CIVIL SERVICES EXAMINATION

# focus

## MONTHLY NOTES BY RAU'S

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## CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS
logical . simple . targeted analysis & explanation of relevant news

## ETHICS, INTEGRITY & APTITUDE
Coverage from varied sources

## ESSAYS OF THE MONTH
Selected essays from Rau's GSI students

# DECEMBER 2021

## Rau's IAS
## Study Circle
— Since 1953 —

# Glasgow: Hits & Misses

Climate change is the gravest threat that humanity is facing today. The latest report of IPCC makes it glaringly clear that humans are the main cause behind this. Despite the fact that the world leaders, agreed to come together and address this challenge at Paris, the real movement in terms of actions to convert the goal to limit global temperature rise below 2°C seemed unlikely.

In this context, the COP 26 of UNFCCC, which is the highest decision-making body to address the issue of climate change, met at Glasgow. World, especially those most vulnerable to the vagaries of climate change, was looking for the world to cooperate and come up with actionable, tangible solutions for addressing climate change. In this context, let us see the key deliverables at Glasgow:

## What gives hopes

1.  **Mitigation:** Secured near-global net zero and future strengthening of mitigation measures:

    Over 90% of world GDP is now covered by net zero and 153 countries put forward new emissions target (NDCs). The Glasgow Climate Pact accelerates the drumbeat and puts in place the underpinning rules and systems. Countries agreed to new strengthened commitments, a new UN climate program on mitigation ambition and finalised the Paris rulebook. The UK Presidency drove commitments to move away from coal power, halt and reverse deforestation, reduce methane emissions and speed up the switch to electric vehicles.

2.  **Adaptation & Loss and Damage: boosted efforts to deal with climate impacts:**

    80 countries are now covered by either Adaptation Communications or National Adaptation Plans to increase preparedness to climate risks. The Glasgow - Sharm el-Sheikh Work Programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation was agreed, which will drive adaptation action. Record amounts of adaptation finance have been pledged, including committing to doubling 2019 levels of adaptation finance by 2025. This is the first time an adaptation specific financing goal has ever been agreed globally. Nations have announced new partnerships to improve access to finance, including for Indigenous Peoples. A new **Glasgow Dialogue on Loss and Damage** funding arrangements was created. The **Santiago Network on Loss and Damage was brought to life through clear functions and funding**.

3.  **Finance: Mobilizing billions and trillions**

    Developed countries have made progress towards delivering the $100 billion climate finance goal and will reach it by 2023 at the latest. Developed countries and financial institutions agreed to stop international support for the unabated fossil fuel energy sector next year.

4.  **Collaboration: worked together to deliver**

    The Glasgow Breakthroughs will accelerate collaboration between governments, businesses and civil society to deliver on climate goals faster, whilst collaborative councils and dialogues in energy, electric vehicles, shipping and commodities will help deliver on commitments. At COP26, we finalised the **Paris Rulebook - agreeing the 'enhanced transparency framework' (common reporting of emissions and support),** a new mechanism and standards for

international carbon markets, and common timeframes for emissions reductions targets.

## Sectoral Achievements at COP

1. **Glasgow has kept 1.5°C in reach but further action is needed:** The Paris climate deal commits the world to restrict global warming to 2°C and if possible till 1.5°C. According to scientists, pledges made under Paris Agreement had the world on track to 2.7-3.7°C rise. However, due to enhanced climate commitments at Glasgow, warming will be kept below 2°C, and further action in decade ahead can keep it below **1.5°C.**

2. **Coal Power:** Power sector accounts for a quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions, and coal is the single biggest contributor to human created climate change. At Glasgow, 65 countries committed to phase out coal. The membership of Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA) reached 48. All major coal financing countries have committed to end international coal finance by the end of 2021. For the first time negotiated references to 'phasing-down coal power' and ending fossil fuel subsidies in the UNFCCC's history.

3. **Reducing Methane Emissions:** Methane is a potent greenhouse gas. Most methane emissions come from oil and gas, waste and agriculture industries. At Glasgow, over 100 countries signed up to the Global Methane Pledge to reduce global methane emissions by 30% by 2030.

4. Halting and reversing deforestation: Protecting and restoring ecosystems, and managing land sustainably, has the potential to reduce annual net greenhouse gas emissions by more than 7 giga tonnes by 2030. It will also support adaptation, reduce climate vulnerability, promote biodiversity, and enhance livelihoods. 137 countries accounting for 91% of world's forests committed to Glasgow Leader's Declaration on Forests and Land to end deforestation by 2030.

## What pulls us down:

1. Climate Finance is one area where developed countries of the world keeping pulling back. They have still not delivered the promised $100 billion to developing countries. Even the paltry funds which are given as climate finance is not in form of aid but grants, which poor developing countries most vulnerable to climate change fail to utilised.

2. **Compensation for loss and damage:** Justice is the soul by which any action should be judged. The present climate change is the result of historical emissions of developed countries. This has been established by recent IPCC report. Developed countries have, however, fail to own up their responsibility by compensating poor & vulnerable countries in addressing an increasingly frequency of climate related disasters.

3. Pushing developing countries beyond their capacity: The developed countries attained their current riches by pursuing a very fossil fuel intensive path to economic growth. However, in the garb of climate change they are pushing developing countries to pledge net zero commitments and deny themselves the benefits of cheaper sources of energy in their path to poverty alleviation, economic growth, and development.

In the end, the climate change is a silent witness to the activities of the mankind. It remains silent to the extent when nature can remain within the "replacement level". But as seen in the last few decades, the climate change has made its voice heard and this voice is heard in the form of increased deaths from respiratory diseases, change in weather cycle, decreasing food security, increased temperature across the globe resulting in jeopardizing the fresh water supply for millions and recently witnessed forest fires, cyclones and weakening of polar vertex. All countries have to come together to fight climate change and developed countries should be willing to take up more responsibility for the damage they have caused rather than transferring the responsibility to developed and developing countries. After all "We have Just One Earth" and there is no planet B for all the residents.

# focus

## CRITICAL NOTES FOR THE PREPARATION OF GENERAL STUDIES PAPERS

The purpose of Focus is to expound the applied nature of General Studies to Civil Services aspirants thereby making them aware of the real demand of UPSC exam.

The sources relied for selection and analysis of issues are:
1. The Hindu, The Hindu (Sunday)
2. The Indian Express
3. The Times of India
4. Asian Age
5. The Tribune
6. The Economic Times
7. Hindu Business Line
8. Frontline
9. Economic and Political Weekly
10. IDSA
11. BBC
12. Yojana
13. Kurukshetra
14. Down to Earth

**Rau's IAS Study Circle**
Since 1953

Dear Students,

FOCUS is the Study Circle's monthly publication of contemporary issues and current affairs analysis. It is in fact a collective effort, by experienced educators in varied themes, of identifying current affairs in light of the UPSC syllabus, supplementing them with background information, explaining their related dimensions, lending them a generalist viewpoint and thus producing critical notes for the preparation of General Studies' syllabus.

The publication, as the name suggests, focuses solely on issues which are relevant to the factual as well as applied aspects of the General Studies' syllabus. That is how Focus covers all anticipated issues and themes for the upcoming Civil Services Examination (CSE).

### Features

#### PART ONE | CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

- **This month edition covers analysis of news from the immediately preceding month.**
- All news/issues are categorized and clubbed syllabus-wise (International Relations, Polity & Governance, Science & Technology, Ethics, Integrity & Aptitude and so on) for efficient study.
- Background information has been added to provide context.
- Related and Additional information-dimensions have been explained to add depth to your understanding.
- Maps and figures have been provided for associative and retentive learning.
- Practice Questions

#### PART TWO | ETHICS, INTEGRITY & APTITUDE

- Coverage from varied sources

#### PART THREE | ESSAYS FOR YOU

- Selected essays from Rau's GSI students

For further understanding or discussion in any topic, please consult your respective professors.

**Good Luck!**
**RAU'S IAS STUDY CIRCLE**

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# PART ONE

# CURRENT

# AFFAIRS

# ANALYSIS

**logical .simple .targeted**
**analysis & explanation**
**of all relevant news of the month**

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## # GS PAPER (PRELIMS) & GS PAPER III (MAIN)

## LEAD ARTICLE

# PEPSICO CONTROVERSY OVER PPV&FR ACT: EXPLAINED

#IPR

**PRIMARY SOURCE** BusinessLine    **SECONDARY SOURCE** FINANCIAL EXPRESS

**SECONDARY SOURCE** mint

*Earlier, in 2019, the PepsiCo filed a case against the potato farmers in Gujarat for allegedly growing its registered potato variety "FL 2027" which is used to make 'Lays' chips. The Company sought a compensation of Rs 1 crore from the farmers for the violation of its rights under the **Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act,2001. (PPVFR Act,2001).** This case was considered to be quite unprecedented since it involved the Rights of the companies Vs. Rights of the Farmers. Further, it was for the first time that a company tried to sue a group of farmers for the violation of intellectual property rights.*

*In a landmark decision, the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' rights Authority (PPV&FRA) has now decided to revoke registration. However, due to growing backlash, the PepsiCo finally agreed to revoke PepsiCo's registration of FL 2027 variety on the grounds that it was not in larger interest of the farmers.*



**01 — 2001**
Passage of Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights act to register plant varieties

**2016 — 02**
Registration of "FL 2027" Potato Variety by PepsiCo

**03 — 2019**
PepsiCo files a case against the potato farmers in Gujarat and seeks compensation of Rs 1 crore for violation of its rights under PPV&FR Act

**2019 — 04**
Filing of Petition against PepsiCo before PPV&FRA

**05 — December 2021**
PPV&FRA revokes Pepsico's registration of "FL 2027" Potato Variety on grounds of violation of Farmers' Interests

### BACKGROUND TO ADOPTION TO PPV&FR ACT, 2001

- Trade related aspects of Intellectual property Rights (TRIPS 1995) agreement under WTO, provides for protection of intellectual property in the form of patents, copyrights etc. to promote innovation.
- On similar lines, there is a need to promote invention of new seeds which can lead to better and high yielding plant varieties. However, the agriculture in the poor and developing countries is dominated by poor farmers and hence patenting of seeds by the companies may go against the interests of such farmers.
- In this regard, TRIPS agreement provides for a flexibility mechanism to the countries wherein a new

plant variety can be protected either by issuing patents or an effective "sui generis" system or a combination of the two. The "sui generis" system means that the country may adopt its own law to meet its special needs.

- Further, TRIPS agreement provides that **Union for protection of Plant Varieties (UPOV)** may be used as the basis for "sui generis" system i.e., provisions of the UPOV may be incorporated in their domestic laws to protect plant varieties.

- So, the choice before India was to either enact a domestic law or issue patents for the protection of plant varieties. Further, India also had the option of becoming the member of UPOV and incorporate the provisions of the UPOV in its domestic law.

- **India decided to enact domestic law in the form of PPVFR Act, 2001 without becoming a member of UPOV.** This was done to protect the interest of the farmers since UPOV denies the farmers the freedom to re-use farm saved seeds and to exchange them with their neighbors.

**Meaning of Protection of Plant varieties:** Intellectual property right that the breeder (Individual, farmer, community of farmers, institution, or a government) enjoys over the plant variety. It means no one can _**sell, export, import or produce the seed or propagating materials**_ of such protected plant variety without the breeder's permission.

### OBJECTIVES OF PPV&FR ACT, 2001

- Grant intellectual property rights to plant breeders to stimulate R&D in new varieties of plant varieties.

- Protect the interests of the farmers and recognize their contribution in conserving, improving and making available plant genetic resources for the development of new plant varieties.

**Difference between Patent Act and PPV&FR Act:** Both acts deal with the IPR of the inventor. The Patent Act of India does not provide for patent protection of a plant variety. The PPVFRA not only protects a plant variety, it also protects the rights of plant breeders and farmers on plant varieties. The protection of a plant variety is granted in the form of registration (and not in form of Patent).

### WHAT KIND OF VARIETIES CAN BE REGISTERED UNDER THE PPV&FR ACT?

A variety is eligible for registration under the Act if it essentially fulfils the criteria of **Distinctiveness, Uniformity and Stability (DUS).** Types of varieties:

- **New Variety**: Developed by breeders.

- **Extant Variety:** Plant variety already in existence for not more than 15 years

- **Farmers' Variety:** Existing variety developed by a farmer or a community from the existing traditional variety

- **Essentially Derived Variety:** Variety derived for a targeted trait that is missing in an existing registered variety or a crossed product (hybrid) of two such initial registered varieties. Developed through genetic engineering, tissue culture etc.

**Note:** Registration of plant varieties is provided by Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' rights Authority, which is a statutory body under the act. Around 3500 plant varieties have been registered under this act so far.

### RIGHTS UNDER THE ACT

**1. Breeders' Rights:** Breeders have exclusive rights to produce, sell, market, distribute, import or export the protected variety.

**2. Researchers' Rights:** Researcher can use any of the registered variety for conducting experiment or research.

**3. Farmers' Rights:**

- **Right to register traditional varieties** or farmers' varieties. Once a variety is registered, farmers obtain exclusive right to produce and market it. This right recognises the role of farmers as plant breeders and innovators.

- **Right to reward and recognition:** Farmers are eligible for recognition and rewards for the conservation of Plant Genetic Resources of land races and wild relatives of economic plants. This right recognizes the role of farmers in preserving and developing agro-diversity.

- **Right to benefit-sharing:** Farming or tribal communities that contributed to the development of a new crop variety are entitled to an equitable sharing of the benefits earned from it.

- **Right to compensation for losses:** This right guarantees compensation to farmers who are victims of exaggerated claims regarding the performance of newly registered varieties. The right serves to prevent

unfair marketing practices by breeders and seed sellers.

- **Right to protection against accusations of infringement:** A farmer cannot be prosecuted on charges of infringement of another's rights if the farmer affirms ignorance of the legal provision. This provision protects people of low legal literacy from harassment, particularly by seed companies.

## EXCEPTIONS TO PPV & FR ACT

- A farmer can save, use, sow, re-sow, exchange, share or sell his farm produce including seed of a variety protected under the PPV&FR Act, 2001. *However, the farmer is not allowed to sell branded seed of a variety protected under the PPV&FR Act, 2001.*

- Researchers can use registered plant varieties without the consent of the breeder for conducting R&D.

## DURATION OF PROTECTION OF A REGISTERED PLANT VARIETY

The duration of protection of registered varieties is different for different type of crops which are as below:

1. Trees and vines - 18 years.
2. For other crops and extant varieties - 15 years

## RECENT PEPSICO-GUJARAT FARMERS CONTROVERSY

- PepsiCo India registered hybrid potato variety FL 2027 in 2016 under PPV&FR Act. PepsiCo marketed this variety under the trademark FC-5 and presently, it is used to make the popular "Lays" potato chips in India.

- The potato variety is grown by approximately 12,000 farmers who are a part of the company's collaborative farming program, wherein the company sells seeds to farmers and has an exclusive contract to buy back their produce. The company found out that some of the farmers in Gujarat, who were not part of its collaborative farming program, were also growing and selling potatoes of this variety. On the account of this, the company decided to file a case against the farmers for the infringement of its rights and accordingly, sought a compensation of around Rs 1 crore.

- **PepsiCo's Argument:** The company argued that some of the big farmers are misusing its registered FC-5 variety wherein the farmers are growing and selling this variety to regional potato chips manufacturers, which is in turn adversely affecting the market share of its popular "Lays" potato chips

- **Farmers' Argument:** The PPV&FR act enables farmers to "save, use, sow, re-sow, exchange, share or sell their farm produce including seed of a variety protected under this Act." The farmers argued that they had not resorted to selling of branded seeds of the registered variety, which is prohibited under the act. Hence, accordingly, they argued that they had not violated the rights of the breeder (PepsiCo India) under the act.

- **Contentious point of Law:** FC-5 has been registered as an "Extant Variety", which is also a "Variety of Common Knowledge". This, in other words, implies that the said variety of potato was already available in the country before it was registered and that there was "common knowledge" about this variety in the country. It may, therefore, be assumed that PepsiCo's variety would surely have been produced in the country before it was registered.

  Registration of extant varieties was allowed in the PPVFRA despite opposition from several experts, and the justification used was that farmers' varieties can be registered under this provision. However, companies like PepsiCo got the opportunity to register older varieties under "Extant" category and hence can sue the farmers for the violation of their rights.

- **2019:** PepsiCo filed a case against the potato farmers in Gujarat and sought a compensation of around Rs 1 crore from the farmers. However, it withdrew the cases later.

- **2021:** The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' rights Authority (PPV&FRA) authority has decided to revoke PepsiCo's registration of FL 2027 variety on the grounds that it was not in larger interest of the farmers.

## WAY FORWARD

The PPV&FR Act, 2002 is unambiguous on upholding farmers' rights wherein the farmers are allowed to sow, re-sow and even sell the registered varieties, provided they are not branded varieties. Hence, this judgement sets a precedent for all MNCs to not only uphold, but also more importantly, not to transgress the legally granted farmers' rights and freedoms in India.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## BANKING AND FINANCE

# RBI'S REPORT ON FUNCTIONING OF ARCS

#BANKING

**PRIMARY SOURCE** BusinessLine   **SECONDARY SOURCE** FINANCIAL EXPRESS

**SECONDARY SOURCE** m i n t

*According to RBI's financial stability report, the gross NPAs of the Banks is set to increase to 9.8% by end of March 2022. Higher NPAs of the Banks can further decelerate growth of credit in the economy and can potentially undermine the financial stability. Recently, the Government has established* **ARC-AMC Model ('Bad Bank") to solve the NPA mess.** *Apart from that, India has* **also introduced Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs) under the SARFAESI Act, 2002.** *However, the private ARCs have not been successful in India.*

*In this regard, recently, a committee appointed by the RBI has highlighted constraints and challenges faced by ARCs and has accordingly given its set of recommendations.*

**EVOLUTION OF THE ASSET RESOLUTION MECHANISM WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ARCs**

**Debt Recovery Tribunals (DRTs):** Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions (RDDBFI) Act,1993 provides for Debt Recovery Tribunals (DRTs) to deal with recovery of bad loans of more than Rs 20 lakhs. The DRTs were also authorised to form Lok Adalat. Initially, the DRTs were successful with recovery rates increasing to 81% in 2008-09. However, in 2019-20, recovery rates reduced to just 4% in 2019-20 due to inadequate infrastructure, delays etc.

**Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act (SARFAESI Act), 2002:**

1. If a borrower defaults on a loan, the Banks can give a notice period of 60 days to the borrower to repay the loans. If the borrower fails to repay within 60 days, the Banks can take the following actions:

   a. Take possession of the pledged assets and then lease or sell it off to recover the loan amount.

   b. Take over the management of the business of the borrower.

   c. Appoint a person to manage the assets.

2. Provides for Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs) to be registered and regulated by the RBI.

3. Provides for issuance of Security Receipts (SRs) by the ARCs.



Working Mechanism of SARFAESI Act, 2002

Bank — Option 2 — (1) Sell NPAs → Asset Reconstruction Company — (3) → Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial assets — Recovers the NPA through Debt Restructuring/ Sale of Assets

(2) Cash + Security Receipts

Option 1 — Enforcement of Security Interest

Issue notice of 60 days upon declaration of NPA

Take possession of the pledged assets and then lease or sell it off to recover the loan amount.

**Applicability of SARFAESI Act**
- Secured Creditors
- Minimum Loan Amount : Rs 1 lakh
- More than 20% of Principal and Interest pending
- Not applicable to Agricultural Land

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016:** Provide for time-bound resolution of NPAs through DRTs (for Individuals) and National Company Law Tribunals (For companies)

**DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SARFAESI ACT AND IBC, 2016**

1. SARFAESI- Applicable only for secured financial creditors; IBC- Applicable for both secured and unsecured financial creditors.

2. Unlike IBC, SARFAESI is not applicable to Operational Creditors.

3. Minimum threshold for invoking IBC: Individuals (Rs 1000); Companies (Rs 1 crore); Minimum threshold for SARFAESI: Rs 1 lakh.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS OF THE ARCs**

The ARC industry began with the establishment of the Asset Reconstruction Company India Limited (ARCIL) in 2003. Presently, there are around 28 ARCs, registered and regulated by RBI. Some of these ARCs are ARCIL, Suraksha Asset Reconstruction, Indiabulls asset reconstruction, ASREC Ltd., IndiaRF etc. As on March 31, 2021, the ARCs had cumulatively taken over NPAs worth Rs 5 lakh crores.

- **Poor Recovery rates compared to IBC:** The recovery rates of ARCs were significantly higher in the initial years of their inception. However, in recent years, it has dropped to just 26% in 2019-20. This is significantly lower than recovery rates under IBC (45%).

- **Low Percentage of NPAs with ARCs (26%) in comparison to DRTs (33%) and IBC (31%).** Remaining 10% NPAs are under Lok Adalats. Since the introduction of IBC, the Banks have started preferring IBC over the DRTs due to time-bound resolution and higher recovery rates.

- **Low Capital Base of ARCs:** Majority of ownership of ARCs lie in the hands of Banks and Financial Institutions. Even though, the Government has allowed 100% FDI through automatic route, ARCs have failed to attract foreign capital.

- **Higher Borrowings:** The ARCs tend to rely heavily on borrowings from Banks for their funds. The poor financial position of ARCs could have negative domino effect on Banking sector.

- **Nature of Resolution:** The ARCs have relied more on recovery of NPAs through selling-off assets and less on revival of business. ARCs have rarely used change or takeover of management of business of the borrowers or conversion of borrowers' debt into equity as measures for reconstruction.

