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SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT EDITORIALS

2nd April 2026

TOPICS:-

- 1. How anti-corruption bodies are politicised**
(GS Paper II - Governance)
- 2. Rupee under pressure sharpens RBI challenge**
(GS Paper III - Economy)
- 3. Two verdicts on live-in relationships, one grey area**
(GS Paper I - Society)

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1. HOW ANTI-CORRUPTION BODIES ARE POLITICISED

(GS Paper II - Governance)

This editorial ‘**How anti-corruption bodies are politicised**’ was published in **The Hindu** on 2nd Apr 2026, highlights how **politicised anti-corruption investigations** weaken both legal credibility and democratic trust.

From spectacle to judicial collapse

- The **Delhi excise policy** case began with sweeping conspiracy claims, parallel **CBI** and **ED** action, arrests of political leaders, and prolonged pre-trial custody.
- The trial court later declined even to frame charges, holding the prosecution failed to establish a **prima facie** case of bribery or criminal conspiracy.
- The court also found no clear evidence linking policy decisions to illegal personal gain, collapsing a case that had dominated media and electoral narratives.
- The editorial raises an institutional question whether agencies should launch high-impact prosecutions without a reasonably solid evidentiary foundation.
- In politically sensitive cases, an **FIR** may legally start a process, but arrests, reputational damage, and incarceration before trial create irreversible consequences.
- When such cases fail at the threshold stage, suspicion shifts from corruption inquiry to possible external or political pressure behind the investigation.

Why corruption cases are hard to prove

- Corruption rarely leaves direct visible evidence, unlike violent crime, making proof dependent on indirect and layered evidentiary chains.
- Money often moves through intermediaries, shell companies, consultancy contracts, or political donations, while gains may appear as favourable decisions or contracts.
- Successful prosecution therefore requires **financial trails**, digital records, and corroborated witness testimony rather than suspicion alone.
- If any critical evidentiary link is missing, courts hesitate to infer criminal intent, especially in policy-level decisions.
- The **Supreme Court** has repeatedly held that government policy decisions cannot be criminalised without clear evidence of dishonest intent and personal gain.
- These safeguards protect individuals from politically motivated prosecution, but also make large corruption cases harder to sustain in court.

Institutional weakness and political misuse

- The editorial locates the deeper problem less in judicial standards and more in weak investigative capacity and poor prosecutorial preparation.
- Many Indian corruption cases still rely heavily on witness statements instead of **forensic accounting, data analytics**, tracing beneficial ownership, and cross-border financial reconstruction.
- Agencies in **Singapore** and **Hong Kong** have developed specialised expertise, while India's anti-corruption system remains fragmented across multiple bodies with uneven coordination.
- India has secured convictions in trap cases involving bribe-taking officials, but large policy-level corruption cases rarely end in successful prosecution.
- This creates a political dilemma corruption allegations must be investigated seriously, yet criminal law cannot become an instrument of partisan contest.
- If arrests and prosecutions are perceived as tools of the executive, the legitimacy of anti-corruption institutions suffers lasting damage.
- Repeated high-profile collapse without convictions deepens public cynicism by suggesting both impunity in corruption and misuse of law.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

Consequences for democratic legitimacy and public trust

- **Rule of law erosion:** Politicised investigations weaken faith in the **rule of law**, as seen when the **Delhi excise policy** case collapsed at the charge-framing stage.
- **Credibility loss:** Repeated collapse of high-profile cases, as seen in the **2G spectrum** case, damages the standing of anti-corruption bodies and weakens trust in later probes.
- **Due process strain:** Long pre-trial arrests, media exposure, and reputational harm, as seen in **Manish Sisodia's** prolonged incarceration, can punish individuals before conviction.
- **Partisan perception:** When criminal law appears selectively applied, as alleged in the **Delhi excise** proceedings against major opposition leaders, corruption charges get viewed through political rivalry.
- **Public cynicism:** Sensational prosecutions that dominate headlines but fail in court, as in **2G** and parts of the excise case, deepen distrust in institutions and the justice process.

