



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

SMART

Mains Current Affairs

Programme 2026



AIR
16

Monika Srivastava

A Catalyst
to
Top Ranks!

Date of Commencement

2nd June 2026

Mode: Offline / Online



AIR
27

Vikas



AIR
72

Kanishak Agarwal



AIR
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Aakash Om Trivedi



AIR
75

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SMART Mains Current Affairs Programme 2026

Embark on an empowering journey to the top ranks of the UPSC Civil Services exam with our SMART Mains Current Affairs Programme. **Current affairs form an integral part of the UPSC syllabus.** With more than **60% of the questions** related to current events appearing in both the Preliminary and Main Examinations directly or indirectly. Therefore, staying updated about current events is essential to score well in these exams.

S.M.A.R.T. Mains Current Affairs Programme 2026 by Vajiram & Ravi is a comprehensive program that aims to provide aspirants with a **Simple yet Strategic, Multi-dimensional, Advanced and Adaptive, Resourceful, and Targeted** approach to their Current Affairs preparation.

**One Expert is Never Enough for UPSC Current Affairs!
That's why we're giving you three.**



Dr. Jayant Parikshit
(IIM Lucknow, DSE)

Macro analysis and
economic perspectives



Srivatsan
(Ex-IRS)

Insights from governance
and public service



Abhinav Srivastav
(IIT Roorkee)

Analytical and data-driven
approach

SMART

Current Affairs Programme 2025



50+ Selections

Features of the SMART Mains Current Affairs Programme

SMART Mains Current Affairs Programme has been meticulously curated to redefine UPSC CSE preparation for aspirants. Thoughtfully created, it has the following distinguishing features:

CLASSES

RESOURCES

MAINS READY



Classes

- **Comprehensive Coverage** of multiple reliable sources like The Hindu, Indian Express, Economic Times, PIB, etc. (including Economic Survey, Budget, Schemes and Indices)
- **Interlinkages** of Current Affairs with static concepts.
- **Understanding the Examiner's Mindset** to gauge the kind of questions that might appear in exam.

Resources

- **Handouts** to support learning, revision and active recall during the exam. No additional study material required.
- **Value Addition** through **comprehensive diagrams, dimensions, data points, examples, and case studies**—ready to use in your answers.

Mains Ready

Mains Answer-Writing and Answer-Generation Skills to seamlessly integrate current affairs into your arguments and elevate your Mains score.

Dynamic Assessment & Feedback

- **Live Answer writing:** Engage in regular answer writing practice in each class to learn the art of writing high quality arguments and examples directly from the Faculties of the program.
- **Regular Assessment tests:** for ultimate exam readiness.
- **Holistic Preparation:** Our program combines the structured rigor of learning with the flexibility of an adaptive environment, ensuring comprehensive preparation and equipping you to face the challenges of the exam with confidence.

Course Details

- Course Start time: **2nd June 2026**
- Classes will be conducted **~3 times a week**
- Class/video duration will be **2.5-3 hours**
- Class Handouts and **Value Addition material** for high scoring.
- **Includes regular Live in-class Answer Writing sessions** to track progress for exam readiness.
- **Regular Assessment tests for ultimate exam readiness**

Note

- **Course Fee: 14,500/-** (without current affairs test series)
- **Course fee: 19,500/-** (along with Current Affairs test series), Includes 8 Current Affairs based sectional tests with evaluation (weekly basis)

Why choose SMART Mains Current Affairs Programme?

As a renowned coaching institute for UPSC CSE, Vajiram & Ravi recognises that despite a solid understanding of the static syllabus, aspirants often face challenges in effectively correlating and applying Current Affairs in the Mains Examination.

The programme is designed to help aspirants understand how a current issue may be framed as a UPSC question and how it can be effectively incorporated into answers.



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Mains Reflections

22 Direct Questions

Reflected from Vajiram and Ravi SMART Current Affairs in Mains 2025

GS3 - Q9. Terrorism is a global scourge. How has it manifested in India? Elaborate with contemporary examples. What are the counter measures adopted by the State? Explain.

