



# Daily Current Affairs



## To The Point by Dhananjay Gautam

### Table Of Content 18 July 2025

1. Supreme Court of India Flags Concerns Over Misuse of Free Speech on Social Media
2. Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) – June 2025
3. Record-Breaking Black Hole Merger Detected
4. Rare Sighting of the Vibrant Grandala in Himachal's Sainj Valley
5. AI-Powered Warning System Launched in Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve
6. Syria in Focus



Subscribe to our

**You Tube** Freedom UPSC with **Dhananjay Gautam**



# CURRENT AFFAIRS QUIZ

By Dhananjay Gautam



GS Paper 2 – Polity and Governance

## 1 Supreme Court of India Flags Concerns Over Misuse of Free Speech on Social Media

**Context:** The **Supreme Court of India** has recently voiced its deep concerns over the **growing misuse of free speech**, especially across **social media platforms**. While upholding the **sanctity of Article 19(1)(a)** of the Constitution, which ensures the **right to freedom of speech and expression**, the Court emphasized that **this right is not absolute** and must be **exercised with caution, responsibility, and dignity**.



### Key Observations by the Supreme Court:

- The **freedom of expression** is a **pillar of democracy**, but it must not be "trampled upon on flimsy and fanciful grounds."
- The **Court drew a line between free speech and dignity**, stating that when Article 19 (freedom of speech) comes in conflict with **Article 21 (right to life and personal dignity)**, **dignity will take precedence**.
- The Bench stressed the need for **self-restraint in online behavior**, warning that **unregulated speech is clogging the legal system** with endless litigation.
- It also noted that if people **fail to regulate themselves**, the **State may be compelled to intervene**—raising concerns over **potential restrictions** on digital freedoms.

### Legal & Constitutional Safeguards: Understanding the Framework

- **Article 19(1)(a)**: Grants the **right to freedom of speech and expression** to every citizen.
- **Article 19(2)**: Permits the State to impose "**reasonable restrictions**" in the interests of **sovereignty, public order, decency, morality, and national security**.
- **Article 361A**: Protects journalists reporting **true proceedings** of legislative houses from legal action, unless such reporting is done **maliciously**.

### Did You Know?

In the landmark case **Shreya Singhal v. Union of India (2015)**, the Supreme Court struck down **Section 66A of the IT Act**, calling it unconstitutional for restricting online speech arbitrarily.

### Impact of Social Media on Freedom of Speech:

#### Positive Contributions:

- **Democratization of Voices**: Platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram allow **citizens and marginalized communities** to be heard, breaking traditional media monopolies.
- **Instant Information Flow**: News and opinions spread rapidly, increasing civic engagement and awareness.
- **Transparency & Accountability**: Social media has become a **tool for whistleblowing and social justice**, often pressuring institutions to act.

#### Rising Challenges:

- **Misinformation & Disinformation**: Fake news, hate speech, and propaganda can **incite violence** and disturb **social harmony**.

Download Our Application



Freedom UPSC with **Dhananjay Gautam**

Page No

2



# CURRENT AFFAIRS QUIZ

By Dhananjay Gautam



- **Inadequate Regulation:** India lacks a **dedicated legal framework** to regulate social media speech. While the **IT Act, 2000**, and other laws address cybercrimes, **implementation remains inconsistent**.
- **Threats to Privacy:** **Mass surveillance and data collection** create a chilling effect, discouraging people from expressing themselves freely.

## The Way Forward: Striking a Balance Between Liberty and Responsibility

The Supreme Court has underlined that **preserving the freedom of speech** demands not just **robust legal protections** but also a **strong sense of civic responsibility**. In a digitally connected society:

- **Citizens must exercise digital etiquette** and refrain from hate speech or personal attacks.
- **Tech companies** must ensure **content moderation, fact-checking, and user safety mechanisms**.
- **Policy makers** should consider a **comprehensive social media regulation law** that upholds freedom while addressing abuse.

## Extra Insight :

According to a **2024 report by UNESCO**, over **70% of online hate speech cases worldwide go unregulated**, underscoring the urgent need for international cooperation on digital governance.

