EDITORIALS - 4TH JUL 2026

1. MANUFACTURING JUSTICE
(GS Paper II Polity)

This editorial 'Manufacturing justice' was published in The Hindu on 4th Jul 2026, highlights the dangers of AI-fabricated judicial precedents for judicial integrity and due process.

AI Fabrication and Judicial Misconduct

- The Supreme Court compared AI hallucinations in judicial work to methyl isocyanate, warning that fabricated citations can cause invisible but catastrophic legal harm.
- The Court set aside NCLT and NCLAT orders after finding reliance on non-existent AI-generated legal citations in an insolvency case.
- The Court treated use of AI-generated fictitious case law as judicial misconduct, not a mere decision-making error, especially where judges rely on unverified material.
- Through rulings and oral observations, the Court has adopted a cautionary approach to AI in the justice delivery system.

Limits of AI in Adjudication

- AI may assist efficiency, but cannot replace human reasoning, judicial discretion, or professional accountability in adjudication.
- AI disruption remains a known unknown, making human oversight essential because its extent, design risks, and social consequences remain unclear.
- Presenting fabricated machine-generated judgments to court amounts to professional misconduct, while any order influenced by fake AI material has no legal authority.

Regulatory and Professional Safeguards

- Draft AI Regulations, 2026 prohibit AI use in shaping adjudicatory outcomes such as sentencing, bail eligibility, credibility assessment, or party/witness evaluation.
- The Court directed BCI to frame strict norms and disciplinary measures for lawyers citing unverified AI-generated legal material.

Beyond Editorial

Algorithmic Due Process in the Justice System

- Explainability duty: AI-assisted legal work must disclose sources, prompts and verification trail, as the Punjab and Haryana High Court's ChatGPT-linked bail order showed.
- Human validation: Supreme Court Portal for Assistance in Court Efficiency (SUPACE) and transcription tools can improve speed, but judges must verify citations, facts and reasoning independently.
- Audit trail: eCourts Phase III includes AI and blockchain components, making logs, review records and responsibility-fixing essential for AI-assisted court processes.
- Professional liability: Mata v. Avianca shows that lawyers can face sanctions when ChatGPT-generated fake cases enter filings without independent legal verification.
- Privacy safeguard: Judicial AI handles pleadings, evidence and identity data, so Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act safeguards become central to court digitisation.
- Data reliability: National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) shows the value of structured judicial data, but AI tools must rely only on authenticated legal databases.
- Capacity building: Judges, lawyers and registry staff need AI literacy on hallucination, bias and prompt misuse to protect liberty, property and fair trial rights.

2. COUNTING CANCER
(GS Paper I Society)

This editorial 'Counting cancer' was published in The Hindu on 4th Jul 2026, highlights the need to make cancer a nationally notifiable disease for reliable data and evidence-based cancer control.

Cancer Notification and Data Deficit

- Cancer is not a notifiable disease nationally, as the Health Ministry limits such notification to communicable diseases.
- India's main cancer data tools are population-based and hospital-based registries, but they cover only 10%-16% of the population.
- Existing registries remain urban-skewed and government health-care centred, leaving major gaps in national cancer surveillance.
- States can notify cancer within their boundaries; Telangana is the latest, taking the total number of such States to 17.

Rising Burden and Registry Limits

- Global Cancer Observatory projects India's cancer cases rising from 1.41 million in 2022 to 2.46 million in 2045, an increase of over 74%.
- Ageing, longer life spans, lifestyle shifts and dietary changes make cancer data essential for early public health preparedness.
- State-level notification can help, but fragmented reporting cannot provide the national data architecture needed for cancer control.
- Cancer care is significantly delivered through the private sector, but this data is not uniformly captured in existing registries.

National Response and Evidence-Based Control

- The government must heed recommendations of ICMR and the National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research, now ICMR-NIRNE, to make cancer notifiable.

- Notification will sharply increase recorded cases, but this should be treated as evidence-building, not a liability.
- A studied, evidence-based response needs stronger health care, information, education and communication support for cancer across the country.
- Despite advances in cancer research and treatment, India's central challenge remains the lack of reliable national data.