Counter Terrorism & Operation Sindoor	
<p>Recent Context</p> <p>Trigger → Pahalgam Attack (Apr 22, 2025) Pakistan-backed (L/TF/JeM) cross-border terror strike in JK → high-profile → public outrage → pressure on India's defence.</p> <p>Response → Operation Sindoor (May 7-10) air strikes on terror camps using drones, targeting militants, satellites, India Air force → no ground troops, no civilian harm → new doctrine: tech-led, external, surgical retaliation.</p> <p>The Strategic Shift in India's Approach</p> <p>Doctrinal Shift → Internalisation vs Externalisation</p> <p>Old Approach → Internalisation Focused on counter-insurgency within Kashmir using ground forces, covert ops, and arrests.</p> <p>New Approach → Externalisation Targets terror roots in DUK and regional using drones, airstrikes, satellites → visible, tech-led, defence-oriented.</p> <p>Key Examples → Evolution Path: 2016 Surgical Strikes (LWE), 2019 Balakot (Pakistan), 2025 Sindoor (Pahalgam) → rising precision, deeper targeting.</p> <p>Strategic Shift → Sindoor vs Earlier Ops</p> <p>Force & Mode From Army-ground ops → to IAF-led zero-terrain strikes.</p> <p><small>Track 1: Tools From manual only → to AI-driven, C4I, Jamming, POC.</small></p>	<p>Messaging & Goal From revenge narrative → to global strategic signalling & pre-emptive deterrence.</p> <p>Ownership & Capability From imported systems → to indigenous (Akash, Naginata etc.) + joint tri-service ops.</p> <p>Strategic Goals of Op. Sindoor</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Military Objective → Destroy terror infrastructure, precision strikes, zero-casualty warfare, zero casualties, deep strikes from Indian airspace (lessen the cost of terror) Psychological Objective → Break nuclear shield perception, restore deterrence, shatter Pakistan's overconfidence, target essential military sites (post retaliation) Political Objective → Show strong leadership, assert national security doctrine, responsible escalation control, hybrid deterrence via economic pressure (SWIFT) Narrative & Diplomatic Objective → Global pre-briefing, media control, robust moral high ground, isolate Pakistan diplomatically <p>Key characteristics of Op. Sindoor</p> <p>Nuclear Deterrence Doctrine Shift → Pakistan's nuclear shield challenged, Stability-Instability Paradox breaks, counterforce strikes under nuclear umbrella demonstrated, deterrence ease implies limited conventional retaliation</p> <p>Full-Spectrum Deterrence → Multi-domain capability across air, land, sea, cyber, space, information, nuclear posture maintained but not visible on, precision + escalation control + strategic messaging integrated</p>

GS3 - Q10. The Government of India recently stated that Left Wing Extremism (LWE) will be eliminated by 2026. What do you understand by LWE and how are the people affected by it? What measures have been taken by the government to eliminate LWE?