- **Conflict of Interest:** Considering that banks are not just the major shareholders of and lenders to ARCs but also sellers of NPAs to ARCs, there could be circuitous movement of funds between banks and these institutions.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Sale of NPAs at an early stage:** Delays in sale of NPAs to ARCs not only leads to erosion in the asset value, but also reduces the probability of reviving genuine companies. Hence, at the start of every year, Banks must compile and share the list of NPAs to be sold to ARCs. This would increase predictability in the amount and quality of stressed assets flowing into ARC sector and improve the lenders' recovery on these NPAs.

- **Bring ARCs under IBC:** Under IBC, Banks are required to invite applications from different entities for the resolution of NPAs. However, the current regulatory and legal framework does not allow ARCs to act as Resolution Applicants (RA) under IBC i.e., they cannot apply for resolution of Bad loans under IBC. This is in spite of the fact that ARCs can use tools such as change in/takeover of management, debt to equity conversion, etc. Hence, regulations should have to be changed to enable ARCs as Resolution Applicants under IBC.

- **Enhanced Financing Options:** The RBI must permit ARCs to raise finances from all regulated entities such as FPIs, Alternate Investment Funds (AIFs), NBFCs as well as retail investors.

- **Liquidity and Trading of Security Receipts (SRs):** Presently, only the Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) such as Banks, Pension fund, Insurance and Mutual fund companies are allowed to invest in Security receipts (SRs) issued by the ARCs. To broaden the investor base of SRs, the list of eligible qualified buyers may be further expanded to include High-net worth individuals (HNIs), corporates, NBFCs/HFCs etc.

# CORPORATES AS BANKS

#BANKING

PRIMARY SOURCE | BusinessLine

*Earlier, in November 2020, the IWG had submitted 33 recommendations to the RBI with respect to ownership*

*structure of Banks. One of the most contentious recommendations submitted by this committee is to allow large corporate/Industrial houses to be the promoters of the Indian Banks.*

*In November 2021, the RBI stated that it has accepted around 21 recommendations of IWG. However, it has decided to put on hold the recommendation to grant Banking licenses to Corporates.*

### EVOLUTION IN BANKING POLICY

- **Phase of Nationalisation (1969-1991):** India's public sector banks (PSBs) were initially set up as Private Banks and later Nationalised in two waves in 1969 and 1980.
- **Entry of New Private Banks (NPBs) post 1991 Reforms:** Based upon the recommendations of Narasimhan committee, the RBI issued policy guidelines to facilitate the entry of new private Banks (NPBs) on a large scale. Subsequently, it led to the entry of large-sized private Banks such as HDFC, ICICI, Axis Bank etc.
- **Guidelines for Licensing of Universal Banks in the Private Sector:** The minimum initial paid-up capital for setting up new private Bank was set at Rs 500 crores. Resident individuals and professionals having 10 years of experience in banking and finance were also eligible to promote universal banks. *However, Large corporate/industrial houses were not allowed to set up Banks but were permitted to invest in the banks up to 10 per cent.*
- **Consolidation of Public Sector Banks (PSBs):** Based upon the recommendations of Narasimhan Committee (1991) and P.J. Nayak Committee (2014), the Government has focussed on consolidation/merger of PSBs. After a series of mergers, currently there are 12 public sector banks, including the SBI.
- **Present Phase:** Shift towards greater role of Private Sector in Banking industry as evident in the new public sector enterprise policy.

### PRESENT STATUS OF BANKING SECTOR

**Under-developed Banking sector:**

- Total balance sheet of banks in India constitutes less than 70% of the GDP, which is lower in comparison to China (170%), Japan (110%) etc.
- Low credit-GDP ratio in India

- Banking sector has remained dwarf in comparison to size of Indian economy (Eco Survey 2019-20). India's largest Bank, SBI is placed at 55th position globally.

**Government's monopoly in Banking sector:** Public sector Banks (PSBs) account for almost 70% of the market share in the Banking sector. However, PSBs account for 80% of the overall NPAs of the Banking sector.

**Higher efficiency of Private Sector Banks:** According to the Economic Survey 2019-20, every rupee of the taxpayers' money which is invested in PSBs fetches a market value of 71 paise. On the other hand, every rupee invested in NPBs fetches a market value of Rs 3.70 i.e., more than five times as much value as that of a rupee invested in PSBs.

### SHOULD CORPORATE/ INDUSTRIAL HOUSES BE ALLOWED TO SET UP BANKS?

A large corporate/industrial/business house is defined as a group having total assets of **Rs 5000 crore or more** wherein the non-financial business of the group accounts for more than **40 per cent in terms of total assets or gross income.**

| Arguments in Favour | Arguments against |
|---|---|
| - Bring in capital and necessary expertise in Banking<br>- Improve the credit-to-GDP ratio and facilitate investment driven model.<br>- Reduce government's monopoly in banking sector and reap benefits (Example of Liberalisation of Telecom and Aviation Sectors).<br>- Infuse competition in Banking Sector leading to higher efficiency.<br>- Lead to development of large-sized banks to cater to credit needs of $ 5 trillion economy.<br>- Leverage private sector | **Prone to shocks:** The Indian Economy remained less affected by Global financial crisis 2017-18 due to the dominance of Public Sector Banks.<br>**Conflict of Interest:** Corporate houses can be involved in inter-connected lending. They can easily turn banks into a source of funds for their own businesses. They can also use banks to provide finance to customers and suppliers of their businesses. Tracing inter-connected lending is a challenge.<br>**Contagion Impact:** Banks owned by corporate houses will be exposed to the risks of the non-bank entities of |

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

| | |
|---|---|
| banks for socio-economic development. (Ex: Jan Dhan Yojana, DBT etc.) <br><br> • Many Countries have not explicitly prohibited entry of large corporate/Industrial houses. | the group. <br><br> **Poor Supervision and Regulatory oversight:** The recent failure of Yes Bank and Laxmi Vilas Bank has exposed the weakness in supervision of banks. Failure of banks promoted by large corporate houses would be disastrous. <br><br> **Concentration of Political and Economic Power:** Political biasedness in giving licenses to certain corporate houses; Anti-competitive practices; promotion of crony capitalism. <br><br> **Misallocation of Credit:** Possibility of diverting depositors' money only towards certain sectors and hence may affect financial inclusion. <br><br> **Over-Burden RBI** leading to decrease in quality of Regulation. <br><br> **Moral Hazard:** Banks in India are rarely allowed to fail. They may have to be rescued by Government which poses moral hazard. |

**WAY FORWARD**

We need to be extra-cautious in issuing licenses to corporate houses as the problems may outweigh the benefits. The issue of licences to the corporate houses should be preceded by number of reforms:

- **Strengthen Banking Regulation Act, 1949:** The Federal Reserve Act in USA prohibits financial transactions of Banks with their affiliates. Hence, amendments to Banking Regulation Act, 1949 should be done to prevent Inter-connected lending.

- **Consolidated Supervision:** The RBI must be empowered to carry out the consolidated supervision of the Banks and their non-Banking entities to avoid any conflict of Interest.

- **Strengthen Supervisory Cadre:** The RBI has set up Specialised Supervisory and Regulatory Cadre (SSRC) in November 2019 to strengthen and consolidate the supervision functions, which were scattered across different departments. The SSRC needs to be strengthened and given proper training.

- **Reforms in PSBs:** The failure of Yes Bank and Laxmi Vilas Bank (LVB) has highlighted that it is not the ownership structure, but quality of corporate governance which determines the efficiency of banks. Hence, the Government must also give due amount of emphasis on governance reforms in the PSBs as highlighted by P.J. Nayak Committee.

# PROPOSAL FOR DIGITAL BANKS IN INDIA

## #BANKING

**PRIMARY SOURCE** | **THE HINDU**

*NITI Aayog has recently released a concept paper highlighting the need for Digital Banks in India. The digital Banks will help us leverage ICT to improve the credit-creation and financial inclusion.*

**PRESENT STATUS**

Presently, only those entities which are licensed by the RBI can undertake banking related operations. As of now, the RBI does not allow Banks to be 100% digital. Hence, even though Banks can provide banking services by leveraging technology (such as Imobile of ICICI), the Banks must have physical branches.

**ABOUT DIGITAL BANKS PROPOSED BY NITI AAYOG**

- To be licensed under Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

- Provide banking services- Acceptance of Deposits, giving loans, provide insurance etc. without the need to have physical branches.

- No physical branches.

- Leverage technology to provide banking service.

- Also called 'Challenger Banks'- Newly created Banks which compete with longer established Banks through use of Digital Technology.

**Global Examples**: Challenger Banks such as Starling Bank, Monese Banks in UK.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### MODELS OF DIGITAL BANKS

- **(Front-End Only) Neo-banks:** These neo-banks partner with existing Banks to offer Banking services such as deposits and loans. These neo-Banks do not have funds of their own, but they collaborate with traditional banks to offer various banking related services. Ex: RazorPayX, InstantPay, Open, Niyo etc.

- **(Licensed) Digital banks:** These entities are fully functional banks, regulated by the banking regulator and issue deposits and make loans on their own balance sheet. Presently, RBI does not allow such fully digital Banks to operate in India. NITI Aayog has argued in favour of such banks in India.

- **(Autonomous) unit of traditional banks:** These entities are essentially neo-banking operations of traditional banks that function autonomously and compete with stand-alone neo-banks. Ex. SBI's Yono, 811 of Kotak Mahindra, DigiBank of DBS etc.

### NEED FOR FULLY LICENSED DIGITAL BANKS IN INDIA

**Under-developed Banking sector:** As highlighted by Economic Survey 2019-20, Indian Banking sector has remained dwarf in comparison to the size of our economy. Take for instance, India's largest Bank i.e., SBI is ranked at 55th position globally. The growth of large-sized economies such as USA, China etc. has been supported by large-sized global banks.

**Poor status of Public Sector Banks:** PSBs account for 80% of the overall NPAs of the Banking sector. The digital banks would infuse competition and improve the performance of PSBs.

**Constraints faced by traditional banks:**

- High Operational costs due to the need to maintain physical branches.
- Limited focus on innovation, particularly on delivering banking services by leveraging technology.
- Low risk appetite in giving loans to MSMEs leading to credit gap of around Rs 25 lakh crores.

**Higher Efficiency:** Unlike normal banks, Digital Banks need not maintain physical branches, which in turn enables them to reduce their operational costs and provide loans at cheaper rates of interest.

**Improve financial inclusion:** India has made rapid strides in financial inclusion by leveraging digital technology such as JAM Trinity, UPI etc. Digital Banks can leverage technology to provide banking services in rural and unbanked areas leading to further fillip to financial inclusion.

**Empirical Evidence:** Digital Banks like Starling Bank (UK) & MyBank (China) have emerged as challenger banks and have been able to compete with bigger banks leading to positive disruption in banking sector.

# REVISED PCA FRAMEWORK

#BANKING

PRIMARY SOURCE mint

*Recently, the RBI has come out with the revised Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework. The provisions of the revised PCA Framework will be effective from January 1, 2022.*

|  | Earlier Regime | Revised Regime |
|---|---|---|
| **Applicability** | All Scheduled Commercial Banks (including Small Finance Banks and Payment Banks) | All Scheduled Commercial Banks (excluding Small Finance Banks and Payment Banks) |
| **Urban Cooperative Banks Covered?** | No. Covered under RBI's Supervisory Action Framework | No. Covered under RBI's Supervisory Action Framework. |
| **RRBs covered?** | No. Covered under NABARD's Supervisory Action Framework | No. Covered under NABARD's Supervisory Action Framework |
| **Parameters used** | <ul><li>Capital to Risk weighted Asset Ratio (CRAR) and Common Equity Tier-1 Ratio.</li><li>Net Non-Performing Assets (NPA)</li><li>Leverage ratio</li><li>Return on Assets (RoA)</li></ul> | <ul><li>Capital to Risk weighted Asset Ratio (CRAR) and Common Equity Tier-1 Ratio.</li><li>Net Non-Performing Assets (NPA) and</li><li>Leverage ratio</li></ul> |
| **Return on Assets** | Yes | No |

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

| included? | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Higher Provisioning Requirements** | Mandatory Provision | Discretionary Provision |
| **Removal of Bank from PCA Framework** | RBI's discretion | Bank to be taken out of PCA framework if there are no breaches in the parameters for 4 continuous quarters. |

## DETAILS ABOUT REVISED PCA FRAMEWORK

Introduced by RBI in 2002 as a structured early intervention mechanism along the lines of the US Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's PCA framework. Subsequently, the RBI reviewed the framework in line with international best practices in 2017. The 2017 framework has further been revised.

**Rationale:** Tool used by the RBI to monitor the financial health of the Banks and take corrective action in the early stages.

**Indicators used:**

- Capital to Risk weighted Asset Ratio (CRAR) and Common Equity Tier-1 Ratio.
- Net Non-Performing Assets (NPA) and
- Leverage ratio

**When does it get triggered:** When the above 3 Indicators breach the threshold target. (Example: If Net NPA Is greater than or equal to 6%)

**Applicability:**

- Covers all the scheduled Commercial Banks except Payment Bank, Small Finance Banks and RRBs.
- Does not cover Cooperative Banks. Cooperative Banks are covered under RBI's Supervisory Action Framework (SAF) which is similar to PCA.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF A BANK IS PLACED UNDER PCA FRAMEWORK?

RBI can take certain mandatory and discretionary actions which can include

- Halting branch expansion
- Stopping dividend payment

- Undertake special audit, restructuring operations and activation of recovery plan.
- Banks' promoters can be asked to bring in new management.
- RBI can also supersede the bank's board.

**Banks under PCA (as on Nov 2021):** In Sep 2021, RBI removed Indian Overseas Bank and UCO Bank from the purview of PCA framework. As on Nov 2021, only Central Bank is under PCA framework.

# RBI's RETAIL DIRECT SCHEME

#BANKING

PRIMARY SOURCE    Business Standard

*The RBI has recently launched the "Retail Direct Scheme" as a one-stop solution to facilitate investment in Government Securities by individual investors. Earlier, the retail investors had to buy G-Secs indirectly through Banks, Stock exchanges etc. But now, retail investors can purchase G-Secs in the primary market directly from the RBI through the Retail direct platform.*

**Qs. With reference to India, consider the following statements (Prelims 2021)**

1. Retail investors through demat account can invest in Treasury Bills and Government of India Debt Bonds in primary market

2. The "Negotiated Dealing System-Ordering Matching" is a government securities trading platform of the Reserve Bank of India.

3. The "Central Depository Services Ltd" is jointly promoted by the Reserve Bank of India and the Bombay Stock Exchange.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 1 and 2

c) 3 only

d) 2 and 3

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



**Present method for investment in G-Secs for Retail Investors**

Retail Investors → Stock Exchanges (BSE Direct or NSE goBID) Or Brokers → Stock Exchanges or Brokers place orders with the RBI on behalf of retail investors → RBI allocates G-Secs which are then deposited in the Investors' Demat Accounts → Trading in secondary market through RBI's NDS-OM and Stock exchanges

**Retail Direct Platform**

Retail Investors → Open Retail Direct Gilt (RDG) account with RBI → Directly buy G-Secs from the RBI through the Retail Direct Platform → Trading in secondary market through RBI's NDS-OM and Stock exchanges

## WHAT ARE GOVERNMENT SECURITIES (G-SECS)?

Financial instruments issued by the Central or state Government to borrow money.

**Types:**

- **Treasury Bills**: Issued only by the Central Government with 3 different maturity periods- 91 days, 182 days and 364 days. Zero Coupon securities with no interest. Issued at discount and redeemed at face value.
- **Government bonds or dated securities:** Issued by the Central Government with long term maturity period of more than 1 year.
- **State Development Loans (SDLs)**: Issued by the State Government with long term maturity period of more than 1 year.

**Note:** G-Secs carry practically no risk of default and, hence, are called risk-free gilt-edged instruments.

## HOW ARE THE G-SECS ISSUED?

The G-Secs are issued through auctions conducted by RBI. Auctions are conducted on an electronic platform called the E-Kuber, the Core Banking Solution (CBS) platform of RBI. Scheduled Banks, Primary Dealers, Insurance companies etc. who maintain accounts with RBI, are members of this electronic platform. All members of E-Kuber can place their bids in the auction through this electronic platform.

## PARTICIPATION OF RETAIL INVESTORS IN G-SECS MARKET

- Presently, the Retail Investors cannot purchase G-secs in the primary market directly from the RBI. They can purchase G-Secs through aggregators/ Facilitators such as Banks, Primary dealers, Stock exchanges etc. For example, Retail investors can purchase G-Secs through the BSE Direct, NSE's goBID, stockbrokers etc.

- The retail investors can also participate in the trading of G-Secs in the secondary market through the RBI's Negotiated dealing system-Order matching (NDS-OM) and stock exchanges.

## DETAILS ABOUT RETAIL DIRECT PLATFORM

Platform to enable retail investors to buy G-Secs directly from RBI. Individual Retail investors can open Gilt Securities Account – "Retail Direct Gilt (RDG)" Account with the RBI.

- **Which G-Secs can be bought?** T-Bills, Dated Secs, SDLs and Sovereign Gold Bonds.
- **Who can open RDG Account?** Retail investors having Bank account, PAN Card etc. fulfilling KYC norms. Non-Resident investors are also eligible.
- **Limits on Investment:** RBI has imposed minimum and maximum investment limits for the retail investors. For example, minimum investment in the G-Secs should be Rs 10,000.

## BENEFITS FOR DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS

- **Retail Investors:** Risk-free Investment; Held in DEMAT form; Can be sold easily in secondary market to meet immediate cash requirements; can be used as collateral to borrow loans etc.
- **Government:** Make it easier for the Government to mobilize household deposits for undertaking long-term investment.
- **Economy:** Deepen the G-Secs Market → Higher Investment rates → Promote Economic Growth.

## WAY FORWARD

Going forward, the Government must run awareness campaigns to educate the people on the benefits of the scheme. The Government must also attract retail investors through income tax deductions for these instruments.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# RBI'S INTEGRATED OMBUDSMAN SCHEME

### #BANKING

PRIMARY SOURCE | Business Standard

*The protection of consumers in the financial sector such as Banks, NBFCs has gained policy priority in the recent years. Accordingly, the RBI has decided to merge three Ombudsman schemes (i) Banking Ombudsman Scheme (ii) Ombudsman Scheme for Non-Banking Financial Companies and (iii) Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions into a single scheme. The merger of these schemes is intended to make the process of redressal of grievances easier for the consumers across different verticals.*

**Qs. With reference to the institution of Banking Ombudsman in India, which one of the statements is not correct? (Prelims 2010)**

(a) The Banking Ombudsman is appointed by the Reserve Bank of India

(b) The Banking Ombudsman can consider complaints from Non-Resident Indians having accounts in India

*(c) The orders passed by the Banking Ombudsman are final and binding on the parties concerned*

(d) The service provided by the Banking Ombudsman is free of any fee

| | Banking Ombudsman Scheme | Ombudsman Scheme for NBFCs | Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Introduced under?** | Banking Regulation Act | RBI Act, 1934 | Payment and Settlement Systems Act |
| **Year** | 1995 | 2018 | 2019 |
| **Coverage** | Scheduled Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks and Scheduled Primary Cooperative Banks | All deposit taking NBFCs with asset size of more than Rs 100 crores. | Digital system participants such as Paytm, Phone pay, Amazon etc. |
| **When can complaint be registered before Ombudsman?** | If the Bank does not respond to complaint *within 1 year* or Bank rejects the complaint or if the customer is not satisfied with the reply given by the Bank. | If the Bank does not respond to complaint within *1 month* or NBFC rejects the complaint or if the customer is not satisfied with the reply given by the NBFC | If the entity does not respond to complaint within *1 month* or entity rejects the complaint or if the customer is not satisfied with the reply given by the entity |
| **Fees for filing Complaints** | No Fees | No Fees | No Fees |
| **Limits on Compensation payable to Customer** | Up to Rs 20 Lakh. Maximum Compensation of Rs 1 lakh can also be awarded for loss of time and mental harassment faced by customer | Up to Rs 10 Lakh. Maximum Compensation of Rs 1 lakh can also be awarded for loss of time and mental harassment faced by customer | Up to Rs 20 Lakh. Maximum Compensation of Rs 1 lakh can also be awarded for loss of time and mental harassment faced by customer |

**SALIENT FEATURES OF THE INTEGRATED OMBUDSMAN SCHEME**

**Need:** The three ombudsman schemes mentioned above had different grounds of complaints, leading to uneven redressal across customers of different entities. Further, they also provided for different compensation amounts resulting in unequal treatment of aggrieved customers.

**Coverage:**

- Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks, Scheduled Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks and Non-Scheduled Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks with deposits size of Rupees 50 crore and above.
- Non-Banking Financial Companies (excluding Housing Finance Companies) which (a) are authorised to accept

deposits; or (b) have customer interface, with an assets size of Rupees 100 crore.

- Payment system operators such as Paytm, PhonePe, TReDS platform etc.

**Grounds on which complaints can be filed:** Deficiency in services provided by above entities which may or may not result in financial loss or damage to customer.

**Mode for registering complaints:** RBI to establish the Centralised Receipt and Processing Centre. Complaints can also be filed online on separate portal.

**Institutional Framework to handle complaints:** RBI to appoint Ombudsman and Deputy Ombudsman with a tenure of 3 years.