- **Chilling effect:** Perceived misuse of investigative power during high-stakes political contests can discourage open competition by making state action seem like executive pressure.
- **Democratic cost:** Accountability itself suffers when citizens can no longer distinguish genuine anti-corruption action from politically driven **state coercion**, weakening trust in neutral enforcement.

2. RUPEE UNDER PRESSURE SHARPENS RBI CHALLENGE

(GS Paper III - Economy)

This editorial ‘**Rupee under pressure sharpens RBI challenge**’ was published in **The Indian Express** on 2nd Apr 2026, highlights how **sustained rupee weakness** is widening external vulnerabilities and complicating the Reserve Bank of India’s policy response.

Scale and sources of rupee pressure

- The **rupee** briefly breached **95 per dollar** on Monday and, despite partial recovery, remained around 93.5, showing persistent depreciation pressure.
- Over **2025-26**, the rupee has fallen about **9.6%** against the dollar, marking a sharp weakening in the current financial year.
- Since the Iran war began, the rupee has lost over **4%**, while other Asian currencies such as Thailand and South Korea have also weakened.
- Pressure is arising from both the **current account** and **capital account**, making the exchange-rate challenge broader and harder to manage.

External account risks intensifying

- India’s dependence on **energy imports** raises imported inflation risk, with average crude at **\$113.5 per barrel** in March.
- Experts warn that an external crude-price increase of **\$10** could push up the **current account deficit** by 30-40 basis points.
- Merchandise exports to West Asia may also suffer if conflict persists; in **2024-25**, exports to the **UAE** stood at **\$36.6 billion**.
- On the capital side, foreign portfolio investors have pulled out **\$13.6 billion** net from India so far this year.

- **FDI** inflows have also weakened, with net FDI at **\$1.6 billion** during April-January 2025-26.

RBI's intervention dilemma

- The **RBI** has capped banks' foreign-exchange positions and has also intervened directly in currency markets to limit rupee pressure.
- Its foreign-currency assets fell from **\$737 billion** on February 27 to **\$557 billion** on March 20, indicating sizable intervention.
- The RBI's outstanding net short dollar position has also declined sharply from **\$67 billion** in January, reflecting evolving intervention strategy.
- The Governor's upcoming **monetary policy** statement may indicate the central bank's next steps if rupee weakness continues.

Limits of exchange-rate defence

- Former Deputy Governor **Viral Acharya** has proposed using the US Federal Reserve's **FIMA** repo facility to add a stabilising influence.
- The RBI has previously used **monetary policy** to defend the exchange rate, but the editorial cautions against repeating that approach.
- While intervention is justified to curb excessive volatility, the RBI should avoid defending any fixed level of the rupee.
- The exchange rate should function as a shock absorber, rather than as a target requiring rigid central-bank defence.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

Implications of rupee weakness for inflation, growth and households

- **Import cost surge:** A weaker **rupee** raises the domestic cost of fuel and other imports, much as the **Russia-Ukraine war** pushed oil-linked pressures onto India.
- **Inflation transmission:** Higher import prices feed into **inflation** through transport, cooking fuel, and manufactured goods, as seen during the **2022 global commodity shock**.
- **Industrial stress:** Firms dependent on imported crude, fertilisers, chemicals, or electronics face rising costs, as seen when global energy and input prices surged after the Ukraine war.
- **Policy constraint:** Persistent currency weakness complicates **monetary policy**, because the **RBI** must contain imported inflation without repeating a 2013-style exchange-rate defence.

- **Household burden:** Families feel indirect pressure through costlier petrol, LPG-linked transport, appliances, and edible goods, much like earlier import-inflation episodes after major external shocks.
- **Corporate exposure:** Companies with foreign-currency borrowings may face higher repayment burdens, as seen during the **2013 taper tantrum**, when rupee depreciation worsened balance-sheet risks.
- **Growth moderation:** If external shocks persist, imported inflation and weaker investor sentiment can together moderate **economic growth**, as seen after war-driven oil and capital-flow disruptions.