Beyond Editorial

Cancer Surveillance as Public Health Infrastructure

- Case reporting: Telangana's cancer notification requires reporting by hospitals, labs and clinics, showing how States can bring hidden cases into official surveillance.
- Registry expansion: Cancer Samiksha lists population-based and hospital-based registries, but their limited reach cannot support a complete national cancer picture.
- Coverage gap: National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research (NCDIR) data shows registry coverage remains inadequate, weakening district-wise estimation and targeted cancer planning.
- Screening linkage: National Programme for Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD) screens oral, breast and cervical cancers, while notification can link screening with diagnosis and follow-up.
- Digital backbone: Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) can support interoperable cancer reporting across hospitals, laboratories and State health platforms.
- Burden planning: Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)-NCDIR projections of rising cancer cases require better planning for oncology units, radiotherapy and palliative care.
- Private-sector capture: Since many patients use private cancer care, notification can make reporting by private hospitals, labs and diagnostic centres uniform and enforceable.

3. AT 250, THE US CAN STILL REINVENT ITSELF — AND THE WORLD

(GS Paper I Society, World History)

This editorial 'At 250, the US can still reinvent itself — and the world' was published in The Indian Express on 4th Jul 2026, highlights how America's repeated capitalist reinventions may reshape its politics and the global order in the AI age.

American Capitalism as Repeated Reinvention

- America's 250th anniversary should be read beyond Trump-era noise, as capitalist reinvention has shaped both domestic politics and the international order.
- The first major shift linked the American Revolution with Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations, making capitalism central to America's rise.
- In the 19th century, factories, railroads and mechanised production transformed an agrarian republic into a leading industrial economy and national power.
- Early 20th-century Fordism and Taylor's scientific management reorganised work, producing mass prosperity while forcing labour to follow machine discipline.
- The third reinvention created global value chains, with US firms retaining technology, finance, branding and intellectual property while manufacturing moved to Asia.

AI-Led Techno-Capitalism

- Today's fourth reinvention is techno-capitalism, driven by AI, semiconductors, cloud computing, biotechnology and humanoid robotics.
- Unlike earlier phases, the new system seeks to reduce dependence on human labour, with Claude AI and Tesla's Optimus symbolising broader automation.

- Techno-capitalism depends on algorithms and data rather than cheap labour, shifting wealth toward ownership of substitutive technologies.
- The AI age may intensify economic concentration, as technological revolutions are shaped by capitalism as much as they transform it.

Political and Global Consequences

- Each capitalist reinvention has forced political adjustment, from antitrust responses to industrial trusts to the New Deal after the Great Depression.
- The digital revolution revived concerns over market concentration, reflected in Lina Khan's FTC action and MAGA opposition to excessive AI adoption.
- AI and robotics reopen questions of ownership and wealth distribution, including who captures productivity gains and what capital owes society.
- The effects will be global, as earlier phases made the US a superpower, underpinned post-war leadership, and spread American capital and finance.
- Despite present divisions and Trump's rise, US history shows repeated capacity to reinvent capitalism and the politics needed to govern it.

Beyond Editorial

Lessons for India from Technological Transitions

- Industrial strategy: IndiaAI Mission shows that AI is being treated as national infrastructure, linking compute capacity, datasets, research and innovation ecosystems.
- Compute access: IndiaAI's common GPU facility can help startups, researchers and academia reduce dependence on a few large technology companies.
- Chip sovereignty: Tata's Dholera semiconductor fab shows why India's AI strategy needs domestic chip capacity and stronger supply-chain resilience.

- Competition guardrails: Draft Digital Competition Bill reflects the need for early regulation before AI-era platform dominance becomes structurally entrenched.
- Labour transition: Code on Social Security, 2020 recognises gig and platform workers, showing that technology-led growth needs updated worker protections.
- Responsible innovation: NITI Aayog's Responsible AI framework must move from principles to audits, procurement rules and sector-specific safeguards.
- Democratic resilience: AI disruption needs Parliament, courts, regulators, universities and unions to negotiate change before inequality deepens social polarisation.