**Limits on compensation payable to Customer:** The Ombudsman shall have the power to provide a compensation of up to Rs 20 lakhs.

## INCLUSIVE GROWTH

# NATIONAL MPI

#POVERTY

PRIMARY SOURCE — pib     SECONDARY SOURCE — BusinessLine
SECONDARY SOURCE — mint

*Recently, the NITI Aayog has published the National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2021. According to this report, one in every four people in India is multidimensionally poor.*

**Multidimensional nature of Poverty:** Poverty is mainly on account of multiple deprivations such as Education, Health, Housing, Employment etc. The multidimensionality of poverty is an integral part of the Sustainable Development Goals. Target 1.2. refers to reducing "at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions"

**ABOUT GLOBAL MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY INDEX (MPI)**

- **Released by:** United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI).

- **Scope:** Incidence of multidimensional deprivation (a headcount of those in multidimensional poverty) and its intensity (the average deprivation score experienced by poor people).

- **Dimensions used:** Measures deprivation at the household and individual level in health, education and standard of living, the same three dimensions as the Human Development Index.

If someone is deprived in a third or more of ten indicators, the global index identifies them as 'MPI poor', and the intensity of their poverty is measured by the percentage of deprivations they are experiencing.

- **How is MPI calculated?** MPI is the product of the incidence of multidimensional poverty (proportion of multidimensionally poor people) and the intensity of multidimensional poverty (average share of weighted deprivations among multidimensionally poor people).

- **Highlights of Global MPI 2021 for India:** Around 28% of India's population are multi-dimensionally poor. However, as per the poverty line estimation based on Suresh Tendulkar methodology, 22% of population live below poverty line.

- **Global Indices for Reforms and Growth (GIRG) initiative:** Initiative under the Cabinet Secretary to track India's performance across 29 global indices including Human Development Index (HDI), Global Hunger Index (GHI), Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), Human Capital Index (HCI), Global Innovation Index (GII) etc. Under this initiative, NITI Aayog is the nodal Ministry for the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).

**NATIONAL MULTI-DIMENSIONAL POVERTY INDEX**

- **Published by: NITI Aayog**

- **Rationale:** Aimed at deconstructing the Global MPI and creating a globally aligned and yet customised MPI for India.

**OBJECTIVE**

- Provide insights on multidimensional poverty at the subnational and district levels.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Formulation of sectoral policies and targeted interventions which contribute towards ensuring that "no one is left behind."
- Drive competition among the States and Union Territories

|  | Global MPI 2021 | National MPI 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| **Published by** | UNDP and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI). | NITI Aayog |
| **Dimensions** | Health, Education and Living Standard. Each dimension has been given weightage of 1/3. | Health, Education and Living Standard. Each dimension has been given weightage of 1/3. |
| **Indicators** | **10 Indicators**<br>• **Health:** Child Mortality and Nutrition<br>• **Education:** Years of Schooling and School Attendance<br>• **Living Standards:** Cooking Fuel, Sanitation, Drinking Water, Housing, Electricity, Assets. | **12 Indicators**<br>• **Health:** Nutrition, Child & Adolescent Mortality, Antenatal Care.<br>• **Education:** Years of Schooling and School Attendance<br>• **Living Standards:** Cooking Fuel, Sanitation, Drinking Water, Housing, Electricity, Assets, Bank Account. |
| **Criteria for classifying person as multi-dimensionally poor** | Deprivation in at least 1/3rd of the weighted indicators. | Deprivation in at least 1/3rd of the weighted indicators. |
| **Percentage of multi-dimensionally poor people in India** | 28% | 25% |
| **Intensity of Deprivation** | 44% | 47% |

**HIGHLIGHTS OF NATIONAL MPI 2021:** The National MPI 2021 have been formulated based upon data provided through National Family Health Survey 4 (2015-16).

- 25% of people are multi dimensionally poor. The intensity of deprivation at all India level is 47%.
- States with highest percentage of poor people: Bihar (52%), Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh.
- States with lowest percentage of poor people: Kerala (1.73%), Goa and Sikkim.

# APPRENTICESHIP IN INDIA

## #SKILLING

PRIMARY SOURCE | pib        SECONDARY SOURCE | BusinessLine

*Apprenticeship has been recognized as an effective way of skilling young people and reap demographic dividend in India. In this regard, recently, the Union Cabinet has decided* *to continue with the National Apprenticeship Training Scheme for next five years.*

**Qs. "Success of 'Make in India' programme depends on the success of 'Skill India' programme and radical labour reforms." Discuss with logical arguments.**

**(Mains 2015)**

**Meaning of Apprenticeship:** Apprenticeship is a Skill Training program wherein a person is engaged by a company as an apprentice and gains classroom (theory) learning for a short period, followed by on-the-job (practical) training.

## BENEFITS OF APPRENTICESHIP

### Opportunities for Skilling

- **Poor Penetration of Skills:** Only 13% of workforce have received training (11%- Informal Training, 2%- Formal Training). This is quite lower as compared to 68 % in the UK, 75 % in Germany and 96 % in South Korea.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Address needs of dropouts:** More than 17% of students drop-out at secondary level due to socio-economic challenges. Apprenticeship would enable seamless transitioning from school to work.
- **Lower Employability:** Only 46% of those coming out of higher educational institutions are employable. (India Skills Report 2021). Apprenticeship can increase employability of such people.

**Benefits for the Economy**

- **Enable structural transformation:** Reduce disguised employment in agriculture and facilitate absorption in the manufacturing and services sector.
- **Address problem of Jobless growth** of Indian Economy.
- **Reap demographic dividend as** the share of working-age population (20-59 years) is set to increase from 51% (2011) to 59% (2041).
- **Apprentices get chance to earn an income while learning** and get both theoretical and practical training.
- **Reduces burden on Government for skilling** and imparting training reduces.
- **Benefits the Employers** as they can provide structured form of training according to their changing needs.

### APPRENTICESHIP ECOSYSTEM IN INDIA

**Apprentices Act, 1961 and Apprenticeship Rules 1992:**

- Establishments employing more than 30 employees are mandatorily required to engage apprentices ranging from 2.5% -15% of their workforce.
- Establishments having employees between 4-30 can engage apprentices on an optional basis
- Minimum stipend to be based on qualification of apprentices.

**National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS):** provide financial support to establishments undertaking the apprenticeship training.

- Reimbursement of 25% of prescribed stipend subject to a maximum of Rs. 1500 per month per apprentice
- Reimbursement of cost of basic training (up to a limit of Rs. 7500)

**National Apprenticeship Training Scheme:** 1 year programme to equip technically qualified youth (such as Engineering, diploma etc.) with practical knowledge and skills required in their field of work. Stipend is paid by the respective companies. Government reimburses 50% of stipend amount to the companies.

**Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills (SHREYAS):** Enhance the employability of Indian youth by providing 'on the job work exposure' and earning of stipend.

### APPRENTICESHIP- PRESENT STATUS AND CHALLENGES

**Present Status:** Currently India has only about 3 lakh apprentices as compared to the labour force of nearly 500 million people. This proportion of less than 0.01% of the workforce compares unfavourably with the countries such as Germany and Australia, which both have around 3.7% of their workforces participating in apprenticeships.

**Reasons for poor apprenticeship in India:**

- **Lack of enterprise engagement in the system:** Only around 24,000 enterprises have taken up apprenticeship in India. The low number of participating enterprises is reported due to high regulatory compliance burden upon employers.
- **Concerns about quality of workplace curriculum:** Outdated training curriculum and lack of emphasis on theoretical component.
- **Limited occupational coverage:** The Indian formal apprenticeship system has a limited list of designated trades in which apprenticeships can be offered.
- **Inadequate stipend:** The stipend that is required to be paid to apprentices is very low.
- **Limited progression into permanent employment:** Normally, apprenticeships do not lead to permanent employment and hence there is low demand for apprenticeship among the youths.
- **Lack of progression into higher qualifications:** Apprentices who pass their trade tests (All India Trades Tests) obtain a National Apprenticeship Certificate. However, such certificates remain outside the formal educational system and are therefore relatively unattractive to potential entrants.
- **Low status of apprentice training** which prevents the school dropouts to take up apprenticeships.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# TAXATION IN INDIA

# INDO-US DEAL ON EQUALIZATION LEVY

#TAXATION

*Recently, India and US have reached a settlement on the issue of imposition of Equalization levy by India. The agreement is said to end trade hostilities between the two countries and improve their economic relationship.*
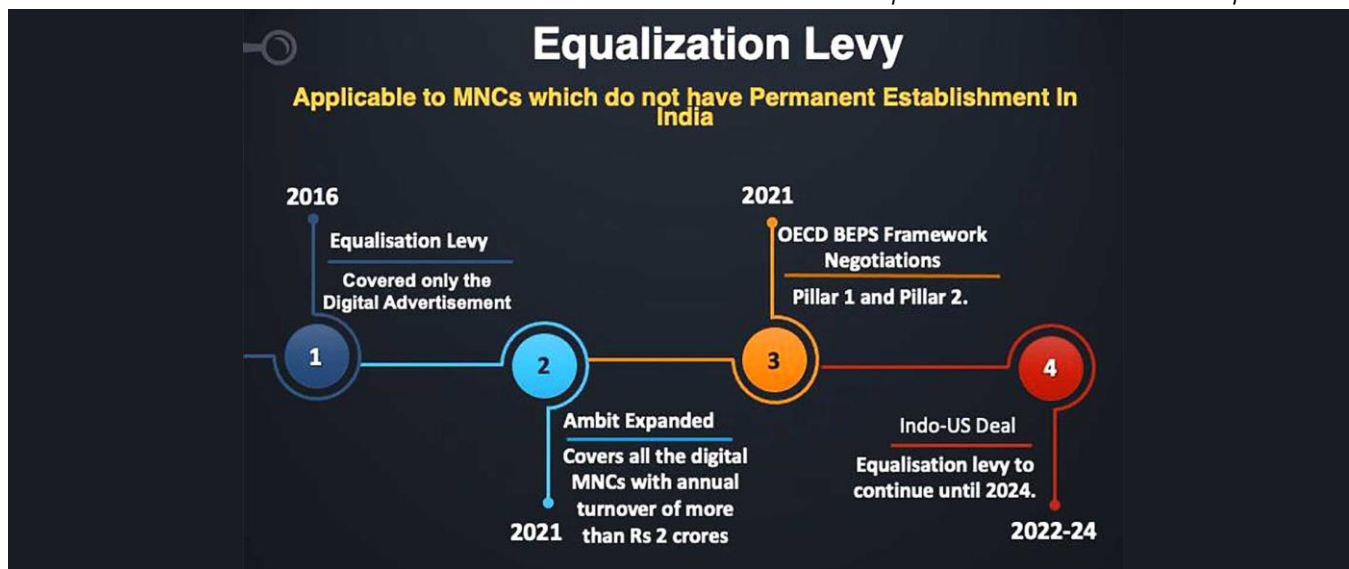


## BACKGROUND

- **Rationale:** The digital MNCs such as Amazon, Facebook, Google etc. pay taxes in the countries in which they are registered and not in the countries in which they operate and make huge profits. For example, even though, these companies make huge profits in India, they do not pay tax.
- **Global Efforts:** More than 130 countries (including India) have come under the OECD BEPS framework to put an end to tax avoidance strategies of such digital MNCs. The deal focusses on 2 Pillars - Pillar 1 (Allocation of profits of Digital MNCs among countries) and Pillar 2 (Global Minimum Corporate Tax). The deal is most likely to come into force from 2024 onwards. (*Covered in detail in October Focus 2021*)
- **India's Efforts:** Government has introduced Equalization levy through the Union Budget 2016. Initially, the tax was applicable only on digital advertisements. Later, the Union Budget 2021-22 expanded the ambit of Equalization levy to cover all the digital MNCs.

## DETAILS ABOUT EQUALIZATION LEVY

| Applicability: Payment made by Indians to the Foreign Companies non-resident in India | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Earlier Regime** | **Present Regime post 2020** |
| **Companies Covered** | Foreign Companies which provide Digital Advertisements such as Google, Facebook, Twitter etc. | All the Foreign Companies with an annual turnover of Rs 2 crores and above. Amazon, Netflix, Trivago etc. |
| **Goods and Services covered** | Only Digital Advertisements | Payment for Digital Advertisements to Foreign Companies + Payment for buying Goods and Services |

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | online. Applicable to companies such as Amazon, Flipkart, Netflix, Trivago etc. |
| **Tax Rate** | 6% of the total payment made for Digital Ads | **Digital Ads:** 6% of the total payment **+** **Payment for buying Goods and Services online:** *2%* of the payment received. |

To clear confusion related to the expansion in scope of Equalisation Levy, the Finance Act, 2021 has provided the following clarifications:

1. Earlier, the Equalisation levy was applicable only for placing Digital Advertisements. Now, it has been expanded to cover all the Goods and Services which are sold through the online platforms such as Amazon, Netflix, Trivago etc.

2. Earlier equalisation levy was applicable only on B2B transactions. But now, the new equalisation levy would be applicable on every transaction undertaken by non-resident e-commerce companies which includes both B2B as well as B2C transactions.

3. The tax would be applicable on the total payment (and not commission) received by the e-commerce companies on selling goods and services sold through their online platforms.

### DEAL BETWEEN INDIA AND USA

- **US Demands:** The US government was against the unilateral imposition of Equalisation Levy by India since it affected the interests of US companies. Hence, the US Government wanted India to do away with the Equalisation levy until global deal under OECD comes into being, which is likely to be in 2024.

- **India's concerns:** India was against doing away with the Equalisation levy since it would have led to loss of revenue.

### BROAD CONTOURS OF THE DEAL

- **Benefits for India:** India would continue to impose Equalisation levy until 2024 when the OECD deal comes into being.

- **Benefits for USA:**
  - India would have to do away with Equalisation Levy once OECD deal comes into being.
  - The Indian Government would refund the excess tax amount collected through Equalisation levy between April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2024. For example, Let's say, a particular US based MNC has paid Rs 20 crores in the form of Equalisation levy between April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2024. However, its tax obligation under OECD framework may be only around Rs 15 crores. In such a case, Indian Government would refund excess Rs 5 crores.

## INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT

# NEW WAGE RATE INDEX

#EMPLOYMENT

PRIMARY SOURCE mint

*The Union Labour Ministry has recently released the new series of Wage Rate Index with the base year of 2016. The new series is based on the recommendations of International Labour Organisation (ILO).*

### DETAILS ABOUT NEW WAGE RATE INDEX (WRI)

- **Purpose:** Economic indicator which measures relative changes in the wage level in selected industries. It can be considered similar to Index of Industrial Production (IIP) which tracks changes in the volume of Industrial production.

| | Old Series | New Series |
|---|---|---|
| **Base year** | 1963-65 | 2016 |
| **Published by** | Labour Bureau | Labour Bureau |
| **Frequency** | Yearly | Half-yearly |
| **Sectors Covered** | Manufacturing, Mining and Plantation | Manufacturing, Mining and Plantation |
| **Number of Industries covered** | **21**- Manufacturing (14); Mining (4) and Plantation (3) | **37**- Manufacturing (30); Mining (4) and Plantation (3) |

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

| Weightage of Different Sectors | Highest- Manufacturing Lowest- Plantation | Highest- Manufacturing Lowest- Plantation |
|---|---|---|

**Enhanced Coverage:** The new series seeks to cover 700 occupations and makes the index more representative, expanding the number of industries, sample size and the weightage of industries. While the previous series covered 21 industries, the new one covers 37, including 30 from the manufacturing sector and three each from the mining and plantation sectors.

**Modifications:**

- Under the manufacturing sector, 16 industries such as synthetic textiles, publishing, footwear, petroleum, drugs and medicines, have been added.

- Under plantation sector, Tea, Coffee and Rubber have been retained, with enhanced coverage.
- Under mining sector, oil mining industry has been introduced in the basket in place of mica mines industry

**Benefits of new series:** Provide valuable insights to determine minimum wages and national floor wage policy.

**Highlights of new series:** The overall Wage Rate Index for all the 37 industries combined stood at 119.7 in 2020. The highest Wage Rate Index in 2020 was reported for Plantation Sector followed by Manufacturing Sector and Mining Sector.

## INFRASTRUCTURE SECTOR

## LEADS INDEX

#INFRASTRUCTURE

PRIMARY SOURCE pib

*The government has recently released the annual Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) report for 2021.*

### ABOUT LEADS INDEX

**Published by:** Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

**Rationale:** Higher logistics cost (14% of GDP) in India reduces competitiveness of manufacturing sector.

**Objective:**

- Rank States and UTs on the efficiency of their logistics ecosystem.
- Enable constructive competition among States to support and facilitate logistics.

- Recommend action points based on the issues and challenges faced by the logistics sector.

**Parameters used:** 21 indicators based on three key pillars—infrastructure, services, and operating and regulatory environment. Include indicators such as Quality of Infrastructure (Roads, Railways, Ports etc), Ease of approvals, safety and security, timeliness of cargo delivery etc.

**Ranking of States:** Top Performers- Gujarat, Haryana and Punjab

### GLOBAL INDICES TO MEASURE LOGISTICS

- Logistics Performance Index - World Bank
- Trade Facilitation Index- OECD
- Enabling Trade Index- World Economic Forum

## AGRICULTURE

## PROMOTION OF HERBAL CULTIVATION

#AGRICULTURE

PRIMARY SOURCE pib

*Medicinal Plants form the major resource base of our indigenous health care traditions such as Ayurveda. However, more than 90% of the medicinal plants are sourced from the wild. Further, India's share in the world*

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*herbal trade is less than 1%. Hence, the Government has taken number of measures to promote Herbal Cultivation in India.*

India is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of biodiversity. Medicinal plants are not only a major resource base for the traditional medicine & herbal industry but also provide livelihood and health security to a large segment of Indian population.

To promote medicinal plants sector, the Government of India has set up National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) in 2000. Currently the board is in Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha & Homoeopathy).

**NATIONAL AYUSH MISSION (NAM):** Implemented by Ayush Ministry. Under 'Medicinal Plants' component of the NAM, the government provides subsidy on cultivation of around 140 medicinal plants. Nature of support includes:

- Cultivation of prioritized medicinal plants on farmer's land.
- Post-harvest management with forward linkages.
- Primary processing, marketing infrastructure etc.

**CONSERVATION, DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF MEDICINAL PLANTS**

Implemented by National Medicinal Plants Board for in-situ/ex-situ conservation, R&D, Marketing of medicinal plants etc.

**ANNOUNCEMENT UNDER AATMA NIRBHAR BHARAT PACKAGE IN 2020**

- The National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) has so far supported 2.25 lakh hectare area under cultivation of medicinal plants.
- Additional 10,00,000 hectare will be covered under Herbal cultivation in next two years with outlay of Rs. 4,000 crores.
- NMPB will bring 800-hectare area by developing a corridor of medicinal plants along the banks of Ganga.
- Network of regional *Mandis* for Medicinal Plants would also be set up.

**PRADHAN MANTRI VRIKSH AYUSH YOJANA:** Draft scheme prepared by the Ayush Ministry for cultivation and marketing of medicinal plants. Yet to be approved by the cabinet.

## PRELIMS SNIPPETS

# FED TAPERING AND DOT PLOT

*The rate of Inflation in US has increased to 6.8%, which is highest in last 40 years. The higher rate of inflation has been attributed to the massive injection of liquidity under the Quantitative Policy (QE) policy of the Fed Bank to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic. Hence, in this regard, the US Fed Bank has recently announced that it would soon starting the policy of Tapering.*

|  | Quantitative Easing | Tapering |
|---|---|---|
| **Rationale** | Stimulate Economic Growth | Control Inflation |
| **Action Taken** | Purchase Bonds such as US Treasury | Slowly reduce the purchase the |

|  | securities to inject dollars into the economy | Bonds over the medium and long run |
|---|---|---|
| **Impact on US Economy** | Decrease in rate of Interest in US and hence higher dollar supply | Increase in rate of Interest in US and hence decrease in dollar supply |

**FED BANK'S DOT PLOT:** The dot plot is the expected trajectory of interest rate hikes proposed by US Fed Bank in graphical form. The policy rate in the US is currently in the 0-0.25 per cent range. So, the dot plot shows as to how policy rates are set to change in the future. So, in a way, the Dot plot gives a hint to the market as to when the hikes in the policy rates are expected.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA:** The QE policy in US had led to higher dollar inflows into Indian economy, particularly in the stock market. However, the recent announcement

of Fed Tapering is expected to reduce the inflow of dollars.

# HARBINGER 2021

*The RBI has recently organised its first global hackathon – "HARBINGER 2021 – Innovation for Transformation" with the theme 'Smarter Digital Payments'.*

The Hackathon seeks to invite participants to identify and develop solutions that have the potential to make digital payments accessible to the under-served, enhance the ease of payments and user experience, while strengthening the security of digital payments.

**HARBINGER 2021 seeks to focus on following:**

1. Innovative, easy-to-use, non-mobile digital payment solutions for converting small-ticket cash transactions to digital mode.
2. Context-based retail payments to remove the physical act of payment.
3. Alternate authentication mechanism for digital payments.
4. Social Media Analysis Monitoring tool for detection of digital payment fraud and disruption.

