



Sanskriti IAS



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SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT EDITORIALS

2nd June 2026

TOPICS:-

1. Perfect storm

(GS Paper II Governance)

2. Joy and pain

(GS Paper I Society)

3. India needs more schools, medical colleges, entrepreneurship in education

(GS Paper I Society)

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1. PERFECT STORM

(GS Paper II Governance)

This editorial '**Perfect storm**' was published in **The Hindu** on 2nd June 2026, highlights how weak enforcement, poor regulation and poverty sustain **illicit liquor** as a **public health crisis**.

Recurring Tragedy and Supply Chain Failure

- India has seen repeated **illicit liquor** deaths across Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam and Maharashtra, yet post-tragedy reform promises remain unfulfilled.
- The **Malwani 2015** incident, which killed over 100 people, exposed the same systemic failures now visible in the Pune-Pimpri-Chinchwad tragedy.
- Preliminary findings show **industrial methanol** was sourced from outside Maharashtra, mixed with ethanol, and sold as cheap country liquor.
- High taxes on **licensed alcohol** push low-income consumers towards illicit supply, while methanol-based production offers huge margins at negligible input cost.
- Operations survive through **local tolerance**, weak policing and political complicity, while enforcement usually arrests retail vendors instead of upstream suppliers.

Structural Drivers of Illicit Liquor

- The crisis recurs due to a **perfect storm** of regulatory gaps, poverty, addiction and poor accountability.
- Weak tracking allows **methanol diversion** into illicit liquor networks, making downstream regulation ineffective after the substance enters local markets.
- Victims are mostly **daily-wage** labourers and scholars argue manual hardship, poverty and addiction create demand for cheap relief despite toxic risk.
- Public health experts note higher **legal prices** push poorer consumers into the illicit market, which accounts for an estimated 40% of alcohol consumption in India.
- Total bans, as in **Bihar-Gujarat**, can shift markets to criminal syndicates where quality control is optional and oversight remains poor.

Enforcement, Conviction and Reform Deficit

- Legal reviews find that even when **big fish** are caught, convictions remain rare, weakening deterrence against organised illicit liquor networks.

- Better **methanol accounting**, affordable alternatives and stronger investigations are needed to break the recurring cycle of death and impunity.
- Without these improvements, regulatory loopholes and **weak enforcement** will keep sustaining illicit liquor among vulnerable communities.

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From Excise Policing to Community-Based Harm Reduction

- **Health-first framing:** Illicit liquor deaths need public health response, linking policing with de-addiction care, as **Kerala Vimukthi** combines excise action and rehabilitation.
- **De-addiction outreach:** Low-cost counselling must target informal workers, using **NAPDDR** centres and helplines for addiction, poverty and occupational stress.
- **Community surveillance:** Panchayats, ULBs, ASHA workers and civil society can detect brewing networks, as **NMBA** uses youth, women and community groups.
- **Emergency preparedness:** District hospitals need toxicology protocols, **fomepizole/ethanol** access and referral systems, since delayed methanol treatment raises mortality.
- **Risk communication:** Local campaigns should explain methanol symptoms and emergency care, using **AIIMS-NPIC** poison helplines for timely guidance.
- **Livelihood protection:** Informal workers need social security and health support through **e-Shram**, because alcohol often becomes cheap escape from hardship.
- **Behavioural reform:** Criminalisation alone cannot reduce addiction-driven demand, so **peer intervention** under ODICs and CPLIs must support enforcement.

2. JOY AND PAIN

(GS Paper I Society)

This editorial ‘**Joy and pain**’ was published in **The Hindu** on 2nd Jun 2026, highlights India’s **NFHS-6 health gains** alongside unresolved nutrition and non-communicable disease risks.

Health Gains and Unfinished Nutrition Agenda

- **NFHS-6** data for 2023-24 shows major gains, with stunting down 17%, severe wasting down 32%, and institutional deliveries above **90%**.

- Full immunisation among children aged 12-23 months rose above **87%**, while India's **TFR** stabilised at 2.0, below replacement level.
- These gains show long-term progress in child health and fertility transition, but require sustained **service delivery** and uncompromised **public-sector** quality.
- The survey also reveals a **dual burden**, with obesity rising among men from 22.9% to 27.3% and women from 24% to **30.7%**.
- Malnutrition remains persistent despite gains, while **exclusive breastfeeding** for children under six months declined from 63.7% in NFHS-5 to **55.8%**.

Evidence, Lifestyle Risks and Demographic Transition

- **NFHS** remains a crucial tool for public policy, evidence-based governance and tracking India's development **indicators**.
- Other India-level data, including **SRS** and National Health Accounts Survey, show similar concerns around lifestyle diseases and **metabolic disorders**.
- India's demographic shift towards a **greyer nation** makes unmanaged obesity, poor nutrition and lifestyle disorders a future health burden.
- Transformations are still possible through comprehensive **NCD programmes**, behaviour-change campaigns on diet and exercise, and higher taxes on sugary beverages and packaged foods.
- Health systems must be strengthened at **village**, town and city levels to tackle non-communicable diseases before their burden becomes entrenched.