## Conclusion:

The Supreme Court's observations serve as a timely reminder: **freedom of speech is not a license for online hostility or defamation**. While social media empowers voices, its unchecked misuse can **erode democratic values and individual dignity**. **Responsible digital citizenship**, supported by thoughtful regulation, is the key to ensuring that the **right to speak remains a tool for progress, not harm**.

Freedom UPSC  
TOGETHER WE SCALE HEIGHTS

Download Our Application



Freedom UPSC with **Dhananjay Gautam**

Page No

3





2

## Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) – June 2025: A Glimpse into India's Evolving Labour Market

**Context:** The **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)**, released by the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**, serves as a vital tool to assess **employment and unemployment trends** across India. The latest edition, covering **June 2025**, offers fresh insights into the country's labour market, particularly post-pandemic recovery patterns, rural-urban divides, and gender disparities in workforce participation.



### Key Labour Market Indicators:

PLFS provides estimates based on the following critical indicators:

- **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR):** Proportion of people aged 15 and above who are **either employed or actively seeking employment**.
- **Worker Population Ratio (WPR):** Percentage of people who are **currently employed** out of the total population.
- **Unemployment Rate (UR):** Share of **jobless individuals actively seeking work** as a percentage of the labour force.
- **Current Weekly Status (CWS):** Employment status based on activity in the **7 days preceding the survey**.

### Major Findings from June 2025:

- The **national LFPR** for individuals aged 15 and above was **54.2%**, marking a slight dip from **54.8% in May 2025**.
  - **Rural LFPR:** 56.1%
  - **Urban LFPR:** 50.4%
- The **Worker Population Ratio (WPR)** stood at:
  - **53.3% in rural areas**
  - **46.8% in urban areas**
  - **Overall national WPR:** 51.2%
- The **Unemployment Rate (UR)** was recorded at **5.6%** for individuals aged 15+, with:
  - **No change among males** compared to May
  - **A 0.1 percentage point decrease in female unemployment**
  - **Rural unemployment** dipped by **0.2 percentage points**
  - **Urban unemployment** rose by **0.2 percentage points**

### Interpreting the Trends: Why the Numbers Shifted

The slight reduction in LFPR and WPR can be attributed to:

- **Seasonal agricultural slowdown** impacting rural employment
- **Scorching summer temperatures**, limiting outdoor and manual labour

Download Our Application



Freedom UPSC with **Dhananjay Gautam**

Page No

4



# CURRENT AFFAIRS QUIZ

By Dhananjay Gautam



- A shift of unpaid rural female helpers toward domestic duties, particularly in better-off households

**Interesting Insight:** India witnessed **record-breaking heatwaves** in June 2025, with temperatures crossing **47°C in northern regions**, which adversely impacted physical labour, especially in agriculture and construction sectors.

## Government Measures to Boost Women's Labour Force Participation:

Recognizing persistent gender gaps, the government has initiated several **targeted schemes**:

- **Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY):** Offers **collateral-free microloans**, encouraging **women entrepreneurship**.
- **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao:** Works on changing **societal attitudes**, promoting **education and empowerment** of girls.
- **Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017:** Extended maternity leave from **12 to 26 weeks**, improving **job retention** among women.
- **Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP):** Launched by **NITI Aayog**, provides **mentoring, networking, and funding** for women-led startups.
- **National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM):** Through **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)**, empowers women with **training, credit access, and collective marketing power**.
- **National Creche Scheme:** Eases the **childcare burden** on working mothers, especially in **unorganized sectors**.
- **Mission Shakti (2021–2025):** Aims to make women **equal stakeholders** in national development by strengthening **welfare and safety measures**.
- **WISE-KIRAN Scheme:** From 2018 to 2023, supported **1,962 women scientists**, enhancing **gender inclusion in STEM careers**.

## The Road Ahead: A Call for Structural Reforms

The **marginal rise in urban unemployment**, coupled with decreasing labour engagement, indicates **persistent structural challenges**—particularly in generating **quality, non-agricultural employment**.