# CENTRAL SECTOR VS CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEMES

*The Central government financially supports the State Governments through many Centrally sponsored and Central-sector schemes. However, the latest data for the last five years show that the actual expenditure on these schemes has remained low compared to Budget estimates.*

|  | Central Sector Schemes | Centrally sponsored Schemes |
|---|---|---|
| **Financed by** | Centre | Both Centre and States in defined proportion |

| **Implemented by** | Centre | State |
|---|---|---|
| **Subjects** | Mainly union list. Some schemes are also part of State list and Concurrent list | Mainly state and Concurrent list |
| **Sectors Covered** | Manufacturing, Mining and Plantation | Manufacturing, Mining and Plantation |
| **Examples** | PM-KISAN; PM-AASHA; Urea Subsidy; PMGDISHA etc. | MGNREGA; PM Krishi Sinchayi Yojana, PM Awas Yojana, Swachh Bharat Mission etc. |

# BHARAT GAURAV SCHEME

*The Railways Ministry has recently announced the introduction of theme-based tourist circuit trains known as "Bharat Gaurav Trains" to showcase India's rich cultural heritage and magnificent historical places.*

**DETAILS**

- The railways have allocated around 190 trains for these theme-based circuits
- Any private operator or service provide can lease trains from Indian Railways to run on a theme-based circuit as a special tourism package.
- Service Providers would be free to decide themes like Guru Kripa trains for covering important places of Sikh culture, Ramayana trains for places connected with Lord Shri Ram etc.

Private operator would have the freedom to decide the route, the halts, the services provided and tariff.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# PRACTICE QUESTIONS

## MCQS

**Q1.** Which among the following indicators is/are tracked under the RBI's revised Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework?

1. Capital-to-Risk Weighted Assets (CRAR)
2. Net NPA
3. Return on Assets (RoA)

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 only        (b) 1 and 2 only

(c) 1 and 3 only     (d) 1, 2 and 3

**Q2.** Which among the following best describes the concept of "Challenger Banks", sometime seen in news?

(a) Banks which are" Too Big to Fail".

(b) Banks which have lower NPAs.

(c) Small Digital Banks which compete with well-established Large Banks

(d) Large Sized NBFCs which compete with the Banks.

**Q3.** Which among the following agencies in India publishes the Wage Rate Index?

(a) National Statistical office (NSO)

(b) Office of Economic Advisor, Ministry of Commerce and Industry

(c) NITI Aayog

(d) Labour Bureau

**Q4.** With respect to Apprenticeship ecosystem in India, consider the following statements:

1. Certain Establishments are mandatorily required to engage apprentices.
2. The Government provides financial support to the establishments undertaking apprenticeship training.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only        (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2   (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Q5.** With respect to National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), consider the following statements:

1. The National MPI is published by NITI Aayog.
2. The National MPI uses 10 indicators which is similar to Global MPI.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only        (b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2   (d) Neither 1 nor 2

## DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

**Q1.** The apprenticeship training has been recognized as an effective way of skilling young people in India, however, it suffers from number of challenges and concerns. Discuss (15 Marks, 250 Words)

**Q2.** Do you agree with the view that large corporate houses should be given Banking licenses in India? Give arguments in support of your answer. (15 Marks, 250 Words)

**Answers**: *1-b, 2-c, 3-d, 4-c, 5-a*

# CONSTITUTION, POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

## # GS PAPER (PRELIMS) & GS PAPER II (MAIN)

## RIGHTING HISTORICAL WRONG – SCHEDULED TRIBES

#SCHEDULED TRIBES #RIGHTS

| PRIMARY SOURCE | THE HINDU | SECONDARY SOURCE | LEGISLATIONS |
|---|---|---|---|

*The article highlights about the plight of tribals (Adivasis) when they are displaced from their areas because of developmental projects (dams, mines, industries) and are neither rehabilitated nor provided enough compensation by the state. Let us go through the laws of India which safeguards their rights and interests. Also let us look into the role of Gram Sabha in safeguarding their tights and interests.*

### EXPLOITATION OF IRULAR COMMUNITY

The Tamil movie Jai Bhim portrayed the discrimination experienced by the **Irula community, the second largest of the 36 tribal communities in Tamil Nadu.** They are **traditional healers, snake and rat catchers**, but now primarily migrate to different places to work in brick kilns, rice mills, etc. Like many Adivasi groups in India, the Irulas also continue to suffer the stigma of criminality due to the **Habitual Offenders Act, 1952, which replaced the colonial Criminal Tribes Act, 1871.** This law is a "crude colonial construct", which should be repealed at the earliest.

### RIGHTS UNDER FRA NOT GIVEN UNTIL 2016

A study on the rate of the formal distribution of rights claims under the Forest Rights Act, found that no title rights were issued in Tamil Nadu because of a ban on the issuance of titles by the High Court till early 2016. The ban was stayed only after the intervention of the Supreme Court.

### DEVELOPMENT-INDUCED DISPLACEMENT OF TRIBALS

The "development-induced displacement" trajectory adopted by the country has often been at the expense of the STs, either by way of exclusion or forced "inclusion" in a "mainstream" that is completely alien to their "world view" through what the Xaxa Committee in 2014 had called the "ashramisation" of the tribal.

Displacement due to the encroachment and appropriation of land inhabited by STs, which are generally rich in forest and mineral resources, has been further intensified in the post-liberalisation period due to corporate interests. Hence, the makers of the Constitution, even while underlining the importance of sharing the values of modernity with the STs, who have a great deal of heterogeneity among themselves, had been careful enough to provide a certain degree of autonomy to them to have a say in their development pursuit.

Nation states have realised that certain elements in the tribal "world view", with respect to ecology, language, democracy, equality, property rights, etc., hold important lessons for human progress and sustainable development. Accordingly, the Fifth and Sixth Schedules, which are governed by Articles 244 (1) and (2) of the Constitution, provides certain rights to tribes in the northeast and across India.

### CREATION OF SCHEDULED AREAS

The Fifth Schedule had been also termed by the Mungekar Committee in 2009 for tribal development as a "Constitution within Constitution". It allows for the creation of Scheduled Areas by the President of India.

#### Criteria for declaring an area as a Scheduled Area

The First Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission, also known as the **Dhebar Commission** (1960-61) laid down the following criteria for declaring any area as a 'Scheduled Area' under the Fifth Schedule:

- Preponderance of tribal population, which should not be less than 50%
- Compactness and reasonable size of the area; Underdeveloped nature of the area
- Marked disparity in the economic standard of the people, as compared to the neighboring areas.
- A viable administrative entity such as a district, block or taluk, has been also identified as an important additional criterion.

**The Programme on Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP) under Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP)** is being implemented since the Fifth Five Year Plan with specific objectives of reducing poverty, improving educational status an eliminating exploitation of the tribal families.

**Powers of Governor under Fifth Schedule**

- **Under Paragraph 4 -** Governor has rule-making powers about the number of members, mode of appointment, and functioning of the Tribes Advisory Council (TAC). The TAC renders advice to him when called upon by the Governor.
- **Paragraph 5(1) -** gives the Governor the power to restrict the application of any Central or State legislation to the Scheduled Area, either completely, or subject to exceptions and modifications. It has been held by the Supreme Court that the power to make exceptions and modifications includes the power to amend these laws.

**Law applicable to Scheduled Areas – (Fifth Schedule)**

**(1)** Notwithstanding anything in Constitution, the Governor may by public notification direct that any particular Act of Parliament or of the Legislature of the State shall not apply to a Scheduled Area or any part thereof in the State or shall apply to a Scheduled Area or any part thereof in the State subject to such exceptions and modifications as he may specify in the notification.

**(2)** The Governor may make regulations for the peace and good government of any area in a State which is for the time being a Scheduled Area.

And without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such regulations may—

**a.** prohibit or restrict the transfer of land by or among members of the Scheduled Tribes in such area.

**b.** regulate the allotment of land to members of the Scheduled Tribes in such area.

**c.** regulate the carrying on of business as moneylender by persons who lend money to members of the Scheduled Tribes in such area.

**(3)** In making any such regulation as is referred to in sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph, the Governor may repeal or amend any Act of Parliament or of the Legislature of the State or any existing law which is for the time being applicable to the area in question.

**(4)** All regulations made under this paragraph shall be submitted forthwith to the President and, until assented to by him, shall have no effect.

**(5)** No regulation shall be made under this paragraph unless the Governor making the regulation has, in the case where there is a Tribes Advisory Council for the State, consulted such Council.

**Mungekar Committee Recommendations on Vth Schedule Areas**

The Mungekar Committee Report on Standards of Administration and Governance in the Scheduled Areas under the chairmanship of Dr. Bhalchandra Mungekar contains recommendations on a variety of issues.

These include inter-alia reviving institutions of self-governance, effective delivery mechanism, creation of critical infrastructure, Tribal Sub-plan, implementation of the Scheduled Tribes and the Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 and Governors Report. The report also contains recommendations on the role of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and State Tribal Welfare Departments, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes and SCs & STs (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

**Important Recommendations**

- For ensuring effective delivery mechanism there is a strong need to resuscitate ITDPs by re-strengthening and revamping for being able to be the implementing agencies for the new proposed deal.
- The process of planning from below should begin with ITDPs. It should move on to block unit in the form of a broad perspective along with annual plan exercise in not more than three years. This preliminary exercise should pave the way for a real process of planning from below for Scheduled Areas in the 12th Plan. Competent micro planning units should be established

at State and ITDP levels.

- A single line administration should be established at the level of ITDPs with a clear chain of command and specific wide-band functional domain. While Panchayat Raj institutions at the District/intermediate level should have decision-making powers in relevant areas, implementation should be the exclusive domain of administration. On the other hand, the domain of Gram Sabha should remain non-violable with administration playing a supportive role.

- At the District level, all TSP funds flowing to the Scheduled Areas should be through the ITDPs. Since the flow of funds at the district level for Scheduled Areas is in many cases likely to exceed Rs. 200 crores annually, an officer equal in rank and experience to that of the CEO (ZP) or Project Officer (DRDA) should be provided with a fixed tenure as the District Tribal Welfare Officer or Project Director ITDP.

- At least for Tribal majority districts such district level officer should be selected by an Expert Committee headed by the Chief Secretary of the State Government. The district level office should be appropriately strengthened, and the strength should be reviewed once in 5 years.

- At the Block level, in Scheduled Areas, monitoring units should be created with modern office and communication facilities under the District Officer in charge of Tribal Affairs. As far as TSP funds are concerned, BDOs should be answerable to the Project Director of the ITDP.

## TRIBAL SUB-PLAN

- Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) strategy was initially developed by an Expert Committee set up by the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare in 1972 under the Chairmanship of Prof. S.C. Dube for the rapid socio-economic development of tribal people and was adopted for the first time in the Fifth Five Year Plan.

- Tribal Sub-Plan came into existence in 1974-75 as a strategy for the development of areas having tribal concentration.

- After merger of Plan and Non-Plan, the TSP was renamed as **Scheduled Tribe Component (STC)** by Ministry of Finance. 41 Central Ministries/Departments have been identified for earmarking of STC.

- **Financial Grant under Article 275(1) by Ministry of Tribal Affairs: Tribal Population more than 60% -**

TSP scheme is not applicable to the states/UT where tribal population exceeds 60% as the Annual Plan in these States/UTs is itself a Tribal Plan.

- **Role of State Government -** State Governments are supposed to earmark Tribal Sub-Plan funds in proportion to ST population (as per Census 2011) in the State with respect to total State Plan.

- **Monitoring of TSP –** The monitoring of TSP plan was being done by erstwhile Planning Commission till 2017-18, it was only in FY 2018-19, the monitoring of STC plan was given to Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

- **Basic Objective of Schedule Tribe Component -** channelize/monitor the flow of outlays and benefits from the general sectors in the Central Ministries/Departments for the development of Schedules Tribes at least in proportion to their population.

### Benefits of TSP/STC Strategy for Tribal Population

- Infrastructural development
- Creating livelihood opportunities
- Reducing poverty and unemployment
- Raising nutritional levels
- Improving literacy and health
- Improving sanitation, provision of clean drinking water, housing

### Concerns on Tribal Sub-Plan

The Public Accounts Committee chaired by had submitted its report on 'Tribal Sub-Plan' noted several discrepancies in the implementation of the TSP, including:

- Non-adoption of specific norms for release of funds,
- Weak programme management,
- Deficient monitoring system, and
- Non-implementation of information programmes.

### Suggestions made by the Committee

- **Categorising Funds under Separate Head for Clear Demarcation –** Strict adherence to earmarking of funds into a separate head at every level (districts, block, panchayat) should be made mandatory for release of funds.

- **Tracking of Funds necessary –** A more proactive approach needs be taken to keep track of monitoring,

fund utilisation, and implementation of schemes for tribal development.

- **Non-lapsable pool for TSP fund -** Presently, funds at the end of the financial year were not being transferred into a non-lapsable pool of TSP fund that could be utilised later. Thus, the committee recommended for: (i) optimal utilisation of TSP funds; and (ii) creation of a non-lapsable pool to utilise unused funds in the previous year.

- **Need for Central Nodal Unit for Review -** to be set up under Ministry of Tribal Affairs to oversee the implementation of flow of fund under TSP, facilitate better co-ordination and efficient implementation of TSP through an online monitoring system.

- **Nodal Units to be set up at state/district level –** as suggested by NITI Aayog for programme monitoring, to indicate state-specific allocation and release for STs separately under centrally sponsored schemes and central sector schemes.

- **Dedicated Nodal Units by all TSP ministries or departments -** for effective monitoring of TSP at the implementation stage.

- **Involvement of Local Tribal Community to strengthen the planning process -** inputs/ suggestions of local tribal community should be sought before finalising the plan for implementation of any program under TSP.

## THE PANCHAYATS (EXTENSION TO SCHEDULED AREAS) ACT, 1996 (PESA)

- **Article 243M** of the Constitution, while exempting the **Fifth Schedule areas from Part IX of the Constitution (Panchayats),** provides that Parliament may by law extend its provisions to the Scheduled and Tribal Areas subject to such exceptions and modifications as may be specified in such law and no such law shall be deemed to be an amendment to the Constitution.

- On the recommendation of **Bhuria Committee (1995**), the Parliament enacted. **The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA)** to extend Part IX of the Constitution with certain modifications and exceptions to the Scheduled V areas.

- At present Scheduled V areas exist in 10 States viz. **Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan and Telangana.**

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj is the nodal Ministry for implementation of the provisions of PESA in the States.

- **Election to PRI -** All posts of Chairpersons of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the areas covered under PESA are reserved for tribal community and only persons belonging to tribal community can contest for these posts.

### POWERS OF GRAM PANCHAYATS UNDER PESA

1. **Developmental powers:** consultation before land acquisition, prevent land alienation, power to enforce prohibition, prior approval of all developmental projects and control over tribal sub-plan, power to issue utilization certificate for developmental expenditure, selection of beneficiaries of poverty alleviation and other schemes of individual benefits, control over institutions and functionaries of social sectors.

2. **Dispute resolution as per traditional laws and customs:** collective resolution of disputes based on customs, traditional laws and religious beliefs of tribal areas.

3. **Ownership and management of natural resources:** maintaining ownership of local tribal community over water resources, common lands, minor forest produce, minor minerals, etc. as well as effective implementation and monitoring of related laws.

### FUNCTIONS OF GRAM PANCHAYAT UNDER PESA

- Safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs of the people, their cultural identity, community resources and the customary mode of dispute resolution.

- Approve plans, programmes and projects for social and economic development before such plans, programmes and projects are taken up for implementation by the Panchayat at the village level.

- Identification or selection of beneficiaries under the poverty alleviation and other programmes.

- Certification of utilisation of funds by the Panchayat for the plans, programs and projects.

- Right to be consulted before acquisition of land in the Scheduled Areas for development projects and before re-settling or rehabilitating persons affected by such projects in the Scheduled Areas.

- Right to plan and manage minor water bodies in the Scheduled Areas.

# CONSTITUTION, POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

- Prior Recommendations to grant prospecting licence for mining minor minerals including auction of minor minerals in the Scheduled Areas.
- Enforce prohibition or Regulate or Restrict the sale and consumption of any intoxicant.
- Grant ownership of minor forest produce.
- Prevent alienation of land in the Scheduled Areas and restore any unlawfully alienated land of a Scheduled Tribe.
- Manage village markets.
- Exercise control over money lending to the Scheduled Tribes, institutions and functionaries in all social sectors and plans for sub-tribes.

## IMPORTANCE & BENEFITS OF PESA

- Effective implementation of PESA will bring development & deepen democracy in Fifth Schedule Areas.
- Enhance people's participation in decision making.
- Better control over the utilisation of public resources for tribals and forest dwellers.
- Reduce alienation of land in tribal areas.
- Reduce poverty and out-migration among tribal population as they will have control and management of natural resources which will help in improving their livelihoods and incomes.
- Minimise exploitation of tribal population as they will be able to control and manage money lending, consumption & sale of liquor and also sell their produce in village markets.
- Promote cultural heritage through preservation of traditions, customs and cultural identity of tribal population.

## XAXA COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS ON PESA

- Promote small sized water-harvesting structures instead for large dams.
- Impose penalties on officials if delayed implementation of Forest Rights Act or PESA.
- Prevent all kinds of tribal land alienation by making Gram Sabha's consent compulsory for any type of land acquisition, even if the government wants land for its own use.
- Unused Government land should be sold off/leased off to get more money and reduce fiscal deficit. Xaxa Committee asked Government to use such land for

tribal resettlement.
- After mines are exhausted, return the land back to original owner.
- In Scheduled Areas, permit only tribals to exploit mineral resources. Policy makers should learn lessons from Niyamagiri episode.
- Appoint a judicial commission to investigate such "naxal cases" registered against tribals and their (non-tribal) supporters.
- Avoid making SalwaJudum like policies to combat left wing extremism.

# GERRYMANDERING

### #DELIMITATION #ELECTION ISSUES

**PRIMARY SOURCE** THE HINDU  **SECONDARY SOURCE** The Indian EXPRESS

*Gerrymandering refers to manipulating the boundaries of constituencies in certain way for electoral benefits. The term originated in Unites States, but the process is practices world over. However, in India, the process of changing of constituency boundaries is done by **Delimitation Commission.** But the question whether gerrymandering is done by ruling party always remains a question of perception.*

## ABOUT GERRYMANDERING

- Gerrymandering (largely an American expression) refers to the act of manipulating the boundaries of election districts in a way:
  - that gives an unfair edge to the ruling party or
  - that dilutes the voting power of members of ethnic or linguistic minority groups
- The term is derived from the name of Gov. Elbridge Gerry, whose administration enacted a law in 1812 defining new state senatorial districts.
- The law consolidated the Federalist Party vote in a few districts and thus gave disproportionate representation to Democratic Republicans.

## DELIMITATION IN INDIA

- Delimitation is the act of redrawing boundaries of Lok Sabha and Assembly seats to represent changes in population.

# CONSTITUTION, POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

- **Article 82 of the Indian Constitution** has empowered Parliament to legislate Delimitation Acts from time to time which constitutes and empowers Delimitation Commission to fulfill the constitutional mandate.

- Constitution 84th and 87th Amendment led to the enactment of **Delimitation Act, 2002.** The amendment fixed the allocation of seats in Lok Sabha based on 1971 Census and division of each State into territorial constituencies based on 2001 Census.

## IMPORTANT ROLE AND FUNCTION OF DELIMITATION COMMISSION

- Ensure balance of representation to achieve the ideals of **'One Vote One Value'.**

- **Adequate representation to vulnerable sections** including Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes.

- **Fair division of geographical areas** to ensure that communities do not go unrepresented.

## CHALLENGES TO DELIMITATION

- Delimitation exercise is restricted by Constitution 84th and 87th Amendment. This has frozen the seats in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies till 2026.

- Seats reserved for SC and ST population also remains frozen and increasing population of vulnerable section is not accounted for.

- Present delimitation exercise carried in Jammu and Kashmir despite disturbed atmosphere.

## IMPACT OF CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS

- **Freezes delimitation exercise up to 2026 -** affects value of votes and disturbs the proportion of seats in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.

- **Affects democratic rights of citizens –** single MP/MLA is elected by larger population and in turn MP/MLA has to cater to the demands and needs to a wider audience.

- **Discounts the efforts made by states to carry out population control measures** - and on the contrary advantages the more populous states for greater seats in Parliament and State Assembly.

The exercise of delimitation should be done along with census to ensure adequate representation of states and vulnerable sections of India.

# SC CORRECTS INTERPRETATION OF POCSO

#RIGHTS #JUDGMENT

**PRIMARY SOURCE** THE HINDU    **SECONDARY SOURCE** POCSO Act

*Supreme Court has corrected a wrong interpretation of Section 7 of POCSO Act which defines sexual assault on child below 18 years of age.*

## DECISION OF BOMBAY HIGH COURT

- High Court held that sexual assault on a child victim would **require "skin-to-skin" contact.** The High Court had construed Section 7 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, pertaining to sexual assault on children, in such a way that it concluded that the acts for which the accused were charged did not amount to sexual assault.

- The absence of physical contact with the girl's body part was used to absolve the accused of the charge of sexual assault. In the second case, the Court took a lenient view that the act of "holding the hands of the prosecutrix" and "opening the zip of the pant" did not fit into the definition of sexual assault.

## QUESTIONS RAISED BY ATTORNEY GENERAL & NATIONAL COMMISSION OF WOMEN

Attorney General of India and NCW questioned the Court's understanding of a POCSO provision, arguing that the law does not intend the sort of dilution that led to the Court ignoring the basic fact that the entire Act is aimed at penalising actions rooted in sexual intent.