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Life-Cycle Health Planning for a Transitioning India

- **Early childhood:** Nutrition, immunisation and breastfeeding support must remain central through **POSHAN 2.0**, because early deficits shape long-term learning and immunity.
- **Adolescent health:** School nutrition, menstrual health and fitness under **RKSK** and Fit India can prevent anaemia, obesity and future NCD risks.
- **Working-age care:** Regular screening through **Ayushman Arogya Mandirs** can detect obesity, diabetes and hypertension, reducing productivity loss and health expenditure.
- **Women's health:** Maternal nutrition, breastfeeding counselling and preventive care under **PMMVY** need priority, since women often neglect their own needs.

- **Elderly preparedness:** India's greying population requires geriatric care and chronic-disease support through NPHCE and strengthened primary health systems.
- **Preventive federalism:** States need different strategies, as Kerala faces ageing while Bihar still manages fertility, malnutrition and service gaps.
- **Behavioural transition:** Diet, exercise and packaged-food awareness need campaigns like **Eat Right India**, since treatment alone cannot control lifestyle disorders.

3. INDIA NEEDS MORE SCHOOLS, MEDICAL COLLEGES, ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN EDUCATION

(GS Paper I Society)

This editorial 'India needs more schools, medical colleges, entrepreneurship in education' was published in **The Indian Express** on 2nd June 2026, highlights how outdated regulation, limited supply and weak competition distort India's **education system**.

Regulatory Bottlenecks and Supply Shortages

- India's education response to **NEET-UG** concerns remains reactive, while lasting reform requires empowering education entrepreneurs to create **institutions**.
- India cannot build prosperity through low-productivity **employers** and youth; reforms must shift from employer productivity alone to educational **capacity expansion**.
- The **Radhakrishnan Commission** sought equal and excellent education, but India's population and maturity demand ending policy behaviour shaped by **scarcity-era** regulation.
- The **Medical Council** capped capacity, creating only about 1 lakh MBBS seats, while AICTE-enabled engineering expansion created 16 lakh **engineering seats** annually.
- Engineering's supply expansion reduced **capitation fees**, but medical education remains distorted by shortage, high fees and limited institutional **competition**.

Entrepreneurship, Quality and Learning Outcomes

- The public-private debate is misleading because **bad institutions** exist in both sectors; policy should encourage good schools and colleges while discouraging **poor outcomes**.
- Education entrepreneurship faces adverse selection because success requires lifelong regulatory **management**, favouring those skilled at compliance over learning-centred **institution-building**.

- Poverty reduction needs learning for **earning**, not rote schooling; vocationalisation should build confidence, curiosity, creativity and communication without forcing early **streaming**.
- The most important skills remain **reading-writing**, arithmetic and relationships, yet many government schools fail these basics despite 50% **enrolment** share.
- Education should make the strange familiar through **knowledge** and make the familiar strange through questioning, linking learning with inquiry rather than mechanical **certification**.

Inclusion, Excellence and Deregulation

- Great institutions must reconcile high faculty and infrastructure **costs** with low fees for diversity and **inclusion**, but fee-control debates have failed.
- India's inequality of opportunity creates extremes, from elite **IIT-IIM** entry gates to weak institutions with open entry and weak exit standards.
- Weak competition and narrow entry-exit gates create poor **learning outcomes**, weak signalling and unemployability, making reform a supply-side **necessity**.
- Deregulation should remove government **NOC** requirements for CBSE recognition, since state registration is already mandatory under the **RTE Act**.
- The editorial supports allowing all companies, not only **Section 8** entities, to run schools and colleges with external capital and stronger **competition**.
- Land norms confuse buildings with education; excessive **minimum land** rules raise costs and block entrepreneurs without improving student **learning**.
- Rules rewarding legal manipulation and regulator **management** handicap talent without capital and capital without **educational talent**.

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Outcome-Based Regulation Instead of Licence-Based Control

- **Learning outcomes:** Regulation should track literacy, numeracy and employability through **PARAKH** and **NIRF**, not permissions, buildings and paperwork.
- **Transparent accreditation:** Institutions should disclose faculty, fees and placements through **NAAC** and **NIRF**, helping families make informed choices.
- **Equity safeguards:** Expansion must include scholarships, **PM-USP** support and regional balance, so deregulation does not deepen educational exclusion.
- **Exit regulation:** Poor institutions should face improvement, merger or closure, as **UGC** norms already act against fake universities.

- **Public accountability:** Institutional autonomy should be linked with audits and grievance redressal, as **HECI** under NEP 2020 envisages lighter but tighter regulation.
- **Regional correction:** New colleges should reach underserved districts through **PM-USHA**, not remain concentrated in profitable urban education markets.
- **Balanced reform:** Education entrepreneurship can expand supply, but **Kendriya Vidyalayas** and government colleges remain vital for social mobility.