



Sanskriti IAS



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SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT EDITORIALS

4th May 2026

TOPICS:-

1. Tackling takedowns

(GS Paper II Polity and Governance)

2. Keeping India's carbon money at home

(GS Paper III Economy, Environment & Ecology)

3. On abortion, SC places the woman at the centre

(GS Paper I Society)

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1. TACKLING TAKEDOWNS

(GS Paper II Polity and Governance)

This editorial ‘Tackling takedowns’ was published in The Hindu on 4th May 2026, highlights online censorship as a threat to free expression, democratic debate and platform accountability.

Expanding State Control over Online Speech

- Amendments to **IT Rules, 2021** and rapid takedown timelines pressure platforms into removing lawful speech to avoid litigation, scrutiny or personal liability.
- The state’s control over AI-generated and online content creates a **despotic regime** where speech can be silenced despite the Internet’s democratic promise.
- Weakening **Sections 69A** and 79(3)(b) of the Information Technology Act enables broad blocking of content, accounts and public conversations.
- Takedowns distort the **public discourse** by targeting Opposition accounts, independent media and critical commentators, often without meaningful transparency.
- Online censorship harms **creators’ livelihoods** and fragments communities by deleting audiences, accounts and speech ecosystems built over time.

Sahyog Portal and Dilution of Judicial Safeguards

- The **Sahyog portal** allows police officials nationwide to request takedowns, turning Section 79(3)(b) into a routine censorship tool.
- Judicial safeguards around **actual knowledge** for illegal online content have weakened, despite the Supreme Court’s standard for valid takedown orders.
- The Karnataka High Court’s approach to **Shreya Singhal** enables executive censorship without requiring Parliament to formally expand such powers.
- Social media platforms have largely accepted **automated processing** of notices, preferring compliance over sustained resistance to state overreach.
- X continues resisting the **Sahyog portal**, but faces pressure through proceedings in Karnataka and Delhi High Courts.

Democratic and Political Consequences

- The ruling party gains from **secrecy** in takedown powers, as opaque online control strengthens its grip over digital political discourse.
- Opposition-ruled States have also used **Sahyog powers**, showing that censorship tools can be misused across party lines.
- The editorial warns that today’s **Opposition parties** may use the same censorship architecture if they form a future government.

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Due Process Deficit in Digital Censorship

- Prior notice: Users should be informed before takedowns, except emergency cases, as the Blocking Rules, 2009 provide hearing safeguards but secrecy often weakens participation.
- Reasoned orders: Every removal order must specify legal ground and precise harm, since Section 69A permits blocking only for sovereignty, security, public order and related grounds.
- Independent oversight: A neutral review mechanism can prevent executive overreach, as Shreya Singhal upheld online blocking only because procedural safeguards existed.
- Appeal rights: Time-bound remedies are needed because wrongful takedowns can erase posts, accounts and audiences before users secure judicial review.
- Transparency audits: Public disclosure of takedown requests, compliance and reversals can reduce secrecy, especially when Rule 16 keeps many blocking orders confidential.
- Platform duty: Intermediaries should conduct legal review instead of mechanical compliance, as Karnataka HC allowed account-level blocking and imposed ₹50 lakh costs on Twitter/X.
- Constitutional balance: Restrictions must satisfy legality, necessity and proportionality under Article 19, so digital safety does not become routine political censorship.

2. KEEPING INDIA'S CARBON MONEY AT HOME

(GS Paper III Economy, Environment & Ecology)

This editorial 'Keeping India's carbon money at home' was published in **The Hindu** on 4th May 2026, highlights how India can use **domestic carbon pricing** to avoid revenue loss under the EU's carbon border regime.

CBAM's Unequal Burden on India

- The EU's **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism** imposes carbon costs on imports, but European producers still benefit from subsidies and free allowances.
- Indian exporters face the full **CBAM charge** without equivalent state support, making the EU's fairness claim only partly valid in practice.
- This imbalance sits uneasily with **GATT Article III**, which bars internal charges from shielding domestic producers against fair competition.

- The India-EU FTA gives no CBAM exemption, but Annex 14-A creates a narrow route for technical dialogue on implementation.

Carbon Pricing and India's Legal Leverage

- CBAM shifts part of Europe's **decarbonisation burden** onto developing exporters while retaining resulting revenues within European hands.
- India's **CCTS** creates a domestic carbon price through tradable certificates, potentially covering key sectors such as steel.
- Under **CBAM Article 9**, European importers may deduct emissions costs already paid in the country of origin.
- Crediting CCTS under **Article 9** would avoid double-pricing, preserve CBAM's levelling aim and recognise India's domestic carbon effort.

IBAM as India's Counter-Adjustment

- India should develop an **IBAM** as a carbon-based charge on CBAM-covered exports, collected at the point of export.
- IBAM must be routed through **Annex 14-A**, so its design is pre-recognised as carbon pricing paid in India.
- If sequenced carefully, **CCTS payments** and IBAM charges can be credited against CBAM, preventing higher net costs for exporters.
- IBAM revenues would stay in **India**, unlike CBAM payments that would otherwise flow implicitly as levy revenue to Europe.