## DECISION OF SUPREME COURT

- Supreme Court held that restricting the interpretation of the words 'touch' or 'physical contact' to 'skin to skin contact' would be a narrow and pedantic interpretation of Section 7, and if such a narrow interpretation is accepted it would frustrate the very object of the Act.

- The judgment sets right not only a misinterpretation of the statute but also underscores that **the core ingredient of a sexual offence is the "sexual intent" behind it.** The Court also said that an interpretation should not be destructive of the law's intention.

# CONSTITUTION, POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

## PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT, 2012

### Salient features

- The Government of India is a signatory to the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.** The Convention prescribes a set of standards to be followed by all State parties in securing the best interests of the child.

- The parties to the Convention are required to take measures to prevent children from being coerced into any unlawful sexual activity. Based on the Convention, India has legislated POCSO Act, 2012.

- POCSO Act protects a **child against different forms of sexual abuse including trafficking, pornographic materials and avoids re-victimization of a child.**

- Under the Act, a person is guilty of using a child for pornographic purposes if he uses a child in any form of media for the purpose of sexual gratification. The Act also penalises persons who use children for pornographic purposes resulting in sexual assault.

- The Act penalises storage of pornographic material for commercial purposes with a punishment between three to five years, or a fine, or both. In addition, the amendment adds two other offences for storage of pornographic material involving children. These include: (i) failing to destroy, or delete, or report pornographic material involving a child, and (ii) transmitting, propagating, or administering such material except for the purpose of reporting it.

- As per the Act, any person below the age of 18 years is defined as a "child". The Bill seeks to penalise any person who commits offences such as "sexual harassment", "sexual assault", "penetrative sexual assault", and "aggravated penetrative sexual assault".

- POCSO aims to protect children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography and provide for **establishment of Special Courts for trial** of such offences. Each district shall **designate a Sessions Court to be a Special Court.** It shall be established by the state government in consultation with the Chief Justice of the High Court. The state government shall appoint a **Special Public Prosecutor for every Special Court.**

- The Court shall, as far as possible, complete the trial within one year. The trial shall be held in camera and in the presence of the child's parents or any person trusted by the child.

- If an offence has been committed by a child, it shall be dealt with under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000.

# SEBI UNVEILS INVESTOR CHARTER

#CHARTER #RIGHTS

PRIMARY SOURCE | THE HINDU    SECONDARY SOURCE | SEBI

*To protect the interests of investors by enabling them to understand the risks involved and invest in a fair, transparent, secure market, and to get services in a timely and efficient manner SEBI has unveiled an investor charter. Likewise, we also need to understand the importance and challenges in the implementation of Citizens' Charter.*

## IMPORTANCE OF INVESTOR CHARTER

- To have streamlined procedures to ensure ease of transacting/ investing in securities market for investors.

- To ensure that SEBI registered intermediaries / regulated entities adhere to their investor charters, including grievance redressal mechanism.

- To enable investors to understand risks involved before investing.

- To ensure fair and equitable treatment to investors.

- To analyse the causes of investor grievances on a periodic basis and make appropriate policy amendments.

- To provide for alternative dispute resolution mechanism in agreements between investors and MIIs/ Intermediaries.

- To encourage innovative and digital solutions in securities market.

## RIGHTS OF INVESTORS

- Get fair and equitable treatment.

- Expect redressal of investor grievances filed in scores in a time bound manner.

- Get quality services from SEBI recognised Market Infrastructure Institutions and SEBI registered intermediaries / regulated entities/ Asset Management Companies.

# CONSTITUTION, POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

## RESPONSIBILITY OF INVESTORS

- Deal with SEBI recognised Market Infrastructure Institutions and SEBI registered intermediaries/ regulated entities.
- Update their contact details like address, mobile number, email address, nomination, and other key KYC details.
- Ensure that grievances are taken up with concerned entities within time limits prescribed.
- Ensure that their accounts are operated only for their own benefit.

## CITIZENS' CHARTER

Citizen's Charter is a document which represents a systematic effort to focus on the commitment of the organisation towards its citizens in respects of Standard of Services, Information, Choice and Consultation, Non-discrimination and Accessibility, Grievance Redress, Courtesy and Value for Money. This also includes expectations of the organisation from the Citizen for fulfilling the commitment of the organisation.



Core principles of Citizen Charter
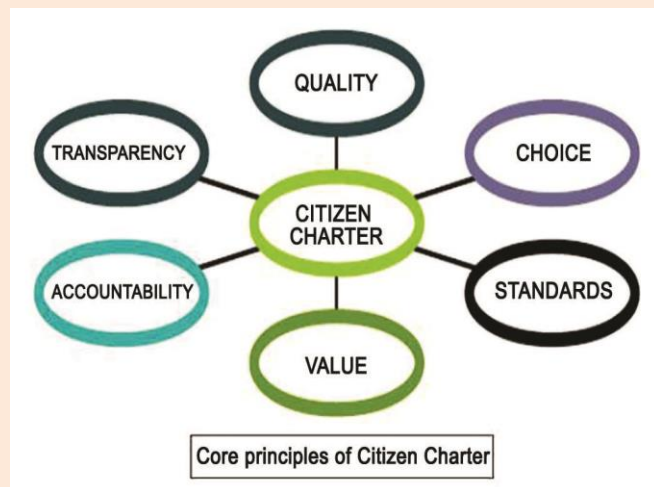
## ROLE OF CITIZEN CHARTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

- **Provides for standards of Service Delivery** to citizens
- **Empower citizens by creating a professional and customer-oriented environment** for the delivery of services.
- **Boosts accountability and transparency** in the delivery of public services.
- **Provides for Grievance Redressal mechanism** for public institutions and offices.

- **Enhance good governance by improving the effectiveness of organizations** by having measurable standards.
- **Augment quality of services** delivered by incorporating an internal and external monitoring entity.
- **Facilitates participatory democracy** by making administration citizen centric.

## CHALLENGES WITH CITIZEN CHARTER

- Considered as mere formality without any periodic evaluation of its implementation.
- Considered a routine activity of government department without any accountability.
- Workforce unaware about the content and spirit of the Charter for which it is envisaged.
- Lack of awareness campaigns to propagate the usage of citizens' charter.
- Unrealistic and impractical standards set by the government for delivery of services.
- Absence of periodic evaluation.
- Inadequate training to frontline functionaries.

## SEVOTTAM MODEL

Sevottam is an **assessment and improvement model** that has been developed with the objective of improving the quality of public service delivery in the country. The Second ARC in its 12th Report on "Citizen Centric Administration had recommended that Union and State Government organisations having public interface should mandatorily implement the seven-step model. The word "Sevottam" is a combination of two Hindi words: Seva (Service) and Uttam (Excellent). It means "Service Excellence", emphasizing the idea of "Service". It symbolizes the change in mindset within the Government, from administration and control to service and enablement.

## THE SEVEN STEPS ARE:

- Define your services and identify your clients
- Set standards and norms for each service
- Develop capability to meet the set standards
- Perform to achieve the standards
- Monitor performance against the set standards
- Evaluate impact through an independent mechanism
- Continuous improvement based on monitoring and

evaluation

**COMPONENTS OF SEVOTTAM HAVE THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES:**

**1. Successful implementation of Citizen's Charters**

- Opening up channel to receive citizens' inputs to improve service delivery
- Charter to publicly declare information on citizens' entitlements
- Making citizens better informed
- Empowering them to demand better services.

**2. Service Delivery Preparedness and achievement of Results**

- Learning to manage key inputs for good service delivery
- Building capacity to continuously improve service delivery
- An organization can have an excellent performance in service delivery only if it is
- Identify services rendered, the service delivery process, its control and delivery requirements.

**3. Sound Public Grievance Redress Mechanism**

- Increased satisfaction of citizens through improved grievance redressal mechanism
- Determination of organisations' response to citizens' grievance should also improve continuously.

**WAY FORWARD**

Mandatory implementation of **SEVOTTAM MODEL** as recommended by Second ARC will help to improve Citizen Charters in India along with continuous evaluation of unaddressed citizens' grievances.

# NATIONAL COURT OF APPEAL

#COURT OF APPEAL #JUDICIARY

PRIMARY SOURCE | THE HINDU | SECONDARY SOURCE | *The Indian* **EXPRESS**

*Attorney General has suggested setting up **four National Court of Appeals** for the regions of north, south, east and west (other than the Supreme Court) to hear appeal from lower Courts. The four National Courts of Appeal having 15 judges each will act as an Intermediate Appellate Courts between the High Courts and the Supreme Court. They would*

*absorb the extra burden clogging on to Supreme Court and will also **allow Supreme Court to function as India's constitutional Court.***

**Strength of the Supreme Court under Constitution**

- Originally Supreme Court - comprised eight judges – a Chief Justice and seven puisne judges.
- Parliament is empowered to increase the strength of the Judges.
- In 2019, the SC's strength was increased to 34. This increase has been in phases.
- Presently there are 33 judges including the CJI

**Strength of Judges vs Pendency of cases**

- Despite an increase in the strength of the Judges, the work of the Supreme Court has expanded exponentially.
- The number of appeals have increased substantially as compared to the constitutional cases.
- This has led to an increase in the pendency of cases in the Judiciary.
- In 2014, various benches of the SC delivered 888 final judgments. Of these, only 64 judgments were those that dealt with a Constitutional matter.
- **Thus, the character of the apex court seems to have transformed from a Constitutional authority to that of an appellate Court.**
- This is because besides the constitutional cases SC is occupied with the cases of appeals from the lower courts.
- In many countries apex courts restrict their hearings to a limited number of cases. They rarely hear cases related to civil or criminal matters.
- In India, such a wide jurisdiction has resulted in a significant backlog of cases at the apex court's level.

**NATIONAL COURT OF APPEAL AS A SOLUTION**

- Act as an intermediary court between the High Courts and the Supreme Court.
- Relieve the SC of routine or appeal cases.
- Allow SC to function as a Constitutional court to deal with matters of national importance, fundamental rights and issues involving a substantial question of law.

**CONCERNS AGAINST SUCH A NATIONAL COURT OF APPEAL**

# CONSTITUTION, POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

- More than two crore cases pending in lower courts compared to fifty thousand cases with the SC. Thus, lower Judiciary needs to be equipped to provide speedy and timely justice. It has been argued that doing this will result in a substantial reduction in the need to approach the SC.

- Appeals will still continue to SC, as often SC takes issues which are beyond its remit. For ex. Inter-State River Water Disputes.

- Will require amendments to Constitution, which itself is difficult.

- Can lead to regionalism and other fissiparous tendencies.

- With the number of cases pending in lower Judiciary, it will take several decades to clear the current backlog of cases.

- The SC will continue being the final Court of appeal, and its role as a Constitutional Court will be further diluted.

- Dilution of Apex Courts Authority.

### ISSUE WITH THE ARGUMENT

- According to Law Commission, if Article 130 is liberally interpreted, no constitutional amendment may be required for the purpose of setting up of cassation benches in four regions and a Constitution Bench at Delhi. Action by the chief justice of India with the president's approval may be enough. In case this liberal interpretation of Article 130 is not feasible, suitable legislation/constitutional amendment may be enacted to do the needful.

- If regional benches are indeed set up, they would only have a functional role in as far as appeals from High Courts are concerned. All Constitutional and national importance matters would continue to be dealt with by the bench in Delhi.

- Article 130 makes it evident that the framers of the Constitution did not restrict the geographical ambit of the SC to Delhi only.

## JUDICIAL PENDENCY

### STATUS OF JUDICIAL BACKLOG

- As per the **National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), in 2018, 2.93 crore cases are pending in the subordinate courts,** 49 lakhs cases in High Courts and 57,987 cases in Supreme Court respectively.

- In the Supreme Court, **more than 30% of pending cases are more than five years old** while in the Allahabad High Court, 15% of the appeals have been pending since 1980s.

- A Law Commission report in 2009 had quoted that it would **require 464 years to clear the arrears** with the present strength of judges.

### REASONS FOR JUDICIAL PENDENCY

- **Shortage of judges:** Around 5,580 or **25% of posts of Judges are lying empty in the sub-ordinate courts.** It leads to poor Judges to Population Ratio, as India has **only 20 judges per million population.** Earlier, **Law Commission had recommended 50 judges per million.**

- **Frequent adjournments:** The laid down procedure of **allowing a maximum of three adjournments per case is not followed** in over 50 per cent of the matters being heard by courts, leading to rising pendency of cases.

- **Low budgetary allocation leading to poor infrastructure:** India spends only about 0.09% of its GDP to maintain the judicial infrastructure. Infrastructure status of lower courts of the country is miserably grim due to which they fail to deliver quality judgements. A 2016 report published by the Supreme Court showed that existing infrastructure could accommodate only 15,540 judicial officers against the all-India sanctioned strength of 20,558.

- **Burden of government cases:** Statistics provided by LIMBS. shows that the Centre and the States were responsible for over 46% of the pending cases in Indian courts.

- **Special leave petition cases in the Supreme Court, currently comprises to 40%** of the court's pendency. Which eventually leads to reduced time for the cases related to constitutional issues.

- **Judges Vacation:** SC works on average for 188 days a year, while apex court rules specify minimum of 225 days of work.

- **Lack of court management systems:** Courts have created dedicated posts for court managers to help improve court operations, optimise case movement and judicial time. However only few courts have filled up such posts so far.

- **Inefficient investigation:** Police are quite often handicapped in undertaking effective investigation for want of modern and scientific tools to collect evidence.

# CONSTITUTION, POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

- **Increasing Legal Literacy and Litigation:** With people becoming more aware of their rights and the obligations of the State towards them, they approach the courts more frequently in case of any violation. This also reflects on social transition, where traditional sources of dispute resolution such as intervention by family, guilds and community is getting diluted.

- **Lack of Maturity of Alternate Dispute Resolution Mechanisms:** Arbitration, Conciliation and Mediation mechanisms have not matured in India.

## IMPACTS OF JUDICIAL PENDENCY

- **Denial of 'timely justice' amounts to denial of 'justice' itself-** Timely disposal of cases is essential to maintain rule of law and provide access to justice. Speedy trial is a part of right to life and liberty guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution.

- **Erodes social infrastructure:** A weak judiciary has a negative effect on social development, which leads to: lower per capita income; higher poverty rates; poorer public infrastructure; and, higher crime rates.

- **Overcrowding of the prisons,** already infrastructure deficient, in some cases beyond 150% of the capacity, results in "violation of human rights".

- **Affects the economy of the country** as it was estimated that judicial delays cost India around 1.5% of its Gross Domestic Product annually.

- As per the Economic Survey 2017-18 pendency **hampers dispute resolution, contract enforcement, discourage investments, stall projects, hamper tax collection and escalate legal costs which leads to Increasing cost of doing business.**

## SUGGESTIONS FOR REDUCING JUDICIAL PENDENCY

- **Improving infrastructure for quality justice-** The Parliamentary Standing Committee in its report on Infrastructure Development and Strengthening of Subordinate Courts, suggested:

- States should provide suitable land for construction of court buildings etc. It should undertake vertical construction in light of shortage of land.

- Timeline set out for computerisation of all the courts, as a necessary step towards setting up of ecourts.

- **Addressing the issue of vacancy of judges:**

  - Ensure the appointments of the judges be done in an efficient way by arriving at an optimal judge strength to handle the cases pending in the system. The 120th Law Commission of India report for the first time, suggested a judge strength fixation formula.

  - Supreme Court and High Courts should **appoint efficient and experienced judges as Ad-hoc** judges in accordance with the Constitution.

  - **All India Judicial Service,** which would benefit the subordinate judiciary by increasing quality of judges and help reduce the pendency.

- **Increase in number of working days for judiciary:** Average annual working days for subordinate courts is 244, 190 for Supreme Court, 232 for High Court. Increase in number of working days could improve productivity significantly.

- **Having a definite time frame to dispose the cases by setting annual targets** and action plans for the subordinate judiciary and the High Courts. The judicial officers could be issued a strict code of conduct, to ensure that the duties are adequately performed by the officials.

- **Better Court Management System & Reliable Data Collection:** For this categorization of cases based on urgency and priority along with bunching of cases should be done.

- Economic Survey 2018-19 has suggested **formation of Indian Courts and Tribunal Services** to provide administrative support functions needed by the judiciary and identify process inefficiencies and advise the judiciary on legal reforms.

- **Use of Information technology (IT) solutions:** The use of technology for tracking and monitoring cases and in providing relevant information to make justice litigant friendly.

- **Mainstreaming of Alternate dispute resolution (ADR)**

- Legal Services Authorities should undertake **pre-litigation mediation** so that the inflow of cases into courts can be regulated.

- The **Lok Adalat should be organized regularly** for settling civil and family matters.

- **Gram Nyayalayas,** as an effective way to manage small claim disputes from rural areas which will help in decreasing the workload of the judicial institution.

- **Village Legal Care & Support Centre** can also be

## CONSTITUTION, POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

established by the High Courts to work at grass root level to make the State litigation friendly.

- **Mainstreaming of institutional Arbitration, Conciliation and Mediation.**

# ATTORNEY GENERAL & ADVOCATE GENERAL

#ADVOCATE GENERAL #ATTORNEY GENERAL

| PRIMARY SOURCE | THE HINDU | SECONDARY SOURCE | *The Indian* EXPRESS |
| SECONDARY SOURCE | LEGISLATIONS |

*Based on political compulsions, Chief Minister of Punjab has suggested to appoint APS Deol as the Advocate General of Punjab. According to Article 165 of the Indian Constitution, the Governor of each State shall appoint a person who is qualified to be appointed a Judge of a High Court to be Advocate-General for the State. The Advocate-General shall hold office during the pleasure of the Governor, and shall receive such remuneration as the Governor may determine.*

| | ATTORNEY GENERAL | ADVOCATE GENERAL |
|---|---|---|
| **1.** | Article 76 – President appoints | Article 165 – governor appoints |
| **2.** | Highest Law Officer of the Union Govt. | Highest Law officer of the State Govt. |
| **3.** | Eligible to be appointed as Judge of Supreme Court | Eligible to be appointed as Judge of High Court |
| **4.** | Holds office during the Pleasure of the President. | Holds office during Pleasure of the Governor. |
| **5.** | Remuneration decided by President. | Remuneration decided by the Governor. |
| **6.** | **Duties & Functions of Attorney General** **(a)** Advice GOI on legal matters. **(b)** Represent GOI in Courts **(c)** Perform other legal duties assigned time to time by President. | **Duties & Functions of Advocate General** **(a)** Advice concerned state govt. **(b)** Represent concerned state. **(c)** Legal matters referred by Governor. |
| **7.** | **Privileges** **(a)** Right to audience in all courts in territory of India. **(b)** Attend Parliamentary Proceedings; speak and take part in the proceedings of the committee; No right to vote. **(c)** Right to Private practice (Criminal case prior permission from the govt.) | **Privileges** **(a)** Audience within the territory of the state (Article 177) **(b)** Similar position in State Legislature |

## RESTRICTIONS ON ALL LAW OFFICERS INCLUDING AGI – THEY SHALL NOT

- Hold briefs against government of India or its affiliates.
- Advice any party against the Government of India or any Public Sector Undertaking.
- Defend an accused person in a criminal prosecution, without the permission of the Government of India
- Accept appointment to any office in any company or corporation without the permission of the Government of India.
- Advise any Ministry or Department of GoI or any statutory organization or any Public Sector Undertaking unless a reference is received through the Ministry of Law and Justice, Department of Legal Affairs.

## WHETHER AGI IS "PUBLIC AUTHORITY" UNDER RTI ACT?

- **2013 - Chief Information Commission** ruled that since the office of AGI did not come within the definition of "State" under Article 12, it did not have the authority to affect the legal relations of others and hence would not come under the purview of the RTI Act. The Commission also said that AG's office, being manned by a single person, did not have the infrastructural wherewithal to meet the requirements of the RTI Act.
- **2015 - Single Judge Bench of Delhi High Court** ruled that AGI is a public authority as he performs the functions required under Article 76(2) of the Indian Constitution and fulfils the definition of public authority provided under RTI Act and there is no need to apply the test of "state" under Article 12.
- **2017 - However, Division Bench of Delhi High Court** overruled the earlier judgment because:

○ Attorney General has a lawyer-client relationship and in this fiduciary capacity, the advice tendered by AGI to the Indian Government cannot be disclosed under RTI Act.

○ AGI is not a functionary reposed with any administrative or other authority which effects the rights or liabilities of persons.

### CONCERNS

- Exemption from disclosure under RTI Act.

- Selective approval from central government to represent in criminal proceedings of private clients which mostly includes cases pertaining to members affiliated to ruling party.

- As per Law Officer (Conditions of Service) Rules, 1987, a law officer shall be appointed for three years and can be again re-appointed for further three years. So, this often leads to politicisation of the office of Attorney General of India.

# SUB-CATEGORISATION OF SCHEDULED CASTE

#RESERVATION #SUB-CATEGORISATION

PRIMARY SOURCE | THE HINDU | SECONDARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS

*In State of Punjab v Davindar Singh, a five-judge Constitution Bench of Supreme Court observed that there can be sub classifications within Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) to provide preferential treatment in reservation to the "weakest of the weak".*

### SUB-CATEGORISATION PROVIDED BY PUNJAB HELD UNCONSTITUTIONAL BY HIGH COURT

- Punjab Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes (Reservation in Services) Act, 2006 provides that 50% of the vacancies of the quota reserved for Scheduled Castes in direct recruitment, shall be offered to Balmikis and Mazhbi Sikhs, if available, as a first preference from amongst the Scheduled Castes.