3. TWO VERDICTS ON LIVE-IN RELATIONSHIPS, ONE GREY AREA

(GS Paper I - Society)

This editorial ‘**Two verdicts on live-in relationships, one grey area**’ was published in **The Indian Express** on 2nd Apr 2026, highlights the **legal ambiguity** around recognising **live-in relationships** involving married persons while balancing women’s protection and marriage-based rights.

Legal basis and original purpose

- Live-in relationships gained legal recognition mainly to extend protection to women facing **domestic violence** in relationships outside marriage.
- In **Indra Sarma v V K V Sarma (2013)**, the concept was recognised primarily to secure remedies for women in non-marital relationships.
- This judicial approach drew strength from India’s obligations under **CEDAW**, while addressing vulnerabilities outside formal marriage.
- Courts have long treated live-in relationships as more fragile than marriage, making women and children vulnerable when partners abandon such unions.

Statutory framework and interpretive tension

- The **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005** includes relationships “in the nature of marriage” within domestic relationship.
- This broad definition enabled courts to extend some marriage-like protections to women in such relationships without treating them as equivalent to marriage.

- Live-in relationships were thus interpreted as a safety net against exploitation, not as a licence to undermine the institution of marriage.
- After **Joseph Shine v Union of India (2018)** decriminalised adultery, live-in relationships were no longer confined to unmarried persons.
- Courts now confront cases involving married heterosexual partners, or both partners married to different persons, making legal classification more complex.

Why the grey area persists

- Not every live-in relationship qualifies as one “in the nature of marriage”, leaving courts to determine legal protection case by case.
- This creates a grey area where courts may adopt a more conservative approach when existing marital rights are directly implicated.
- One Allahabad High Court bench denied legality to a live-in relationship involving a married person and a third party without first seeking divorce.
- Another bench allowed a live-in relationship between a married man and an adult woman, stressing that morality and law are distinct.
- The opposing rulings emerged from different priorities protecting a spouse’s statutory rights versus preserving adult liberty and physical safety.

Marriage protection versus individual liberty

- One line of reasoning holds that a married person’s duty of **cohabitation** under **Section 9** of the **Hindu Marriage Act, 1955** cannot be overridden by another person’s liberty claim.
- On that view, legal protection may arise only after divorce proceedings conclude, since marriage already carries enforceable statutory obligations.
- The contrary reasoning treats live-in protection as a question of safety from family violence, not validation of the relationship’s morality.
- The editorial notes that the issue is not merely moral because honour-based violence can make such couples especially vulnerable.
- It argues that courts should not insist a married person secure divorce before obtaining protection in a live-in relationship.
- Excessive paternalism must be restrained, especially when the law itself has not criminalised such relationships after adultery’s decriminalisation.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

Changing family norms and the law's social adaptation challenge

- **Social transition:** Indian society is witnessing changing forms of **intimate relationships**, as reflected in repeated live-in protection petitions before the **Allahabad High Court** in 2025-26.
- **Liberty question:** The rise of non-marital partnerships is testing how far **personal liberty** can be protected, especially after **Joseph Shine (2018)** decriminalised adultery.
- **Judicial adaptation:** Courts are increasingly responding to lived realities rather than only traditional marriage norms, as seen from **Indra Sarma (2013)** onward.
- **Gender vulnerability:** Women in such relationships often face both stigma and legal uncertainty, which was central to the protective reasoning in **Indra Sarma** and later **DV Act** jurisprudence.
- **Safety concern:** Honour-based threats and family violence show that personal security cannot depend solely on formal **marital status**, as seen in police-protection directions for live-in couples.
- **Doctrinal inconsistency:** Divergent rulings by different benches of the **Allahabad High Court** show that social change is moving faster than settled legal standards.
- **Core challenge:** The larger issue is how law can adapt to evolving relationships without eroding protections attached to **marriage**, which remains unresolved in current jurisprudence.