Moreover, **climate extremes**, such as **heatwaves and erratic rainfall**, are emerging as **significant influencers** of employment trends, especially in vulnerable sectors like **agriculture, construction, and informal labour**.

To ensure a resilient and inclusive labour market, the following steps are crucial:

- **Monthly labour data tracking** to enable timely interventions
- **Strengthening urban job creation**, especially in manufacturing and services
- **Gender-sensitive policies** to ensure **women's sustained economic participation**
- **Skill development programs** aligned with digital and green economy goals
- **Climate-adaptive employment models**, such as promoting remote work, indoor jobs, and skill-based gig work

**Conclusion:** The PLFS June 2025 report provides a nuanced picture of India's labour market, highlighting seasonal, **structural, and environmental dynamics**. While progress has been made, especially in improving **female unemployment rates**, challenges remain. With focused policies, inclusive planning, and climate resilience, **India can shape a future where growth and employment go hand in hand**—ensuring that **no citizen is left behind** in the journey toward economic development.

Download Our Application



Freedom UPSC with **Dhananjay Gautam**

Page No

5



## 3 Record-Breaking Black Hole Merger Detected: A New Cosmic Milestone

**Context:** In a **groundbreaking discovery**, scientists have detected the **largest black hole merger ever recorded**, offering critical insights into the mysterious and powerful forces that shape our universe. The event, designated **GW231123**, represents a **monumental achievement** in astrophysics and the study of **gravitational waves**.



### The Event: GW231123 – A Cosmic Collision of Titans

The merger, observed on **November 23, 2023**, was picked up by a **global network of gravitational wave observatories**—**LIGO (USA)**, **Virgo (Europe)**, and **KAGRA (Japan)**. It involved the collision of two black holes weighing approximately **100 and 140 times the mass of the Sun**, which coalesced into a single, colossal black hole of **225 solar masses**.

This event marks one of the **heaviest black hole mergers** ever detected and **crosses into the "intermediate-mass" black hole category**, a relatively **rare and poorly understood class** of black holes.

### Did You Know?

Black holes in the **intermediate mass range (100–1,000 solar masses)** are considered the **missing link** between **stellar-mass** and **supermassive black holes**.

### What Are Gravitational Waves and How Do We Detect Them?

**Gravitational waves** are tiny ripples in the **fabric of space-time**, first predicted by **Albert Einstein in 1916** as a consequence of his **General Theory of Relativity**.

These waves are produced when **massive celestial objects**, such as black holes or neutron stars, **accelerate or collide**. As they move, they stretch and compress space itself, traveling outward at the **speed of light**.

They are detected by instruments like **LIGO (Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory)** and its counterparts, which use **laser interferometry** to measure these **infinitesimal distortions**—less than a thousandth the size of a proton!

### Types of Black Holes: Understanding the Monsters of the Cosmos

- **Stellar-Mass Black Holes:** Formed by the **collapse of massive stars**, usually ranging from **a few to tens of solar masses**.
- **Intermediate-Mass Black Holes:** Ranging from **hundreds to thousands of solar masses**, these are **rarely observed** but crucial to understanding black hole growth.
- **Supermassive Black Holes:** Found at the **centers of galaxies**, including the **Milky Way**, they weigh **millions to billions of solar masses**.

The detection of **GW231123** strengthens the **evidence for intermediate-mass black holes**, suggesting that **such mergers might be more common** than previously thought.

### Why It Matters: Scientific and Cosmological Significance

#### Redefining Astrophysics:

- The **GW231123** event pushes the boundaries of **current black hole formation models**.
- It raises **questions about how such massive stellar remnants form**, and whether they result from **hierarchical mergers** (i.e., black holes merging multiple times).

Download Our Application







# CURRENT AFFAIRS QUIZ

By Dhananjay Gautam



## Impact on Our Understanding of the Universe:

- Gravitational wave detections like GW231123 offer a **new way to study the cosmos**, independent of light-based observations.
- Each detection contributes to building a **census of black holes** in the universe, helping trace their **evolution over billions of years**.
- It could help uncover **new physics**, possibly offering insights into the **nature of dark matter, extra dimensions, or quantum gravity**.