- This provision was held unconstitutional by Punjab and Haryana High Court as the Court relied on the judgment pronounced in *V Chinnaiah vs State of Andhra Pradesh and Others* which disallows such sub-categorisation in reservation for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes.

- **E.V. Chinnaiah Judgment** held that that all the castes in the Presidential Order under **Article 341(1)** of the Constitution formed one class of homogeneous group and the same could not be further sub divided.

### JUDGMENT GIVEN BY SUPREME COURT

- The Court held that sub-classification made under Punjab Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes (Reservation in Services) Act, 2006 was to ensure that the benefit of the reservation percolate down to the deprived section, to provide benefit to all and give them equal treatment.

- The Court held that such sub-classification would not amount to exclusion from the list as no class (caste) is deprived of reservation in totality.

- **The entire basket of fruits cannot be given to mighty at the cost of others under the guise of forming a homogenous class.** The Court said that creamy layer for members of SC/ST who have progressed or advanced in their life can be created as compared to the weakest among the weaker sections of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe.

- As per Article 16(4) and Article 342A, it would not be permissible to adopt different criteria for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and socially and educationally backward classes.

- **It is State's obligation to undertake the emancipation of the deprived section** of the community and eradicate inequalities. So to remove inequality even within same community, State can sub-classify and adopt distributive justice method so that State benefits does not concentrate in few hands and equal justice to all is provided as per Article 39(b) and 39(c).

### THE CASE OF THE ARUNTHATHIYARS

- An example of state legislations earmarking quotas for certain communities within the Scheduled Castes is the 2009 Tamil Nadu law that reserves 3% of the total seats in educational institutions and state services for the Arunthathiyar community.

- While the Arunthathiyars constitute nearly 16% of the total Scheduled Caste population in the state, a report of the Justice Janarthanam Commission observed that their representation in most government departments, corporations and education institutions was anywhere between 5% to 0% within the Scheduled Caste communities.

- For this reason, the Tamil Nadu government found it necessary for the state to ensure that the Arunthathiyars obtain representation corresponding to their proportion in the total population of the state.

### REASONS TO NOT SUB-CLASSIFY SCHEDULES CASTE BASED ON ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

- Inter-se classification is wrought with danger if it is done with the assumption that "affluent and socially and economically advanced", no more deserve reservations and that reservations need to be rethought and provided on the basis of economic conditions so that benefits can "trickle down to the needy".

- Reservations is not a mean for poverty alleviation or to substitute for quality public education, which has its subscribers inside and outside the court, and which was given a parliamentary stamp of approval with the passing of the 103rd Constitutional Amendment reserving 10% seats for "economically weaker" *savarna* candidates.

- To argue that reservations should trickle down to the 'needy' within the Scheduled Castes, 'needy' being defined based on economic conditions, refuses to accept caste as a social problem, one which does not go away with some degree of educational or economic mobility.

- In a 1976 case, State of Kerala v N M Thomas, the Supreme Court laid down that "Scheduled Castes are not castes, they are class."

- The decision to change the proportion of reservation may be based on the perception that such decisions will be made to appease one vote-bank or the other. A watertight President's list was envisaged to protect from such potential arbitrary change.

### LEGAL COURSE IS MOVING IN THE DIRECTION OF MAKING SOCIO-POLITICAL STATUS AS THE BASIS RESERVATION

- Tiny elite gobbling up the benefits of reservations.

- Certain caste groups or sub-groups have "come out of untouchability or backwardness by virtue of belonging to the creamy layer".

- **Constitution 103rd Amendment** reserving 10% seats for "economically weaker" savarna candidates reinforces the idea that reservation is the tool for economic development.

- It is unfair for some castes within the Scheduled Castes to 'usurp' all the benefits of reservation.

### CONCLUSION

This assumption will be denial of the atrocities, humiliation and violence faced by members of the Scheduled Castes across classes, in rural as well as urban spaces. Even with considerable education, economic or social mobility, the humiliation and violence of untouchability does not cease. Reservations thus become necessary to ensure representation in government and society to counter the deep-rooted structures of caste hierarchy, domination and oppression.

Therefore, the court ought to steer clear from allowing inter-se classification among Scheduled Castes on the flawed ground that some Scheduled Castes who have gained representation through reservation have "usurped" or "gobbled up" the benefits and therefore, potentially, now should be excluded. The rationale for inter-se classification is simply that it is imperative and a fundamental requirement for our democracy that all communities within the Scheduled Castes are adequately represented in society, polity and government. Supreme Court has observed that "the constitutional goal of social transformation cannot be achieved without taking into account changing social realities".

# OPINION POLL

#OPINION POLL #EXIT POLL

PRIMARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS    SECONDARY SOURCE | THE HINDU

*Chancellor of Austria was forced to resign as he was charged with orchestrating fake surveys and bribing the news media to show them as genuine opinion polls. This is the first time when the head of a country had to resign for inaccurate and misleading opinion polls. It reflects the **growing "weaponisation" of opinion polls** in electoral democracies. In this backdrop of misuse of opinion polls, let us understand about Exit Polls and Opinion polls, their difference and the impact of misleading and inaccurate opinion polls on electoral democracy.*

### OPINION POLLS

- Opinion poll is a method for collecting information about the views or beliefs of a given group prior to the voting process. Information from an opinion poll can shed light on and potentially allow inferences to be drawn about certain attributes of a larger population.

## CONSTITUTION, POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

- Opinion polls involve a sample of respondents drawn to represent a larger population who are asked a standardized series of questions in a fixed form. The results are analysed for the entire respondent sample that represents different groups in the population.
- They help in enhancing awareness among citizens and encourage public debate on performance of the government in different sectors.

### EXIT POLLS

- Exit poll is a survey which is conducted just after a voter walks out after casting his or her vote. In an exit poll, agencies conducting it ask the voters for whom they have voted just after the poll.
- Such polls aim at predicting the actual result based on the information collected from voters who have casted their vote.
- Exit polls are conducted by the method of sampling where agencies select different constituencies across different parts of the country based on select demography and caste to get an idea across sections of populations about voting pattern.

### ISSUES WITH OPINION POLLS

- **Opinion polls are not scientific** as they are based on the opinions of a very small fraction of voters and hence not the accucrate prediction.
- **Influences Voters** - it is possible for psephologists and the media to manipulate public opinion using opinion polls.
- **Opinion of voters might change during voting** – so it can be misleading.
- **Opinion Polls can be rigged and misused** by political parties for vested interest

### ATTEMPTS AT REGULATION OF OPINION POLLS

- The earliest attempt to regulate opinion polls was made in 1998 when the Election Commission of India (ECI) took an overall view of the situation and issued **"Guidelines for Publication and Dissemination of Results of Opinion Polls/Exit Polls"** in 1988.
- The EC was of the view that publication of such exit/opinion polls during election when the polling is still in process had the potential to influence decision making of voters. However, the Election Commission was also aware of the freedom of press in a democratic country and could not have put a complete ban on such process.

- **Keeping in mind both these aspects EC issued the following guidelines:**
  o The organisations or agencies conducting Opinion Polls shall be free to publish and disseminate such polls with an exception.
  o **Exception:** "No result of any opinion poll conducted at any time shall be published, publicised or disseminated by any print or electronic media, after 5 pm on two days before poll and till after the closing of poll in all States and Union territories, i.e. till 5 pm on the last day of poll.
  o Any organisations or agencies conducting any Opinion Poll or Exit Poll, while publishing, publicising or disseminating the result of any such poll, **must indicate the sample size of the electorate covered by such polls and geographic spread of survey so conducted.**
  o The organisations must invariably give the **details of methodology followed, including likely percentage of errors, the professional background and experience of the organisation or organisations and the key professionals involved in the conduct and analysis of the poll.**
  o **'Dissemination'** includes publication in any newspaper, magazine or periodical, or display on electronic media, or circulation by means of any pamphlet, poster, placard, handbill or any other document.
  o **Punishment -** Contravention of the above prohibition is a penal offence punishable with imprisonment up to 2 years or with fine or with both.

### CONSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGE

- The 1998 Guidelines issued by EC were challenged by media and publication houses on the ground that it violated their fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression and their right of information under Article 19(1)(a).
- **In *R Rajagopal v. Union of India*,** Supreme Court allowed the EC guidelines and accordingly were duly observed by all electronic and print media at the time of the general elections in February-March 1998.
- Validity of guidelines of EC again came into question during the General Election of 1999. The Times of India Group of Newspapers, as well as certain other newspapers refused to observe the guidelines issued

by the EC. Consequently EC approached the Supreme Court for direction against the Times of India Group to abide by the Commission's guidelines.

- Owing to the important constitutional issues involved in this matter, Supreme Court referred the matter to a Constitution bench.

- The Constitution Bench observed serious doubts about the EC guidelines on their being issued without statutory sanction and also infringing the fundamental rights of the media houses. Consequently, EC withdrew the guidelines on 14th September 1999.

Such withdrawal meant that there were **no restrictions on the conduct of opinion polls and exit polls** or on the dissemination of results of these polls during the general elections to the House of the People and certain legislative assemblies held in September-October 1999.

### SOLVING THE VACUUM AFTER 2004

On the matter of Exit Poll, the EC then asked the Ministry of Law and Justice to add a specific provision in RPA, 1951 prohibiting publication and dissemination of the results of exit polls and opinion polls during the last 48 hours.

### ADDING SECTION 126A TO REPRESENTATION OF PEOPLE ACT, 1951

- **ECI suggested having statutory restriction** on publishing the results of opinion polls and exit polls. This proposal of EC was accepted by Parliament in 2009 and Section 126A was added in RPA, 1951.

- **Section 126A restricts** publication and dissemination of result of exit polls from the period between the commencements of the poll **until half an hour** after the closing of the final phase of the poll. Section 126A in RPA 1951 was added in 2009 on concerns that such polls influence voting results.

- **Now conduct of voting process starts at 7 am in the morning and ends at 6 pm in the evening. That is why exit polls were announced after 6:30 pm.**

- Violation of Section 126A of RPA, 1951 shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 2 years or with fine or with both.

# HATE SPEECH NOT RECOGNISED BY FACEBOOK

### #HATE SPEECH #RIGHTS #LIBERTY

**PRIMARY SOURCE** *The Indian* EXPRESS    **SECONDARY SOURCE** THE HINDU

*Several red flags on the use of fake or unauthenticated messages were flagged by Facebook internally between 2018 and 2020. The red flagging was done on constant barrage of polarising nationalistic content and fake or inauthentic messaging from "misinformation" to content "denigrating" minority communities. However, much of these flagged contents were not taken down because the Facebook's Artificial Intelligence tools did not "identify vernacular languages" resulting in failure in identifying hate speech or problematic content. These glaring gaps in response are revealed in documents which are part of the disclosures made to the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and provided to the US Congress in redacted form by the legal counsel of former Facebook employee and whistle-blower Frances Haugen.*

### COMMITTEE APPOINTED ON HATE SPEECH

A committee appointed by the Union Home Ministry, tasked with recommending changes in criminal law, is now seeking to formulate new provisions that will make hate speech a separate offence. The Committee is headed by Prof. Ranbir Singh, Chairperson Vice-Chancellor NLU Delhi.

### HATE SPEECH

- **Adding new Provisions in IPC -** The term 'hate speech' may not be used, but the panel is examining recommendations made by the Law Commission and the **Expert Committee headed by T.K. Viswanathan**, on adding Sections 153C and 505A to the IPC.

- **Section 153C** would target speech that gravely threatens any person or group with intention to cause fear or alarm, or incite violence towards them, and prescribe a sentence of two years in prison and a fine.

- **Section 505A,** on the other hand, proposes to punish speech or writing that causes fear or alarm among a group, or provokes violence against it, on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, place of birth or disability.

### NEED TO CURB HATE SPEECH

# CONSTITUTION, POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

- **Incites Hostility -** Hate speech is an expression which is likely to cause distress or offend other individuals based on their association with a particular group or incite hostility towards them.

- **There is no general legal definition of hate speech -** perhaps for the apprehension that setting a standard for determining unwarranted speech may lead to suppression of this liberty.

- **Boundary for Disagreements must be drawn -** Democracy thrives on disagreements provided they do not cross the boundaries of civil discourse. Critical and dissenting voices are important for a vibrant society. However, care must be taken to prevent public discourse from becoming a tool to promote speech inimical to public order.

- **Reasonable Restrictions -** The Constitution acknowledges that liberty cannot be absolute or uncontrolled and thereby enabled the legislature to impose reasonable restrictions on the exercise of the right to freedom of speech and expression in the interests of
  i. Security of the state and sovereignty and integrity of India,
  ii. Friendly relations with foreign States,
  iii. Public order,
  iv. Decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence.

- **Protect Vulnerable Sections -** Laws strive to harmonise the freedom of expression with right to equality, hence seeks to prevent such speech which marginalizes the vulnerable sections of the society. To protect this group from discriminatory attitudes and practices, it is necessary to curb such forms of expression that have the potential of inciting fear, hatred and violence and such speeches must be regulated by law.

- **Grounds to Restrict Hate Speech –** UN Human Rights Council's 'Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression on content regulation on internet, expressed that freedom of expression can be restricted on the following grounds
  i. child pornography
  ii. hate speech
  iii. defamation

  iv. direct and public incitement to commit genocide
  v. advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence

- Supreme Court in 1950 stated that public order was allied to the public safety and considered equivalent to security of the State. This interpretation was validated by the First Constitution Amendment, when public order was inserted as a ground of restriction under 19(2).

- The importance of allowing expression, howsoever, unpopular has been stressed by J.S. Mill in the following words, in his work *'On Liberty'* – *"If all mankind minus one, were of one opinion, and only one person were of* the *contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind."*

## PROFESSOR WALDRON'S DEFINITION OF HATE SPEECH

- **Hate speech refers to utterances that incite violence, hatred, or discrimination against people based on their collective identity, be it race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexuality.**

- The limitation in these cases should be restricted to those categories of minorities who are vulnerable. Under this conception, a merely offensive statement would not qualify as hate speech.

- For example, a mockery of Buddhism's tenets would not be illegal simply because it offends the sensibilities of its practitioners; on the other hand, speech that describes all Buddhists as amoral would qualify.

- Similarly, a work of satire on a religious figure that outrages the sentiments of his followers will be safeguarded, but speech that vilifies an entire community by describing them, say, as "anti-nationals" would go unprotected.

- This is because hate speech attacks two key tenets of a democratic republic:
  1. Guarantee of equal dignity to all
  2. Public good of inclusiveness.

## PROFESSOR WALDRON'S DEFINITION AS PER INDIAN PREAMBLE

- Prof. Waldron's theory is also appealing because it fits with India's democratic vision. Specifically, it animates the values of LIBERTY, EQUALITY AND FRATERNITY that the Constitution's framers viewed as foundational.

# CONSTITUTION, POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

- Until now, however, the country's hate-speech laws have suffered from inaccuracy**. Section 153A and Section 295A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC),** which criminalises speeches that seeks to promote enmity between different groups and speech/acts that outrage/s religious feelings - are no more than a poor imitation of what hate speech laws ought to be.

- They are vaguely worded, and they are frequently invoked to quell speech that so much as offends a person's belief. As a result, they militate against the permissible grounds for limiting free speech enumerated in Article 19(2) of the Constitution, and the restrictions allowed on considerations of public order and morality.

## WHEN CAN SPEECH BE CRIMINALISED?

- **Speech must reach a level of incitement to be criminalised.** That is, the utterance in dispute must go beyond advocacy.

- **A re-imagination of our hate speech laws.** It obliges us to read morality not as societal morality but as constitutional morality.

- Thus, speech that merely causes offence and is no more than disparaging or unpleasant, would continue to remain shielded. **But speech that treats communities with disparate concern, by creating in them a sense of dread, a sense of exclusion from civic life, will go unprotected.**

## HATE SPEECH IN THE ERA OF TECHNOLOGY

- The issue of hate speech has assumed greater significance in the era of internet, since the accessibility of internet allows offensive speeches to affect a larger audience in a short span of time.

- In the age of technology, the anonymity of internet allows a miscreant to easily spread false and offensive ideas. These ideas need not always incite violence but they might perpetuate the discriminatory attitudes prevalent in the society.

- Incitement to discrimination is also a significant factor that contributes to the identification of hate speech. Hence its regulation through Information Technology Act becomes equally important.

- Recently in the case of **Shreya Singhal v Union of India, Supreme Court declared** *section 66A of Information Technology Act as unconstitutional* as it was violative of freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1).

# PRESERVING JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE

#JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE #JUDICIARY

PRIMARY SOURCE *The Indian* EXPRESS    SECONDARY SOURCE THE HINDU

*Chief Justice of India in an address at the valedictory ceremony of the Pan-India Legal Awareness and Outreach Campaign by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has stated that there is nothing more important than to "preserve, protect and promote" the independence of the judiciary at all levels".*

## HIGHLIGHTS OF SPEECH OF CJI

- **Independence of Judiciary -** Highlighting the importance of constitutional Courts in a welfare state, CJI said that it is their ability to function with absolute independence and necessary boldness in the face of adversity that defines the character of the Indian judiciary.

- **Upholding Constitutional Values -** Indian Judiciary's ability to uphold the Constitution sustains its impeccable character and there is no other way to live up to the faith of Indians. Indian Constitutional Courts have been handling the responsibilities entrusted to it by the Constitution with utmost sincerity and commitment. The immense trust reposed by the public at large upon the judiciary, as a last resort of hope, stands testimony to this fact.

- **Addressing issues of vulnerable sections important -** Independent India inherited a deeply fragmented society from its colonial past and the stark divide between haves and have nots is still a reality. No matter how many cherished declarations we successfully arrive at, in the face of poverty, inequity and deprivations, it will all seem pointless. Despite our being a part of a welfare state, benefits are not trickling down to the intended beneficiaries at the desired levels. People's aspiration about leading a dignified life is often met with challenges including poverty as the main challenge.

- **Preserved the ideals of Welfare State -** The history of this country is a witness as to how the constitutional courts, keeping the principles of a welfare constitution in their heart, have strived to stand up for the marginalised in this country. The Indian judiciary has always remained in the forefront in shaping this

welfare state. The decisions of the constitutional courts of this country have enabled social democracy to thrive.

- **Justice at Grassroots –** There is a need for a robust justice delivery system at the grassroots level. One cannot imagine a healthy judiciary without it. Therefore, nothing is more important than to preserve, protect and promote the independence and integrity of the judiciary at all levels.

- **Simple Language in Judgments –** Need to write judgments and orders in "simple and clear language" as "our decisions have a huge social impact".

## INDIAN CONSTITUTION HAS ENSURED THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY THROUGH A NUMBER OF MEASURES.

- **Administration of Law & Justice** - Supreme Court plays a significant role in the administration of law and justice and is the final arbiter and interpreter of the Constitution.

- **Judicial Review -** The Judiciary is the protector of the Constitution and can strike down executive, administrative or legislative acts of Centre and States if they violate legal or constitutional principles.

- **SC is the final court of appeal** in public and private law and enjoys advisory, appellate and original jurisdiction.

- **Creative & Balanced Role of Supreme Court** - in keeping the responsible and parliamentary system of government in proper working order, in maintaining federal balance and protects fundamental rights of people of India.

- **Promotes and Protects Welfare State & Other Constitutional Ideals** and Goals enshrined in the Preamble and other parts of the Constitution.

- **Overall, an Independent Judiciary is sine qua non (an essential condition) of a vibrant democratic system.**

## CONSTITUTIONAL & LEGAL PROVISION TO ENSURE JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE

- **Separation of Power - Article 50** - Separation of Power between Legislature, Executive and Judiciary – is now a part of basic Structure of the Indian Constitution.

- **Security of Tenure of Judges** – Judge of Supreme Court or High Court cannot be removed arbitrarily by the executive and their removal must undergo rigorous legislative scrutiny as provided under **Article 124 (4).** Further, **Article 124 (5)** mentions that removal of judge on grounds of "misbehaviour" and "incapacity" can be prescribed by law made by Parliament.

- **The Judges Enquiry Act, 1968** – lays down the process to remove Judges of Supreme Court and High Court including the investigation necessary to prove misbehaviour or incapacity.

- **Salary of Judges cannot be reduced - Article 125 (2)** - Salary of Judges is fixed by Parliament and it cannot be reduced during the tenure of a Judge. Privileges, allowances, leaves and pension provided to a Judge cannot be varied or reduced to their disadvantage.

- **Expense of Supreme Court charged upon Consolidated Fund of India – Article 146 (3)** – This ensures financial independence of judiciary away from Parliament's vote on the matter or executive's pressure or influence.

- **Jurisdiction of Courts cannot be diminished** - Parliament cannot reduce jurisdiction of Supreme Court or High Court by passing any law on appeals or Supreme Court's Original Jurisdiction under Article 131 with respect to dispute between centre and states.

- **Constitution insulates Judges from criticism in Parliament & State Legislature** –Parliament or State Legislature cannot discuss the conduct of Judge in discharge of their duties.

- **Protection from Contempt Proceedings -** Supreme Court held that Article 121 and 211 also protects a Judge of Court from any contempt proceedings which may be taken against them in discharge of their duties.

- **Collegium System** – This has further strengthened judicial independence as interference from executive in appointment is ruled out.

## IS THERE A POSSIBILITY OF EROSION OF JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE DESPITE CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES?