LWE - Achievements and Assessment	
<p>Geographic Shrinkage → Red Corridor Shrink</p> <p>LWE-affected districts down from 126 (2019) → 42 (2025)</p> <p>7 "Hot Affected" districts below 12 → 6 (Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra)</p> <p>Most influence area: 18,000 sq. km → 4,200 sq. km</p> <p>Inference: Corridor now split into isolated pockets → no mass mobilisation</p> <p>Violence Plummeted → Lowest in Decades</p> <p>Casualties: 4600 (2019), 730 (2025), before attacks: 365 → 25</p> <p>Casualties <100 for first time in 30 yrs (2023)</p> <p>Inference: State now dominating the battlefield</p> <p>Top Leadership Upped Out → Psychological Blow</p> <p>Massacre (UP) - M Govt (May 2023) → first time in 30 yrs</p> <p>Other key leaders: Sudhakar, Bhaskar, Uday → all neutralised</p> <p>Total 186 Maoists killed in Bihar in 18 months</p> <p>Inference: Leadership vacuum, internal demoralisation</p> <p>Organisational Collapse → Cadre & Command Eroded</p> <p>Pushkarna 12 → 3 members</p> <p>Cadres in Chhattisgarh: 24 left, confined to 2 talukas</p> <p>Annual Maoists: 1,700 → 1,300 (last 2 years)</p> <p>Inference: Followed out chain of command, supply collapse</p> <p>State Declares Red Zones → Development + Domination</p> <p>Shiksha, SHS, housing, 24x7 mobile coverage, schools, PNCs</p> <p>Alighad breached, camps established</p> <p>Safe corridors built: Bhanar, Chalkhori, Lakshar now under watch</p> <p>Inference: "Single District" replaced by "District of India"</p> <p>Mass Surrenders & Rehabilitation → Break from Violence</p> <p>10,000 surrenders since 2019</p>	<p>Revised Strategy</p> <p>Security Dimension</p> <p>Strategic Vision → Total Elimination, Not Management</p> <p>Now: Mission declared as India's gravest internal threat with a clear goal of elimination by March 31, 2026</p> <p>Earlier: Viewed as a socio-economic issue; goal was containment, not elimination</p> <p>Political LWE → Mission-Mode National Leadership</p> <p>Now: Centralised, singular leadership, national political ownership</p> <p>Earlier: Inconsistent, Centre-State approach, weak follow-through and diluted focus</p> <p>Leadership Targeting → Decapitation as Core Doctrine</p> <p>Now: Systematic targeting of top Maoist leadership (e.g., Bhaskar, Sudhakar), disrupts ideological base</p> <p>Earlier: Lacked prioritised targeting; leadership structure remained intact for decades</p> <p>Security Infrastructure → Fortified, Penetrative Grid</p> <p>Now: 612 fortified police stations (up from 66-2019), 280+ new camps, helipads for deep-area access</p> <p>Earlier: Sparse camps, weak forward deployment, security vacuum in Red Corridor interiors</p> <p>Force Deployment → Elite Forces + Tribal Integration</p> <p>Now: CIBSD, Coughmeds, and local Border Force riggers dominate counter-insurgency</p> <p>Earlier: Generic CAPF deployment with little specialisation or continuity in key stations</p> <p>Local Governance → Community-Backed Policing</p>

22 Direct Questions

Reflected from Vajiram and Ravi SMART Current Affairs in Mains 2025

GS2 - Q2. Comment on the need of administrative tribunals as compared to the court system. Assess the impact of the recent tribunal reforms through rationalization of tribunals made in 2021.

Administrative tribunals	
<p>• Administrative tribunals are the successor entities from which practice are said to have been elevated from the Bar.</p> <p>Lok Adalat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the alternative dispute redressal mechanisms. NALSA, along with other Legal Services Institutions, conducts Lok Adalats. Forums where disputes/cases pending in the court of law or at the pre-litigation stage are settled/compromised <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Art - 323A: Civil Service disputes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> e.g. Central Administrative Tribunal Art - 323B: Other Tribunals <ol style="list-style-type: none"> e.g. Income Tax Tribunal, NCLT, SEBI Tribunal, NCLAT, IRDA, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violates the Theory of Separation of Powers. They violate the Principle of Natural Justice as they may decide the matter ex parte. They are not bound to follow precedents, which reduces the public trust. The public hearing is not allowed. They suffer from a lack of publicity. Vacancy affects the efficiency; obj: objectives of these institutions. Decisions of Tribunals are subject to appeal in the Supreme Court & High Courts which defeats the purpose. 	<p>Waqf Amendment Act -2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly define "waqf" as waqf by any person practicing Islam for at least five years and having ownership of such property. Ensuring that the creation of waqf-al-ahid does not lead to the denial of inheritance rights to women. Providing the functions of the Survey Commissioner to the Collector or any other officer not below the rank of Deputy Collector, duly nominated by the Collector Providing for a broad-based composition of the Central Waqf Council and the State Waqf Boards and ensuring the representation of Muslim women and non-Muslims. Providing for the establishment of a separate Board of Waqf for Bihar and Jharkhand. Providing for the representation of Shia, Sunni, Bohra, Aghakhan, and other backward classes among Muslim.

GS2 - Q14. Examine the evolving pattern of Centre-State financial relations in the context of planned development in India. How far have the recent reforms impacted the fiscal federalism in India?