## Looking Ahead:

The discovery of **GW231123** is not just a record-breaking event—it's a **stepping stone to unraveling deeper cosmic mysteries**. As detectors become more sensitive and **next-generation observatories** like **LISA (Laser Interferometer Space Antenna)** launch in the coming decade, we can expect **even more dramatic discoveries**.

This monumental event is a **reminder of the universe's raw power**, and how much more there is to discover beyond the stars we see. With every ripple in space-time we detect, **we listen to the universe telling its ancient stories**—one gravitational wave at a time.



Download Our Application



**Freedom UPSC with Dhananjay Gautam**

Page No

7



## 4 Rare Sighting of the Vibrant Grandala in Himachal's Sainj Valley

**Context:** In a delightful discovery for birdwatchers and nature lovers, a **rare electric-blue bird known as the *Grandala*** was recently spotted in the picturesque Sainj Valley of Himachal Pradesh. This striking bird is a seasonal visitor to the **high-altitude Himalayan landscapes**, and such sightings are always celebrated by the wildlife community.



### Meet the Grandala: The Sky-Blue Thrush of the Mountains

- **Scientific Name:** *Grandala coelicolor*
- **Family:** Turdidae (Thrush family)
- The **Grandala** is the **sole species in its genus**, making it taxonomically unique.
- It is an **arboreal insectivore**, feeding mainly on insects it forages among trees and shrubs.

### Habitat and Distribution:

The Grandala is native to the **northeastern Indian subcontinent** and surrounding regions. It thrives in **alpine and subalpine habitats**, preferring rugged mountainous terrain.

- **Geographical Range:**
  - Found in **India, Bhutan, Nepal, and Myanmar**
  - Also present in **Tibet and southwestern China**
- **Preferred Altitude:**
  - Typically seen between **3,000 to 5,000 meters** above sea level
  - During winter, it may descend to lower elevations in search of food

### Striking Features of the Grandala:

- **Size:** Measures between **20.5 to 23 cm in length**
- **Weight:** Varies from **38 to 52 grams**
- **Male Plumage:**
  - Dazzling **blue-grey body**
  - Contrasting **black wings and tail**, making it highly eye-catching against snow-covered or rocky terrain
- **Female Plumage:**
  - More camouflaged with **brownish feathers marked by white stripes**
  - **Rump has a bluish-grey hue, with white-tipped wings**
- **Behavioral Trait:**
  - During non-breeding seasons, Grandalas are known to **form large flocks**, sometimes consisting of **up to 200 individuals**
  - This **flock-forming behavior** is quite rare among Himalayan bird species and adds to the visual spectacle





# CURRENT AFFAIRS QUIZ

By Dhananjay Gautam



## Conservation Status: No Immediate Threat

- Listed as '**Least Concern**' on the **IUCN Red List**
- Despite its rare sightings, the species is considered **stable in population** due to its **wide distribution** and **relatively undisturbed habitat**

## Interesting:

**Fact:** The Grandala is often seen as a **symbol of pristine Himalayan ecosystems**. Their presence in an area is considered an **indicator of ecological health**, as they rely on insect-rich alpine habitats.

## Why This Sighting Matters:

The spotting of a Grandala in Himachal's **Sainj Valley**, part of the **Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (a UNESCO World Heritage Site)**, underscores the **ecological richness of India's high-altitude regions**. It also highlights the importance of preserving these fragile environments, which continue to support a wide range of **migratory and endemic species**.

As climate change and human interference inch closer to sensitive alpine zones, such sightings serve as a **reminder of the critical need for sustainable ecotourism and conservation efforts**.

## Final Note:

The **Grandala**, with its **celestial hues and elusive presence**, remains one of the **Himalayas' most stunning avian residents**. Its recent appearance in Himachal is not just a treat for the eyes, but also a **sign of nature's enduring beauty and balance**, waiting to be protected and cherished.

freedom UPSC  
TOGETHER WE SCALE HEIGHTS

Download Our Application



**Freedom UPSC with Dhananjay Gautam**

Page No

9



## 5 AI-Powered Warning System Launched in Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve to Prevent Human-Wildlife Conflict

**Context:** In a forward-thinking move towards wildlife conservation and public safety, an **artificial intelligence-based alert system** has been installed in **20 villages surrounding the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR) in Maharashtra**. The system detects tiger movement and **issues real-time warnings via loudspeakers**, helping to **prevent human-wildlife conflict** in areas bordering the forest.