- **Post-Retirement Benefits -** There is always a lurking danger of judicial independence being eroded by prevailing practices of post retirement re-employment of retired SC/HC Judges in various executive capacities.

- **Arbitration Practice -** Most Supreme Court Judges on retirement start their Arbitration Practice. This may develop a prior linkage or affiliation with any

corporate, company, industry or organisation for a future job. Such prior linkage pre-retirement may impact judgments pronounced prior retirement.

- **No Constitutional Bar on retired SC/HC Judges entering Active Politics –** Lure of participation in active politics by political parties further erodes judicial independence. As part of quid pro quo, judges may deliver favourable judgment and this overall may hamper judicial independence.

### WAY FORWARD

- **Implementing the observation made in the case of Nixon M. Joseph v Union of India –** On the issue of taking up jobs post retirement for Judges, SC expressed firm opposition against such practice. The Court said that to maintain dignity and independence of judiciary as well as public confidence in the judiciary, it is necessary that a Judge should not allow his judicial position to be compromised at any cost. Justice should not only be done but seen to be done.

- **Cooling off period of two years** must be made part of legal principles for retired Judges of Supreme Court and High Court.

- **Implementing "Restatement of Values of Judicial life"** which provides complete cannons for judicial ethics as adopted by Supreme Court in May 1997 and serves as a guide for an independent & fair judiciary.

# EXTENSION OF SOCIAL AUDIT IN RAJSTHAN

#SOCIAL AUDIT #GOVERNANCE

| PRIMARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS | SECONDARY SOURCE | THE HINDU |
|---|---|---|---|

*The concept of social audit is being extended to more departments and government schemes in Rajasthan in an attempt to ensure transparency and accountability in the utilisation of funds. The civil society activists have made a significant contribution to the audit process and suggested measures for an effective check on the executive action. The schemes being audited through the process at present include the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Aawas Yojana, Swachh Bharat Mission, National Social Assistance Programme and the Central Finance Commission's 14th and 15th grants to the State.*

### ABOUT SOCIAL AUDIT

- Social audit is a process of reviewing official records and determining whether state reported expenditures reflect the actual monies spent on the ground. (Ground truth by the intended beneficiaries).

- Social audit is a process in which, details of the resource, both financial and non-financial, used by public agencies for development initiatives are shared with the community, often through a public platform.

- Review of official records also helps to determine the gap in state reported expenditure and accrual money spent on ground. This overall helps to **enforce accountability and transparency** and enable public to **scrutinise development initiatives** especially at local level in Panchayats and Municipalities.

### INSTITUTIONALISING SOCIAL AUDIT IN GOVT. SCHEMES

- **National level - Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was the first Act to mandate Social Audits by the Gram Sabha of all the projects taken up in the Gram Panchayat.**

- **State level -** Few States have taken up social audit –
  - ○ Pradhan Mantri Aawas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) audits are done in Uttar Pradesh, Meghalaya and West Bengal.
  - ○ National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) audits are done in Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal.
  - ○ **Legislative backing to social audits: Meghalaya Legislature has enacted 'The Meghalaya Community Participation and Public Services Social Audit Act, 2017'** which mandates social audit in 26 different schemes in Education, Health, Rural Development and other areas.

### NEED & BENEFIT OF SOCIAL AUDIT

The main reason for the push for social audit is the huge disconnect between what people want and what people get. As soon as social audit kicks in, it exercises its control over the policy developers and implementers in the following manner:

- **A check on corruption:** It uncovers irregularities and malpractices in the public sector and maintains oversight on government functioning, thus reducing leakages and corruption.

- **Timely Monitoring, feedback and Course-correction measures on performance at local level.**

## CONSTITUTION, POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

- **Accountability and transparency:** It ensure accountability and transparency in working of local government bodies and reduces trust gap between people and local governments.
- **Participative and democratic process:** It promotes participation of people in implementation of programs and makes people more forthcoming for social development activities.
- **Identifies Gaps in Implementation:** It allows the civil society to identify the gap between the desired and actual impact of any project/programme/service implemented.
- **Strengthens functioning of Gram Sabha:** It gives voice and influencing power to the Gram Sabha, the lynchpin of rural governance structure.
- **Generates demand for rural economy by highlighting governance gaps:** Serves as the basis for framing the management's policies by raising demands in a socially responsible and accountable manner by highlighting the real problems.
- **Strengthens Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Groups and helps in facilitating Good Governance.**
- **Encourages grass-root democracy by enhancing local participation.**
- **Improves and institutionalises professionalism**: It boosts professionalism in public bodies by forcing Panchayats to keep proper records and accounts of the spending made against the grants received from the government and other sources.
- **Collective platform for Social Cohesion**: It provides a collective platform such as a social audit Gram Sabha, for people to express their common needs, resulting into social cohesion.

### CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL AUDIT

- Lack of Infrastructure at ground level to address grievances made by public during scrutiny.
- Lack of administrative and political will in institutionalising social audit mechanisms.
- Lack of stringent penal action against those creating hurdles in the process.
- Lack of educated and well-informed citizenry to undertake regular audits.
- Lack of technical and managerial capacity such as book-keeping, accounting.
- Unwillingness of public officials at ground level to share the reality of developmental process.

- Lack of uniform process of social audit across states due to language and cultural barriers.
- No Benchmarking of Social Audit Mechanism for comparison purpose across districts.
- Difficult to gauge social impact assessment of government programmes without any uniform or fixed criteria.
- For state officials, it is a time-consuming exercise – hence need for special officers at village level only for the purpose of Social Audit.

### WAY FORWARD

Social audit as a transparent, participatory, and active evaluation process has the potential to encounter the corruption that plagues anti-poverty programmes. Thus, as a step towards good governance, social audit's concepts, approaches, strategies, and adaptable methodologies need to be propagated and percolated.

# FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT PROVES TO BE THE HURDLE

#GOVERNANCE #SECURITY

PRIMARY SOURCE *The Indian EXPRESS*   SECONDARY SOURCE THE HINDU
SECONDARY SOURCE pib

*The 2015 Framework Agreement between the Centre and the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah) – NSCN-IM - to finalise the Naga Peace Accord is now turning out to be the key stumbling block in reaching an agreement between the two sides on the issue of interpretation of sovereignty.*

### PROBLEM OF INTERPRETATION OF THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

- The Naga Framework Agreement was signed in 2015, when special status of Jammu and Kashmir existed with a separate constitution, a state flag and autonomy over internal administration based on Article 370 and various Presidential Orders.
- NSCN-IM argues that according to the Framework Agreement signed in 2015, sovereignty must be retained and any final agreement should be for peaceful coexistence of the two sovereign powers.
- NSCN(IM) contends that the idea of "sharing sovereign power" and "co-existence of the two entities" means Naga people will be entitled to their own national flag and constitution.

- NSCN's understanding is based on the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir which under Article 370 enjoyed special status and were allowed to have their own state flag and a separate constitution.

### BACKDROP TO THE 2015 FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

- In 2015, the Centre signed a framework agreement with the NSCN (I-M) to resolve the Naga issue, but both sides maintained secrecy about its contents.

- The optimism among some Naga groups eroded a bit when the Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs) were brought on board the peace process on November 17, 2017.

- **The NNPGs are a group of Seven Naga outfits** and organizations who along with NSCN-IM are also involved in talks with the Centre to sign a Final Agreement to the Naga issue. NNGPs and NSCN (I-M) are not on same page regarding the political solution of Nagaland. This aspect of division among Naga Group was kept in mind by the Indian Government while bringing NNGPs along with NSCN (I-M) in the peace deal.

- So, according to NSCN (I-M) bringing along NNGPs on board the peace deal created suspicion about Central Government exploiting divisions within the Nagas on tribal and geopolitical lines. It was also a throwback to the first peace deal, **The Shillong Accord of 1975** that Naga hardliners had rejected.

- Rejection of the Shillong Accord had led to the birth of the NSCN in January 1980. However, differences surfaced within the outfit a few years later over initiating a dialogue process with the Indian government. Because of the difference, NSCN split into the NSCN (I-M) and NSCN (Khaplang) in April 1988 who often engaged in fratricidal battles.

### REASONS FOR GROWING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND NSCN (I-M)

- When Mr. Ravi was appointed as Nagaland's Governor in 2019, there was certain amount of euphoria that the peace deal would eventually be fruitful and there would be light at the end of long drawn tunnel. As the Centre's interlocutor, Mr. Ravi had signed the framework agreement in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

- In October 2019, Mr. Ravi issued a statement blaming the "procrastinating attitude" of the NSCN (I-M) for the delay in a mutually agreed draft comprehensive settlement. He also said the NSCN (I-M) imputed

"imaginary contents" to the framework agreement while referring to the government's purported acceptance of a 'Naga national flag' and 'Naga Yezhabo (constitution)' as part of the deal.

- In June 2020, the NSCN (I-M) took offence to Mr. Ravi's letter to Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio in which he referred to them as *"armed gangs" running parallel governments.* The NSCN (I-M) reacted by demanding Mr. Ravi's removal from the peace process. However, this demand was opposed by Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs), a conglomerate of seven rival groups, and some social organisations as they want Mr. Ravi to stay as the interlocutor.

### MAJOR HURDLES TO PEACE PROCESS

- **Greater Nagalim -** NSCN (I-M) believes in the idea of Greater Nagalim, which is a homeland encompassing all Naga-inhabited areas in Nagaland and beyond including parts of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Manipur.

- **Problem in Accepting the demand of Greater Nagalim -** Accepting this demand would leave the centre no choice but to reorganize the states of Nagaland, Assam, Manipur and Arunachal. No states presently would agree to such a proposal which carves away their settled territory. The Assam government has vowed not to part with "even an inch of land", the All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union warned against any "territorial changes" while finding a solution. Manipur Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren Singh said he has received the Centre's assurance that the peace deal with the NSCN (I-M) will not affect the territorial integrity of Manipur.

- **Peaceful Settlement outside the purview of Indian Constitution –** NSCN (I-M) wants settlement of peace outside the purview of Indian Constitution as that will allow them to fulfil their demand of peaceful co-existence of two sovereign entities. Now, in his 'Naga Independence Day' speech on August 14, NSCN (I-M) general secretary Thuingaleng Muivah insisted the Nagas "will never merge with India and strongly indicated a settlement outside the purview of the Constitution of India.

- **Demand for a separate Flag and Constitution –** NSCN (I-M) faction have demanded a separate Flag and Constitution for their Greater Nagalim. However, so far the Naga leaders are divided around the demand for a separate flag and a constitution separate from the Indian constitution as NNGPs are

ready to go ahead with the peace deal even without a separate flag and constitution.

### WAY FORWARD

With the intention to finalise the Naga Framework Agreement, the centre has removed the earlier interlocutor Mr. Ravi and has appointed retired Intelligence Bureau special director Akshay Mishra to negotiate with the NSCN-IM. Despite these changes, the issue of sovereignty, separate flag and separate constitution remains a contentious and non-negotiating issue for both sides.

# MEMBERS SUSPENDED IN RAJYA SABHA

#SUSPENSION #RAJYA SABHA

**PRIMARY SOURCE** THE HINDU   **SECONDARY SOURCE** The Indian EXPRESS

*Twelve Opposition MPs have been suspended for the rest of the Winter Session for disruptions in Rajya Sabha due to their acts of misconduct, contemptuous, unruly and violent behaviour and intentional attacks on security personnel. So, let us go through the powers of Speaker/Chairman to suspend members of Lok Sabha & Rajya Sabha.*

### RULES OF PROCEDURE AND CONDUCT OF BUSINESS IN LOK SABHA

- **Maintaining Orderly Business -** Speaker of Lok Sabha maintains order in the House to ensure its smooth functioning. In the process Speaker is empowered either to withdraw or suspend the member from the House.
- **Withdrawal of Member –** Regarding disorderly conduct in the House by any member, Speaker may direct such member to **withdraw from the House** immediately for the entire day and such member shall not sit in the House for the remaining proceedings of the day.
- **Suspension of Member -** The Speaker may name a member who disregards the authority of the Chair or abuses the rules of the House by persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House.
- **A motion shall be presented in the House for the named person's suspension**. A motion on being passed by the House results in suspension of the member for the remainder of the Session of the House.

- **The suspension of such member can be terminated** on presenting of another motion in the House.
- **Regarding Expulsion of Members,** Speaker appoints a committee to investigate the conduct and activities of MP, whether it is derogatory to the dignity of the House and inconsistent with the Code of Conduct.
- **Committee on Ethics** can also be asked to give its recommendations. Consequent to the findings of committee a motion for expulsion is adopted by the house.

### POWER OF CHAIRMAN - RULES OF PROCEDURE AND CONDUCT OF BUSINESS IN THE COUNCIL OF STATES

The Rules of Procedure of Rajya Sabha also provides for the **withdrawal & suspension** of Members of Rajya Sabha. It is slightly different from Lok Sabha.

- Withdrawal of Member regarding disorderly conduct in the House.
- Suspension of Member - shall take place after Rajya Sabha adopts a motion for suspension for remaining session.
- The Council can terminate the suspension by passing another motion.
- So, unlike Lok Sabha, the motion for suspension of member of Rajya Sabha is not moved by the Chairman but is adopted by the Council.

### COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

- It consists of 15 members nominated by the Speaker. **The Chairperson of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker** from amongst the Members of the Committee.
- *The functions of the Committee are:*
a) to examine every complaint relating to unethical conduct of a Member of Lok Sabha referred to it by the Speaker and make such recommendations as it may deem fit.
b) to formulate a Code of Conduct for Members and suggest amendments or additions to the Code of Conduct from time to time.
- The Committee can conduct a preliminary enquiry on matters referred to it.
- The Committee can take up the matter for further investigation if needed.
- The Report of the Committee shall be presented to the Speaker who may direct that the report be laid on the Table of the House.

## CONSTITUTION, POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

As per The Members of Lok Sabha (Declaration of Assets and Liabilities) Rules, 2004 - every elected candidate of Lok Sabha shall, within 90 days from the date on which he makes and subscribes an oath or affirmation for taking his seat, furnish information pertaining to his/her Assets and Liabilities.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

### MCQS

**Q.1)  Dhebar Commission and Mungekar Committee can be associated with?**

(a)     Women Empowerment

(b)     Criteria and administration of Scheduled Areas

(c)     Citizenship

(d)     Parliamentary Reforms

**Q.2)  Which of the following can be said to be the cornerstone for Citizen Charters?**

1.     Accountability

2.     Transparency

3.     Timely Service Delivery

4.     Effective Grievance Redressal

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a)     1, 2 and 3 only          (b)     1 and 2 only

(c)     2, 3 and 4 only          (d)     1, 2, 3 and 4

**Q.3)  Constituting four National Courts of Appeal as suggested by Attorney General may need constitutional amendment of which of the following Articles?**

(a)     Article 124          (b)     Article 141

(c)     Article 130          (d)     Article 129

**Q.4) Consider the following statements:**

1.     Attorney General and Advocate General enjoy privileges as guaranteed under Article 105 and Article 194 while attending the sessions of Parliament or State Legislative Assembly.

2.     The Attorney-General for India is appointed by the President who is qualified to be appointed as Judge of the Supreme Court.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a)     1 only          (b)     2 only

(c)     Both 1 and 2          (d)     Neither 1 nor 2

**Q.5)  The Indian Constitution has ensured the independence of the judiciary through a number of provisions such as:**

1.     Independence of Judiciary from the executive

2.     Security of tenure for Judges

3.     Expense of Supreme Court charged upon Consolidated Fund of India

4.     Protection from contempt proceedings

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a)     2, 3 and 4 only          (b)     1, 2 and 4 only

(c)     1, 2 and 3only          (d)     1, 2, 3 and 4

### DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

**Q1.**     Highlight the importance of constituting National Court of Appeal to streamline higher judiciary challenges.

**Q2.**     Highlight the important challenges and way forward for strengthening the implementation of PESA Act.

*Answers: 1 (b), 2 (d), 3 (c), 4(c), 5(d)*

# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & SECURITY

## # GS PAPER (PRELIMS) & GS PAPER II & III (MAIN)

## ONE CHINA POLICY – TAIWAN ISSUE

### #GEOPOLITICS

**PRIMARY SOURCE** | THE HINDU

*On its 72nd National Day, China flew over 100 fighter jets into the Taiwan's air defense identification zone. It set off alarms about China preparing to take over Taiwan by force. Taiwan has not been recognised as an independent country till now. However, Taiwan is self-ruled and considers itself to be an independent nation. The conflict between China and Taiwan is based on the Chinese goal of reunification of Taiwan with China, while Taiwan asserts its independence from China.*

### BACKGROUND TO TAIWAN ISSUE

- Present day China is Known as the **People's Republic of China (PRC),** while Taiwan is known as **Republic of China (ROC).**
- The RoC was declared on December 29, 1911, under the leadership of Dr Sun Yat-sen, founder of the Kuomintang (KMT) Party.
- Under the leadership of General Chiang Kai-shek, a civil war started between Chinese Communist Party and KMT resulting in victory of the former, which led to retreat of KMT to **Taiwan (then known as Formosa Island),** while Communists taking control of Mainland China (PRC).
- Since 1949 PRC believes that Taiwan must be reunified with the mainland.
- During the Cold War ROC was the only 'China' recognised at the UN until 1971.
- US inaugurated ties with the PRC and finally PRC was

recognised as the actual China replacing Taiwan.

- US backs Taiwan's independence but officially subscribes to PRC's "One China Policy", which means there is only one legitimate Chinese government.
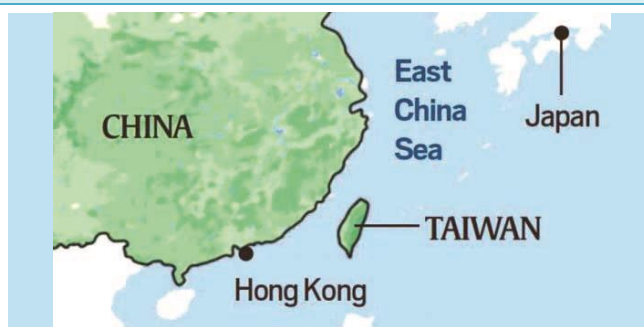


### INDIA AND TAIWAN

India has been following the One China Policy with regards to the issue of Taiwan and Hong Kong. However, in the context of turbulence in India China relations, owing to the Galwan Valley clash, there has been a call for reviewing the One China policy that India has followed till date.

### ONE CHINA POLICY OF INDIA

- The Communist Party of China (CPC), after it occupied mainland China in 1949, pushing out then ruling Kuomintang Party to Formosa, now known as Taiwan, came up with One China policy.
- It staked claim on a much bigger territory of Tibet, then under a Buddhist order government with practically no military, besides Taiwan.
- China occupied Tibet by 1950 and consolidated its military stranglehold on the region through the decade.
- It has been aiming to capture Taiwan since then but in the face of global opposition, China has not dared to carry out its designs across the Formosa Strait in the East China Sea.

- India was among the first countries to recognise communist rule in China. Through the 1954 Sino-Indian Trade Agreement, India also acknowledged Chinese control of Tibet.
- India's support to One China policy remained in limbo until 2003. It was during this intervening period that China built its south Tibet claim over Arunachal Pradesh.
- In 2003, then Indian Prime Minister signed a joint declaration with his counterpart in Beijing. This declaration recognised that the Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the territory of the People's Republic of China.

### INDIA - TAIWAN RELATIONS

- Diplomatic relations have improved between India and Taiwan since 1990s, but **they do have official diplomatic relations.**
- India recognises only the People's Republic of China (in mainland China) and not the Republic of China's claims of being the legitimate government of Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau.
- However, Taiwan views India's rising geopolitical standing as a counterbalance to the PRC's dominance in the region.
- As a part of its **"Look East" foreign policy**, India has sought to cultivate extensive ties with Taiwan in trade and investment and cultural ties.
- The **India-Taipei Association** was established in Taipei in 1995 to promote non-governmental interactions between India and Taiwan.
- In 2002, the two sides signed the Bilateral Investment Promotion & Protection Agreement.
- In 2019, India - Taiwan trade volume was US$7 billion, growing at a rate of 20% year on year.
- Major Taiwanese exports to India include integrated circuits, machinery and other electronic products. India is also keen to attract Taiwanese investment particularly in hi-tech and labour-intensive industries. More than 80 Taiwanese companies and entities currently have a presence in India.

### CHANGE IN STANCE OF INDIA

- In May 2020, two members of the Indian Parliament virtually attended the newly elected President Tsai's swearing in ceremony and praised Taiwanese democracy, thereby sending what

some have termed a warning message to China and signalling a strengthening of relations between the Tsai and Modi administrations.

- In July 2020, the Indian government appointed a top career diplomat, Joint Secretary Gourangalal Das, the former head of the U.S. division in India's Ministry of External Affairs, as its new envoy to Taiwan.
- Ahead of Taiwan's National Day on 10 October, the Chinese embassy in India penned a letter to Indian media houses asking them to adhere to the government's One-China policy.
- An advertisement in Indian print media carried an image of the Taiwanese President, Tsai Ing-wen, with the slogan "Taiwan and India are natural partners".
- The Indian External Affairs Ministry brushed away the Chinese criticism by simply saying that the Indian media is free to carry what they want. Significantly, MEA did not re-iterate India's One-China policy.