Fiscal Federalism	
<p>Fiscal federalism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U/A - 26B: Duties levied by the Union but collected & appropriated by States, e.g. Stamp duties & duties of excise on medicinal & toilet preparations mentioned in the Union list. Article 268A: Service Tax added by 89th CAA - 2003 & repealed by 101st CAA - 2016. U/A - 26A: Taxes levied & collected by Union but assigned to the States, e.g. Taxes on sales or purchase of Goods in course of inter-state trade or commerce, Terminal Taxes on Goods or Passengers carried by Rail, Road, Air or Ships. U/A - 26AA: Levy and collection of goods and services tax in course of inter-State trade or commerce (GST) such tax shall be apportioned between the Union and the States on the recommendations of the Goods and Services Tax Council. U/A - 270: Taxes levied & distributed between Union & States. It is on the recommendation of the Finance Commission. U/A - 271: Surcharge on certain duties & taxes for the purposes of the Union. U/A - 272: Grants in lieu of export duty on jute & jute products, (Assam, Bihar, Odisha & West Bengal) U/A - 275: Grants from the Union to certain States for raising levels of administration of Scheduled areas & promotion of welfare of Scheduled Tribes, (Sikkim & VI States) Union can make grants for any public purposes, even if it is not in the Union list. 	<p>ROYALTY IS NOT A TAX</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supreme Court Nine Judge Constitution Bench of Dr. DY Chandrachud, CJ, held that royalty paid by mining operators to the Central government is not a tax and that States have the power to levy cesses on mining and mineral-use activities. Royalty is a contractual consideration paid by the mining lessee to the lessor for enjoyment of mineral rights. M. P. V. Sundararaman & Co. v. State of Andhra Pradesh (1958), The legislative power to tax mineral rights vests with the State legislatures. Parliament does not have the legislative competence to tax mineral rights. <p>Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulation of mines and mineral development is enumerated under both the Union List and the State list. Parliament enacted the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) provides that the holder of a mining lease shall pay royalty in respect of any mineral removed or consumed from the leased area at the specified rates. In the India Cement case, a seven-judge Bench of this Court held that royalty is tax, and the State legislatures lack competence to levy taxes on mineral rights because the subject-matter is covered by the MMDR Act. Later in time, in State of West Bengal v. Kesoram Industries Ltd (2009), a Constitution Bench of this Court held that the decision in India Cement (supra) stemmed from the fact that the royalty was levied on the removal of the rock.

How will our SMART Mains Current Affairs Programme help you?

We understand that students face difficulties in recalling and effectively utilising current affairs from multiple scattered sources. SMART Mains Current Affairs Programme follows a multi-dimensional approach towards Current Affairs preparation covering political, economic, social, scientific, environmental, and international developments through a structured and exam-oriented framework.



Key Challenges faced by aspirants in current affairs preparation are:

- **Identifying important current affairs** for UPSC CSE Main Examination.
- Avoiding the **deluge of current affairs material** and focusing on quality over quantity.
- **Understanding the UPSC current affairs question pattern** and the difference between news and issues. (News talks about an incident while Issues focus on ideas)
- **Analyzing and establishing connections** between the forward and backward linkages of a current affairs topic.
- **Covering and connecting** current affairs with the static syllabus.
- **Adopting an active and engaging approach** rather than a passive and superficial one

HOW DOES THE PROGRAMME ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES?

1 Structured Approach

A structured and organised framework to cover diverse Current Affairs relevant for Mains and Interview stages.

2 Focused Coverage

Coverage aligned with the requirements of UPSC including politics, economy, science & technology, environment, international relations, and governance.

3 Time Efficiency

Streamlined preparation under one programme without the need to follow multiple scattered resources.

4 Integration with Syllabus

Integrated approach correlating Current Affairs with static portions of the UPSC syllabus.

5 Improve Main Answer Writing Skills

Learn to seamlessly incorporate Current Affairs into GS Paper I, II, III, and IV answers.

6 Boosts Essay and Interview Preparation

Develop issue-based understanding and depth required for Essay and Interview stages.

7 Confidence and Clarity

Regular classes help improve clarity on complex issues and build confidence for all stages of UPSC CSE.

Scan to Watch

How Our SMART Mains Current Affairs Programme

Helped UPSC Toppers 2024

Real Stories. Real Ranks. Real Results.



Shakti Dubey
AIR 1



Priyanshu Agrawal
AIR 123



Akshat Koolwal
AIR 352



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