink** goal to 3.5 billion-4 billion tonnes of CO₂.
- These improve upon the **2020 NDCs**, which targeted 50% non-fossil capacity and 45% emissions-intensity reduction.

Comparative context and mitigation pathway

- Unlike the **EU**, India does not promise absolute emissions cuts, but lower emissions per unit of output.
- As a developing country, India is presented as a major net emitter but still below the global average in **per capita emissions**.
- India has also committed to **net zero by 2070** through forest cover expansion and technology pathways.
- The editorial notes recent emphasis on **carbon capture, utilisation, and storage** as part of that pathway.
- The government itself indicates that India's **2035 goals** are relatively easy to achieve.

Why the targets look modest

- India had already met its **2030 non-fossil target** last year, with 52% capacity installed.
- Yet only about **25% of power generated** is non-fossil because available renewable capacity is not fully utilised.
- The key constraint is inadequate **battery storage**, which limits the use of solar and wind power.
- Weak **grid capacity** further reduces the system's ability to absorb existing non-fossil generation.
- Thus, headline capacity targets overstate actual progress in clean power generation.

Energy security and implementation gap

- The **National Generation Adequacy Plan** expects 70% of projected 1,121 GW installed capacity by 2035-36 to be non-fossil.

- The editorial cautions against praising green commitments without improvements in actual generated supply.
- The war in West Asia has exposed the vulnerability created by dependence on fossil-fuel supply chains.
- That disruption underlines the urgency of reducing the chokehold of a vital fossil fuel source.
- Without better storage and transmission, numerical commitments will have limited practical value.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

Towards a secure, inclusive and implementation-ready energy transition

- **Generation alone is not enough:** India's transition needs delivery systems too, as the **Green Energy Corridor Phase II** spans seven States.
- **Battery storage must scale rapidly:** India has backed **BESS** through two VGF schemes covering about 43.8 GWh.
- **Grid expansion remains indispensable:** The **Green Energy Corridor** was built because renewable growth without evacuation leaves clean capacity underused.
- **Distributed solar can strengthen resilience:** **PM Surya Ghar** has crossed 26 lakh rooftop installations, easing pressure on central grids.
- **Domestic manufacturing needs support:** The **PLI** scheme for high-efficiency solar modules aims to reduce import dependence in clean-energy deployment.
- **Policy stability should guide implementation:** Stable support matters, as shown by continued backing for storage, rooftop solar and transmission networks.
- **Implementation quality will decide outcomes:** The real test is converting headline **installed capacity** into reliable and usable green electricity.