This innovation marks a major step in combining **technology with conservation**, enabling both **wildlife protection** and **community safety** in a region known for frequent tiger encounters.

### About Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve:

- **Location:** Situated in **Chandrapur district, Maharashtra**
- **Significance:** It is the **oldest and largest tiger reserve** in the state
- **Name Origin:**
  - "**Tadoba**" comes from the local deity "**Taru**" revered by indigenous tribes
  - "**Andhari**" is named after the **Andhari River** that flows through the reserve
- **Constituent Areas:**
  - Comprises **Tadoba National Park** and **Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary**
  - Forms part of the **Tadoba landscape**, which connects with **Nagzira-Navegaon** and **Pench Tiger Reserves** through **ecological corridors**

### Landscape and Ecosystem:

- **Biogeographical Zone:** Lies within the **Central Plateau of the Deccan Peninsula**
- **Topography:** Characterized by **undulating hills**, dense forests, and valleys, making it ideal for **tiger habitation**
- **Vegetation Type:** Dominated by **Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous Forests**

### Water Bodies Within the Reserve:

- **Tadoba Lake, Kolsa Lake**, and the **Tadoba River** are vital water sources, supporting both **wildlife and vegetation**, and acting as **natural viewpoints** for tiger sightings

### Rich Flora and Fauna:

- **Teak (Tectona grandis)** is the dominant tree species
- Other notable plants include **crocodile bark (Terminalia tomentosa)**, **salai**, **tendu**, **karaya gum**, and **mahua (Madhuca indica)**—a tree that also holds cultural and economic importance for tribal communities
- Home to iconic wildlife such as:
  - **Bengal tiger** (flagship species)
  - **Indian leopard**
  - **Sloth bear**



# CURRENT AFFAIRS QUIZ

By Dhananjay Gautam



- Gaur (Indian bison)
- Wild dog (dhole)
- Sambar deer, chital, nilgai, and various reptilian and avian species

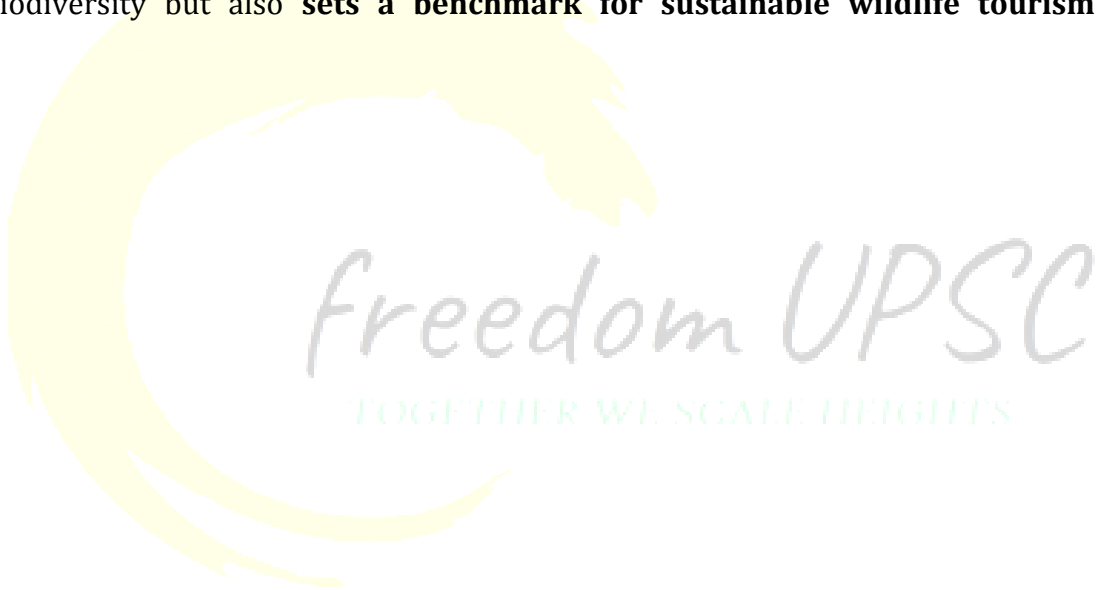
**Interesting Fact:** Tadoba is one of the few reserves in India where **tiger sightings are frequent**, thanks to its open habitat, strategic water bodies, and thriving prey base.

