

## EDITORIALS – 27TH JUL 2026

### 1. FOR ANTIBIOTICS, THE RIGHT DOSE IS RESTRAINT

(GS Paper I Society)

This editorial 'For antibiotics, the right dose is restraint' was published in The Indian Express on 27th Jul 2026, highlights India's irrational antibiotic use and the need for evidence-based antimicrobial stewardship.

#### Antibiotic-use imbalance

- A global Lancet Public Health study finds India overuses stronger antibiotics while safer first-line medicines remain underused.
- The WHO classification places antibiotics into "access" drugs for common infections, "watch" drugs for specific situations and "reserve" drugs for highly resistant infections.
- India uses 18.3 daily doses per 1,000 people against the optimal 9.9–14.7; "watch" use is 9.3 against six recommended, while "access" use is only 4.5.

#### Causes and consequences

- Preference for broad-spectrum antibiotics reflects patient demand for quick recovery and pressure on overstretched doctors, but unnecessary doses reduce future treatment options.
- Underuse of "reserve" antibiotics in genuinely resistant cases, fragmented healthcare and poor diagnostics prevent the right medicine from reaching patients promptly.
- Liberal antibiotic use in livestock and agriculture compounds human misuse, accelerating antimicrobial resistance and making infections harder and costlier to treat.

#### Required response

- The National Action Plan on AMR 2.0 (2025–2029) prioritises antimicrobial stewardship across human healthcare, animal husbandry and agriculture.
- Coordinated supply-chain compliance must curb indiscriminate over-the-counter sales and irrational fixed-dose combinations.

## Beyond Editorial

### Environmental Pathways of Antimicrobial Resistance

- Pharmaceutical pollution: Studies found high fluoroquinolone residues in industrial effluents entering Hyderabad's Musi basin, showing how pharmaceutical clusters become AMR hotspots.
- Hospital wastewater: A Ujjain hospital study detected antibiotic residues and resistant *E. coli* in wastewater, exposing gaps in healthcare effluent treatment.
- Urban sewage: Sampling across 20 drains and five Yamuna sites linked faecal pollution with carbapenem-resistant and ESBL-resistant bacteria.
- Livestock runoff: India banned colistin as a poultry growth promoter to limit resistant organisms spreading through manure, water and food.
- Aquaculture discharge: An INFAAR survey across five coastal States found over 90% penicillin resistance among some staphylococcal isolates from shrimp systems.
- Unsafe disposal: Kerala's nPROUD initiative collects unused household medicines for scientific destruction, preventing pharmaceutical residues from entering sewage and landfills.
- Wastewater surveillance: A CSIR-CCMB study of 447 samples from four major cities found similar resistance genes, supporting sewage-based AMR monitoring.

## 2. RISING RUPEE, NEW TRUMP TARIFFS — TRACK THE HEADWINDS

(GS Paper III Economy)

This editorial 'Rising rupee, new Trump tariffs — track the headwinds' was published in The Indian Express on 27th Jul 2026, highlights the external and domestic headwinds threatening India's emerging economic recovery.

Revival in capital flows

- July saw foreign portfolio investment of \$1.5 billion, reversing earlier outflows, while RBI measures mobilised \$17.4 billion through FCNR(B) deposits and \$3.3 billion through other channels.
- Net FDI reached \$6.5 billion during April–May against \$2.4 billion a year earlier, alongside higher gross inflows and lower repatriation.

#### Macroeconomic headwinds

- West Asian conflict, attacks on Red Sea tankers and risks around Hormuz and Bab al-Mandab pushed crude above \$100 amid declining oil inventories.
- India's crude oil basket rose from \$83.22 per barrel in June to \$103.33 by July 23, threatening higher inflation, strained oil-company finances and a wider current account deficit.
- The rupee weakened to 96.53 per dollar as the dollar index strengthened; its weakness predates the West Asian conflict and raises concerns about India's growth prospects.
- Uncertain monsoons and El Niño threaten kharif and rabi crops, while June retail inflation reached 5.32%; the August Monetary Policy Committee meeting will clarify the inflation and interest-rate trajectory.

