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Vikram-1, Article 142 & Textile Exports

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Recent developments such as the launch of the Vikram-1, the use of Article 142 by the Supreme Court, and the decline in India's textile exports are important for UPSC preparation. These topics span across Science & Technology, Polity, and Economy, making them highly relevant for both Prelims and Mains.?

Vikram-1 and Private Space Sector:

The Vikram-1 rocket, developed by Skyroot Aerospace, is India's first privately built orbital launch vehicle and is expected to be launched soon. It is a multi-stage rocket capable of placing small satellites (up to ~350 kg) into Low Earth Orbit (LEO). A key innovation is the use of carbon composites and 3D-printed engines, making it cost-effective and faster to manufacture.

This development highlights India's shift toward private participation in the space sector, supported by reforms such as IN-SPACE and the opening of ISRO facilities to private players. It also strengthens India's position in the global small-satellite launch market.

Article 142 – 'Complete Justice' Power:

Article 142 of the Constitution empowers the Supreme Court of India to pass any decree necessary to ensure "complete justice." Recently, the Court used this power in a suo motu case related to road safety, issuing directives to prevent accidents.

This provision reflects the judiciary's extraordinary authority to bridge gaps where existing laws may be inadequate, but it also raises debates regarding judicial overreach vs judicial activism.

Decline in Textile Exports:

India's textile and garment exports declined by about 2.2% in FY26 to ~\$35.8 billion, mainly due to contraction in key segments like cotton textiles, garments, and carpets.

Interestingly, exports showed growth in rupee terms but declined in dollar terms, indicating the role of currency depreciation rather than real competitiveness. This suggests India may be losing global market share in textiles.

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Key Issues in Textile Sector:

The decline in exports is attributed to several structural challenges:

Weak global demand and economic slowdown

Rising competition from countries like Bangladesh and Vietnam

Dependence on cotton and limited diversification into man-made fibres

High logistics and compliance costs

Despite this, handicrafts showed slight growth, indicating niche sector resilience.