## Conservation with Community Involvement:

The newly implemented **AI system** aims to minimize the risk of tiger attacks on people and livestock by offering **real-time alerts**, especially in areas where **villages and forest boundaries intersect**. This initiative is part of a broader effort to encourage **coexistence between humans and wildlife**, and it reflects a model that could be replicated in other high-conflict zones across India.

## Looking Forward:

The **Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve** continues to be a beacon of conservation success in India, where **innovative technology, scientific forest management, and community participation** converge to protect one of the planet's most majestic predators. With initiatives like the AI alert system, the reserve not only preserves biodiversity but also **sets a benchmark for sustainable wildlife tourism and conflict mitigation**.



Download Our Application



**Freedom UPSC with Dhananjay Gautam**

Page No

11





# CURRENT AFFAIRS QUIZ

By Dhananjay Gautam



GS Paper 1 – Geography

## 6 Syria in Focus: Sectarian Clashes Erupt in Sweida Amid Ongoing Regional Tensions

**Context:** The Middle Eastern nation of Syria has once again made global headlines as **violent clashes erupted in the southern city of Sweida**, involving **Sunni Bedouin tribal fighters and Druze militias**. This flare-up is part of the country's broader instability, stemming from years of conflict and deep-rooted sectarian divisions.

### Political Overview of Syria:

- **Capital:** Damascus
- **Region:** Situated in the **Middle East**, Syria is a part of the **historic Levant Region**, which also includes parts of modern-day Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, and Palestine.
- **Neighboring Countries:**
  - **Iraq** to the east
  - **Turkey** to the north
  - **Lebanon and Israel** to the west
  - **Jordan** to the south
- **Coastline:** Bordered by the **Mediterranean Sea** to the west, offering maritime access to Europe and North Africa.



### Geographical Significance:

- **Major River:** The **Euphrates River** flows through eastern Syria, playing a crucial role in the region's agriculture and ancient civilizations.
- **Terrain:** The country features **mountains, deserts, and fertile plains**, with the **Anti-Lebanon mountain range** running along its western edge.
- **Strategic Location:** Syria holds a **geopolitical position** at the crossroads of Asia, Africa, and Europe, making it a long-contested territory throughout history.

### Contested Territories:

- A key flashpoint in Syria's geopolitical situation is the **Golan Heights**, a plateau that has been **occupied by Israel since the Six-Day War in 1967**. While internationally recognized as Syrian territory, its control remains a subject of dispute between **Israel and Syria**, with broader implications for regional peace.

### Did You Know?

**Damascus**, Syria's capital, is often considered one of the **oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world**, with a history stretching back over **11,000 years**.

### Broader Implications of the Sweida Violence:

The recent outbreak of conflict in Sweida, a region predominantly inhabited by the **Druze minority**, reveals the **fragile ethnic and sectarian fabric** of post-war Syria. While Sweida had remained relatively calm during much of the Syrian civil war, recent tensions over **economic hardship, political marginalization, and shifting power dynamics** have triggered localized unrest.

**Conclusion:** With its **rich history, strategic location, and diverse population**, Syria remains a **central player in Middle Eastern geopolitics**. However, its **internal divisions, unresolved territorial disputes, and regional power struggles** continue to fuel instability. The recent violence in Sweida serves as a stark reminder that **peace and reconciliation in Syria are still distant goals**, and that **sectarian tensions** can easily reignite despite years of war fatigue.

Download Our Application



Freedom UPSC with Dhananjay Gautam

Page No

12