Green Transition Finance at Home

- IBAM funds should be ring-fenced for **green projects**, including cleaner steel, low-carbon electricity, hydrogen and worker support.
- Strict **MRV standards** and independent audits would make IBAM credible, transparent and acceptable as a genuine carbon-pricing offset.
- The proposal reframes IBAM as a **constructive offer**, aligning carbon-priced trade with India's right to retain transition finance.

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Carbon Sovereignty and Industrial Competitiveness

- **Revenue retention:** India must ensure carbon payments finance domestic decarbonisation instead of flowing abroad, as CBAM revenues would otherwise accrue within the EU system.

- **MSME support:** Smaller exporters need help with emissions measurement and compliance, since **CBAM** initially covers carbon-intensive goods such as iron, steel, aluminium, cement and fertilisers.
- **Green finance:** Carbon revenue can fund cleaner furnaces, renewable electricity and low-carbon technology, supporting India's **Net Zero 2070** and emission-intensity reduction goals.
- **Export resilience:** Domestic carbon pricing can protect firms from external levies, as India's **CCTS** creates tradable carbon credits linked to emissions-intensity performance.
- **Standards readiness:** Indian certification must align with global norms because CBAM requires credible reporting of **embedded emissions** during its transitional and definitive phases.
- **Technology transition:** Steel, aluminium and cement need sector-specific decarbonisation pathways, as **iron and steel** dominate India's CBAM-covered exports to the EU.
- **Negotiating leverage:** A credible domestic carbon market can strengthen India's climate-trade diplomacy, especially under **CBAM Article 9**, which permits deduction of carbon prices paid in the country of origin.

3. ON ABORTION, SC PLACES THE WOMAN AT THE CENTRE

(GS Paper I Society)

This editorial '**On abortion, SC places the woman at the centre**' was published in **The Indian Express** on 4th May 2026, highlights **reproductive autonomy, dignity** and **bodily integrity** as central to abortion jurisprudence.

Reproductive Autonomy and Constitutional Protection

- The Supreme Court held that unwanted pregnancy cannot be imposed, reaffirming **reproductive autonomy** as part of dignity and bodily integrity.
- The ruling frames abortion through the woman's **informed choice**, not only through medical paternalism or foetal-viability concerns.
- The Court's approach matters as abortion is increasingly debated as a conflict between **competing lives**, rather than autonomy and dignity.
- The judgment signals that constitutional guarantees cannot be diluted by **medical paternalism**, especially in pregnancy-related decision-making.

MTP Law and Judicial Trajectory

- The **MTP Act, 1971** legalised abortion to reduce unsafe procedures, but remained dependent on doctors' consent and statutory conditions.
- The **2021 amendment** expanded gestational limits for vulnerable women and granted greater privacy to women seeking termination.
- In **X v Principal Secretary**, the Court widened women's decisional autonomy within the statutory framework of the Act.
- Recent Supreme Court decisions exposed tension between **foetal viability** and women's choice, especially in late-stage pregnancy cases.
- In **October 2023**, termination at 26 weeks was declined, while High Courts later rejected similar late-stage pleas despite serious distress.

Need for a Safeguard-Based Statutory Framework

- The editorial calls for rights-based reform where **reproductive autonomy** is presumed and medical oversight acts only as a safeguard.
- Clear **statutory standards** can guide doctors, prevent delays and protect patients from avoidable judicial and medical uncertainty.
- Time-bound procedures are essential because delays can turn **choices into crises**, especially in complex pregnancy-related cases.
- Late-term termination remains ethically difficult, but its burden should not be increased by **legal uncertainty** or procedural hesitation.

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Access Gap between Legal Entitlement and Medical Reality

- **Service availability:** Legal rights remain incomplete without accessible abortion facilities, as the **MTP Act** permits termination only through registered medical practitioners in approved settings.
- **Provider shortage:** Rural women face delays due to limited trained providers and diagnostic support, with government **CAC guidelines** identifying scarcity of qualified providers as a key access barrier.
- **Stigma barrier:** Fear of judgment, family pressure and confidentiality breach discourages lawful care, despite the **MTP Amendment, 2021** strengthening privacy protection for women seeking termination.

- **Adolescent support:** Minors need survivor-centred counselling and privacy protection, as the **MTP Rules, 2021** include minors among vulnerable women eligible for termination up to 24 weeks.
- **Doctor awareness:** Clear legal training can reduce defensive refusals, since termination up to **20 weeks** needs one registered practitioner's opinion and 20–24 weeks needs two opinions for specified categories.
- **Time sensitivity:** Delayed decisions can push pregnancies beyond statutory limits, making late cases dependent on **Medical Boards** or courts rather than routine healthcare access.
- **Health integration:** Abortion access should link with contraception, counselling and maternal healthcare, as **WHO guidelines** treat abortion care as part of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services.