#### Escalating tariff risks

- Following a USTR Section 301 investigation, the US imposed a 10% tariff on India and several peers, while Vietnam, Turkey and Australia face 12.5% tariffs.
- Trump's plan proposes generic-drug tariffs of 100% after two years and 200% thereafter, creating a major threat to Indian pharmaceutical exports.
- A separate USTR investigation into excess manufacturing capacity covers 16 economies, including India, and could impose additional tariffs as protectionism becomes central to Trump's economic strategy.

- Energy diversification: Indian refiners expanded Russian and Latin American sourcing in 2026, while MRPL sought cargoes avoiding Hormuz and the Red Sea.
- Strategic reserves: India has 5.33 million tonnes of crude storage at three sites, while ONGC approved another 1.75-million-tonne Mangaluru facility.
- Currency buffer: During 2008–09, the RBI sold \$34.9 billion to control exchange-rate volatility without defending a fixed rupee value.
- Capital-flow quality: The 2013 taper tantrum showed how portfolio outflows and a high current account deficit can rapidly weaken the rupee.
- Export diversification: India-UAE CEPA helped bilateral trade rise from \$72.87 billion in FY2022 to \$100.06 billion in FY2025.
- Pharmaceutical upgrading: PLI schemes for bulk drugs, key starting materials and APIs strengthen domestic capacity against import disruptions and foreign tariffs.
- Inflation cushioning: India's March 2026 fuel-duty reductions, partly funded through export windfall taxes, limited the transfer of crude shocks to consumers.

### 3. READING THE STREET — LESSONS FROM JANTAR MANTAR FOR THE POLICE

(GS Paper III Security)

This editorial 'Reading the street — lessons from Jantar Mantar for the police' was published in The Indian Express on 27th Jul 2026, highlights policing reforms required for decentralised, digitally mobilised protest movements.

#### Changing nature of protests

- The CJP protest drew over 10,000 people and caused nearly 180 injuries, showing how multiple operational misjudgements can compound during crowd management.

- Beginning through satire, memes and student networks before developing spokespeople, the movement exposed the limits of traditional intelligence designed around parties, unions and fixed command structures.

### Operational lessons for policing

- Intelligence must track online mobilisation and public sentiment through real-time monitoring centres, providing early warning and identifying legitimate crowd representatives.
- Designated protest sites work only when grievances receive attention; a march towards Parliament required early political engagement, as physical containment without outreach converted frustration into confrontation.
- In the era of phone cameras, tactical success cannot offset reputational damage from viral footage; police require clear rules of engagement, visible identification and disciplined de-escalation.
- Sonam Wangchuk's hospitalisation expanded the march, showing that high-profile fasts require pre-agreed protocols, independent medical opinion and transparent communication.
- Negotiations beginning only after clashes reflected a costly sequencing failure; early communication with identifiable spokespeople could reduce injuries and protect institutional legitimacy.

### Post-protest accountability

- Mass detentions and prosecutions must satisfy pace and proportionality, as prolonged cases or perceived selective action can create fresh grievances and fuel another protest cycle.

### Beyond Editorial

#### Constitutional Framework for Protest Policing

- Protected assembly: In *Himat Lal K. Shah*, the Supreme Court held that public meetings may be regulated but cannot be completely prohibited.

- Reasonable restrictions: In *Anuradha Bhasin*, the Court held that repetitive Section 144 orders cannot suppress legitimate democratic expression indefinitely.
- Proportionate force: In the *Ramlila Maidan Incident* case, the Court criticised midnight police action and emphasised necessity and restraint.
- Regulated protest: In *Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan*, the Court rejected a complete Jantar Mantar ban while protecting residents' interests.
- Public access: In *Amit Sahni*, concerning Shaheen Bagh, the Court held that protesters cannot occupy public roads indefinitely.
- Arrest safeguards: The *D.K. Basu* guidelines require arrest memos, relative notification, medical examination and timely production before a magistrate.
- Public accountability: In *Nilabati Behera*, the Court awarded compensation for custodial death, recognising public-law remedies for State violations of Article 21.