### ARGUMENTS FOR RECONSIDERING ONE CHINA POLICY

- China has never followed the One-India policy.
- It recently announced that it does not accept Ladakh as a Union Territory, and while ignoring Indian objections constructs roads through disputed Gilgit-Baltistan.
- Simultaneously, it diplomatically censures India whenever there are visits by Indian leaders or foreign diplomats to Arunachal Pradesh.
- China has also blocked foreign funding for developmental projects in Arunachal claiming it to be disputed.
- China has supported insurgencies in the Northeast.

# INDIA – US TRADE RELATIONS

#BILATERAL

PRIMARY SOURCE | THE HINDU

*India and the United States held the twelfth Ministerial-level meeting of the **India-United States Trade Policy Forum (TPF).** The TPF has been revived after four years to resolve trade and investment issues between the two countries. Both countries recognise the need for diversifying critical supply*
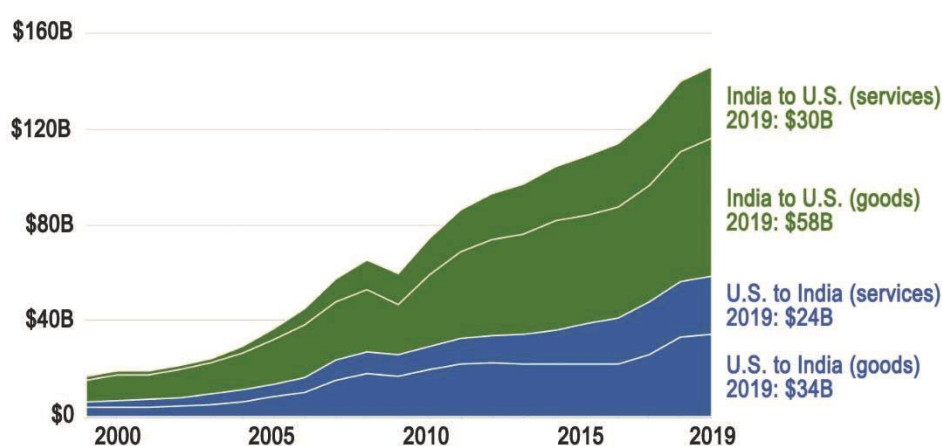
*chains and are poised to play an increasingly important role when it comes to resilient supply chains and working with other like-minded nations.*

## INDIA - US ECONOMIC RELATIONS

- Bilateral trade in goods and services—**estimated at just $16 billion in 1999 and $59.5 billion in 2009—topped $146 billion in 2019**.

- **The U.S. is India's largest trading partner**, goods and services combined. Bilateral trade in goods and services grew by more than 10% per annum over the past two years to reach US$ 142 billion in 2018.

- In 2019, **India was the ninth-largest trading partner of the United States**, while the United States was India's largest trading partner—surpassing China's rank for the second consecutive year.



The Growth of U.S.-India Trade

India to U.S. (services) 2019: $30B
India to U.S. (goods) 2019: $58B
U.S. to India (services) 2019: $24B
U.S. to India (goods) 2019: $34B

## POTENTIAL OF BILATERAL TRADE BETWEEN INDIA AND USA

- The level of goods traded between the United States and Korea is nearly 1.5 times larger than between the United States and India— even though Korea's GDP is roughly 40 percent smaller than India's.

- Vietnam's trade with the United States is 84 percent that of India's, even though India's GDP is ten times larger than that of Vietnam

- China's trade with United States is 6 times larger than.

- This highlights the potential of trade between India and the USA. Also, as USA tries to diversify its dependence on China and with increasing labour costs in China, the potential for US and India trade is immense. Both India and the USA are democracy and have deeper convergence of several issues apart from increasing security cooperation.

## TRADE RELATED ISSUES BETWEEN INDIA AND US

Despite immense potential of bilateral trade between India and USA, certain issues have limited realisation of trade potential between them.

### 1. Tariffs

- US imposed tariffs on steel and aluminium imports from India. US has also called out high tariffs in India on certain categories such as automobiles.

- India drew up a list of retaliatory tariffs and filed it with the World Trade Organization (WTO) but held off on applying them.

### 2. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP)

- US removed India from the GSP program.

- India imposed retaliatory tariffs, after which the United States filed a dispute at the WTO. These retaliatory tariffs remain in place.

- In 2018, India was the largest beneficiary of GSP; over one-tenth ($6.3 billion) of U.S. goods imports from India entered duty-free under the program (e.g., chemicals, auto parts, and tableware).

### 3. Agriculture

- India has been demanding enhanced market access for its agricultural produce in the US market. India has opposed enhanced phyto-sanitary standards being imposed by USA to curb imports from India.

- Particularly India wants restoration of market access for wild caught shrimp and water buffalo meat.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & SECURITY

- US wants to export excess ethanol for India's ethanol blending with petrol.

### 4. Intellectual property rights

- US concerns include piracy of software, film, and music and weak patent protections.
- India amended the Patents Act to recognize **product rather than process patents.**
- **Despite the changes in the Patent act, US has raised concerns about** insufficient patent protections, restrictive standards for patents, and threats of compulsory licensing.

### 5. Investments

- India restricts FDI in certain sectors. Under, India's FDI regime above a certain cap FDI investors have to take permission for investing in India. US considers this as a restrictive.

### 6. Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices

- U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) expressed concern for years **about customs duties on medical equipment and devices.**
- Issues increased when Indian government applied new price controls on coronary stents and knee implants.
- India wants cooperation from US in developing a secure pharmaceutical manufacturing base for augmenting global supply chains. However, COVID-19 pandemic has stalled inspections of Indian pharmaceutical facilities by US Drug Regulator, Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

### 7. Digital Economy

- Issues exist regarding **data localization, data privacy, and e-commerce.**
- **E-commerce rules of India and Data Equalisation** levy have also been contentious trade issues between the two countries. US feels that these hit global software giants adversely. For ex. Amazon, Apple, Microsoft and Google.
- **Data Protection bill** has not been passed in India.
- India's rules for **Mandatory Testing and Certification of Telecom Equipment (MTCTE)** have also been a concern for US.

### 8. Labour movement and visas

- United States, H1B and L1 visas permit highly skilled workers from other countries to be employed.

- The Indian government continues to **object to U.S. laws passed in 2010 and 2015 that apply higher fees on companies with more than fifty employees i**f more than half of those employees are in the United States as non-immigrants.
- In 2016, India filed a trade dispute at the WTO over these visa fees, arguing that the higher fees "raised the overall barriers for service suppliers from India."
- India has been demanding conclusion of **Social Security Totalisation Agreement** between India and US, this would allow Indian citizens to repatriate their social security savings once they come back to India.
- Legal, nursing and accountancy services can facilitate growth in trade and investment, both countries promote engagement in these sectors.

### 9. New emerging trade issues

- US has been pressing for issues such as child labour and forced labour in global supply chains. India does not want to tackle these issues in the framework of trade agreements and trade talks.
- US has been pressing for bringing in environmental issues in the framework of trade talks.
- Standards and conformity assessment procedures are often used for trade restrictive practices.

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM RECENT TRADE POLICY FORUM MEETING

India and USA held the 12th Ministerial level meeting of the India-US Trade Policy Forum (TPF). India's Minister of Commerce and Industry and US Trade Representative participated in the meeting. This was the first meeting of the Trade Policy Forum since 2017.

Political agreement between India and USA on the issue of Digital Services Tax during the interim period prior to full implementation of Pillar I of the OECD agreement.

### WAY FORWARD

- Both are emerging as strategic partners and as such **there is a need for convergence on all issues concerning both the countries. Trade** forms a foundation of such strategic partnership.
- **Reinstatement of the GSP -** It would benefit the Indian exports to USA. India can act as an alternative for Chinese goods in the US markets.
- **Delinking Issues -** US reportedly considered capping the issuance of H1B visas to about 15% for any country that "does data localisation." This goes against

the spirit of having an overall improvement in trade between the two.

- Like the 2+2 dialogue, there is a need for institutionalisation of the economic dialogue between USTR and Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- India needs to **boost manufacturing sector and make exports more competitive to become a major trade partner of USA replacing China.**
- Both nations must actively work **towards de-escalating trade tensions.**
- **Regular convening of Trade Policy Forum** and its working groups to iron out trade issues.
- **Collaboration on emerging technologies** such as cyberspace, semiconductors, AI, 5G 6G and future generation telecommunications technology.
- **Participation and collaboration between private sector in both countries** in building critical linkages in critical sectors.
- **Regular exchange of information on standards and conformity assessment procedures** to ensure that all requirements are no more trade restrictive than necessary. There is a need for transparency in the rulemaking process and focus on enhanced good regulatory practices.

# S-400 DEAL AND CAATSA

## #BILATERAL

**PRIMARY SOURCE** | THE HINDU

*The threat of US sanctions under the CAATSA law have come into light in the context of delivery of S-400 missile system from Russia to India. However, with increasing convergence between US and India highlighted by the foundational defence agreements and the strategic conception of QUAD in the Indo - Pacific such sanction by US on India can undermine the India-US strategic partnership.*

### ABOUT CAATSA LAW

- The US Congress in 2017 passed the Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) to impose sanctions on Russia, Iran, and North Korea.
- Section 231 of the CAATSA mandated secondary sanctions to any nation entering high-value deals to procure military hardware from Russia.

### IMPLICATIONS OF CAATSA FOR INDIA

- Impacts India's security and strategic interests as Russia is one of the principal suppliers of critical defence system to India.
- Erodes India's Sovereignty as US can use CAATSA as tool for arm twisting and preventing India from having trade relations with countries like Russia, Iran etc.
- Puts constraints on India to purchase critical defence equipment.
- Adversely Impacts India- Russia relations.
- It is a unilateral law, not grounded in international law and neither is backed by UN.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA-US RELATIONS

- CAATSA is a unilateral law of US which seeks to impose sanctions on India without taking into consideration India's concerns.
- Heightens India's traditional insecurity about reliability of US as bilateral partner.
- Undermines trust of US in India on the larger question of Indo – Pacific security.
- Such sanctions would be counterproductive to US's larger aim of countering China.
- Undermines the stand of both countries on the issue of Multilateralism.
- Throws questions about consistency of US policy. Ex - Arbitrary imposition of sanctions on Iran.
- Acceding to such sanctions amounts to becoming a party to a bilateral dispute and challenges the India's principles of sovereignty and strategic autonomy.

### WAY FORWARD

Short term goal of India should be getting a waiver from the US for its S-400 deal. However, in the long term it needs to be highlighted that this law goes against the "rules-based international order" that is the foundation of the India-U.S. global strategic partnership.

# INDIA – MALDIVES RELATIONS

## #BILATERAL

**PRIMARY SOURCE** | THE HINDU

*Various Issues have come up between India and Maldives in the recent past. In this context let us focus on broad*

*contours of the relationship including challenges and opportunities.*

### LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

- A social media campaign #Indiaout is being led by the opposition parties of Maldives against Indian projects.
- However, the present government led by Ibrahim Mohamed Solih has reiterated its **India first Policy** and has rejected the attempts by opposition to spread false information of criticizing its ties with India, which the present administration considers as its **"closest ally and trusted neighbour."**
- Earlier, Maldives Foreign Minister Abdullah Shahid won the Presidential election of the United Nations General Assembly with India's cooperation.
- The presidency assumes significance because of coinciding of this term with India's election as a non-permanent member of the UNSC.
- Also, India's decision of opening a new consulate at Addu city has faced backlash on social media.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIA AND MALDIVES

- **Geographical Proximity:** Maldives is located just 300 nautical miles from India's mainland.
- **Vaccines:** Both the countries can cooperate on matters related to equitable access to Vaccines and **TRIPS waiver.**
- **Climate change:** Climate change is detrimental to both developing countries like India and Small Island Developing States such as the Maldives. So, both the countries can collaborate to strengthen the global response to climate change, through the **UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.**
- **Terrorism:** Peace and security in the Indian ocean region are of common interest to both the countries. In the backdrop of growing radicalization in the region, India and Maldives can revive discussion on **Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT).** *(The adoption of the CCIT under the UN was first proposed by India in 1996, but it has been in limbo ever since due to opposition from several countries on some of the provisions laid out in the convention.)*
- **Multilateral Reforms:** India and Maldives can work in tandem for multilateral reforms. (Example - UNSC reform to expand UNSC permanent membership and make it more representative)

- **Respecting International laws on the seas and navigation:** Maldives' proximity to the west coast of India and its situation at the hub of commercial sea-lanes running through Indian Ocean makes it strategically important to India. Both the countries can work together to revive the sanctity of 'United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea'. *(In the backdrop of Recent US navy's violation of the EEZ of India and Maldives and Chinese expansionism in Indo pacific region)*
- **Maldives economy is a majorly dependent on tourism.** Many Indians visit the Maldives as tourists. Also, many Indians are employed in these resorts.
- **India First Policy of Maldives:** Ever since President Solih came into power, he has practiced a stated policy of 'India First'. This reflects that the present government of India gives highest importance to relations with India.

### INDIAN ASSISTANCE TO MALDIVES

- **Operation Cactus:** In 1988, when armed mercenaries attempted a coup against President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, India sent paratroopers and Navy vessels and restored the legitimate leadership under Operation Cactus.
- **2004 Tsunami:** India had helped Maldives and had also supported it during the drinking water crisis in 2014
- **COVID -19:** India rushed $250 million aid in quick time, India has also rushed medical supplies to the Maldives, started a new cargo ferry.
- **Greater Male Connectivity project:** This is an infrastructure project in Maldives, connecting Male (the capital) with three neighbouring islands through construction of a bridge-and-causeway link. This project was a part of $400 million line of credit announced by India to the island.

### CONCERNS IN INDIA – MALDIVES RELATIONSHIP

Although India and Maldives enjoy a healthy relationship, there some areas of concern between the two nations.

- **Enhanced Chinese Presence:** Maldives signed its **first country-specific FTA with China in 2017** and thereby becoming China's 2nd FTA in South Asia after Pakistan. It raised concerns that Maldives will fall in the **debt trap of China,** wherein more than **70% of Maldives' foreign debt is owed to China.** There is a growing trend of **Chinese companies and**

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & SECURITY

**individuals acquiring land in Maldives.** This land grab has raised concern of Maldives being increasingly falling into **an economic neo-colonial influence of China.** The new government of President Solih has affirmed that Maldives will scrap the FTA with China and investigate the Chinese land grab in Maldives.

- **President Yameen Hangover:** President Yameen had earlier declared an emergency in Maldives and halted the functioning of Maldives Parliament (Majlis) and arrested several opposition leaders. This was opposed by India and several other countries. Apart from this, President Yameen augmented relations with China without taking India into confidence. This led India-Maldives relations to decline.

- Although the New Government under president Solih has welcomed Indian support, The previous President Yameen and his party has launched **an 'India Out' campaign** against India's massive developmental funding for creating physical, social and community infrastructure. There have been protests for early release of Mr. Yameen — sentenced to five years of imprisonment in a money laundering case, pending appeal.

- **Growing Radicalization:** There is a **growing presence of ISIS/Daesh in Maldives and growing influence of Saudi philosophy of Wahhabis.** Moreover, due to the defeat of Daesh is Iraq, ISIS fighters have been returning to Maldives and pose a threat to security of India, Sri Lanka and Maldives.

- **New Consulate in Addu:** Recently Union Cabinet approved Opening of a New Consulate General of India in Addu City, Maldives. But the Maldivian government has not made any decision regarding it. This came in the backdrop of ongoing #saveAddu social media campaign by a section of Maldivians, who are sceptical of India's presence in Addu atoll.

- **Helicopter Issue:** India had gifted the Maldives two ALHs (Advanced Light helicopters) in 2013 and each was operated by the Indian Coast Guard and the Indian Navy. However, a controversy broke out in 2018 after the previous Maldives government refused to extend the visas of Indian military personnel and asked India to take back the helicopters.

### WAY FORWARD

India – Maldives relation must be pursued bilaterally with an aim of not creating space for outside powers to interfere. This can be achieved by meeting the aspirations of Maldivian people with focus on people centric developmental projects, so that a favourable perception of India can be created.

# BSF – CHANGE IN JURISDICTION

### #SECURITY

**PRIMARY SOURCE** | **THE HINDU**

*Ministry of Home Affairs has modified the areas of jurisdiction for the Border Security Force (BSF) to exercise its powers in the states bordering Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar.*

### AMENDED JURISDICTION OF BSF

- The BSF's jurisdiction now comprises - the whole area in the **States of Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland and Meghalaya along the Bangladesh border.**

- **Whole of the area of Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir (J & K) and Ladakh.**

- The area **within a belt of 50 km in the States of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, West Bengal and Assam,** running along the borders of India.

- The new changes have **increased the area of jurisdiction of the BSF in Punjab, West Bengal and Assam** to 50 km from existing 15 km, while has reduced the area in Gujarat to 50 km from existing 80 km.

- There is **no change in jurisdiction of the BSF in the north-eastern states and the union territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.**

### RATIONALE BEHIND MODIFICATION

- It is based on the **new security concerns because of Taliban's takeover Afghanistan.**

- Fear of heightened **incidents** of **cross-border terrorism in future.**

- **Rise in terrorist attacks in J&K** as well as **an increase in the incidents of arms being dropped by Pakistani drones in Punjab.**

- Concerns regarding **illegal migration, cattle smuggling, trafficking in person and narcotics as well as smuggling in fake Indian currency notes**

**(FICN)** along the Bangladesh border continue to persist.

- Now, with the increase in their operational limits, the force will be able to conduct raids and make arrests deep inside the state.
- **Use of Drones by terrorist groups** which allow trafficking of drugs and arms deep inside Indian territory.

## CHANGES IN POWER OF BSF

- The new Notification empowers the BSF to search, seize and arrest only in respect to the Passport Act of 1967, the Passport (Entry into India) Act of 1920, and specified sections of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) in the extended area of its jurisdiction.
- The BSF's powers and duties regarding other central acts such as the Customs Act, the Central Excise and Salt Act, the Narcotics and Psychotropic (NDPS) Act, the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1947, etc., do not apply to the extended area of jurisdiction and remain same as earlier, that is, 15 km for Punjab, West Bengal and Assam and 80 km for Gujarat
- The Notification does not provide the BSF the power to investigate and prosecute, which implies that the BSF still has to hand the arrested person and the seized consignments over to the State Police within 24 hours after minimal questioning

## ISSUES RAISED BY STATES AGAINST THE CHANGES

- Some states like Assam have welcomed the changes, while others like Punjab and West Bengal have raised concerns about the infringement of rights of the state and is seen as affecting the Federal structure.
- Since law and order is state subject, the extension of policing powers with increased jurisdiction is seen as usurpation of the rights of the States.
- States like Punjab have argued that notification has been brought without due consultation with the State government.

### Policing Powers

- The extension in jurisdiction has been done with the purpose of bringing uniformity in securing the border areas.
- Delegation of police powers has been done to the BSF in the past – 1969, 1973 and 2014.
- These powers were considered essential in view of circumstances like the terrain, population composition, crime pattern besides presence and effectiveness of the police in border areas.
- However, the issues faced by states vary and as such one size fits all approach does not reflect the ground reality.

## STATE SPECIFIC ISSUE

### →Rajasthan and Gujarat

These states have a low population density and an absence of any population centres up to a large distance from the border, and a limited police presence—necessarily required that police powers delegated to the BSF be larger in these two states.

### →West Bengal, Punjab, Assam

- These states have **much higher population density and a stronger police** presence and better infrastructure.
- In the interior areas, the police have a better presence and effectiveness.
- Enhancement of jurisdiction in these three states to 50-km border belt **may lead to confusion unless close coordination with the police is not ensured**.
- On many occasions, **close coordination may not even be feasible, especially in the case of hot pursuit because of necessity of swiftness and secrecy.**
- Lack of coordination **may lead to tussles because the concurrent jurisdiction of two forces**, controlled by two different governments may lead to turf wars, especially if the ruling parties in the state and centre are different.
- **Core function of the BSF will get adversely effected** by enhancement of jurisdiction as the troops deployed on Border Outposts (BOPs) will have to be withdrawn for operations in depth. This **might leave the borders vulnerable**.

## WAY FORWARD

- New threats of tunnels and drones should be addressed by **augmenting the capabilities of the BSF through induction of technology to detect these at the borders itself.**
- **Police is better equipped** to handle the drones landing in interior areas away from borders because of vicinity to the sites.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & SECURITY

- **Strengthening the BSF intelligence wing through induction of technology, and focused tasking to collect information** about trans-border criminals
- Collection of intelligence in an area as large as 50 km from the border in densely populated states can be

**better coordinated by the state and central intelligence agencies and acted upon by the local police.**

- BSF is better trained for border guarding rather than policing functions.

# PRACTICE QUESTIONS

## MCQ'S

**Q1. Which of the following countries is/are the members of the G20 countries?**

1. Mexico                    2. Brazil
3. European union

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 only                    (b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only              (d) 1,2 and 3

**Q2. CAATSA law sometimes seen in news is a law of which of the following**

(a) United Nations
(b) European Union
(c) United States of America
(d) Russia

**Q3. GSP sometimes seen in the news is related to which of the following?**

(a) Trade                     (b) Arms Exports
(c) Nuclear proliferation     (d) Terrorism

**Q4. Formosa is the name of which of the following?**

(a) Japanese island           (b) Taiwan
(c) Philippines               (d) South Korea

**Q5. BSF is under the administrative control of which of the following?**

(a) Ministry of Home Affairs
(b) Ministry of defence
(c) Prime ministers Office
(d) Cabinet Secretariat

## DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

**Q1**. In the context recent notification which changed the Jurisdiction of BSF, discuss the need for such change and the issues that have been raised against it.

**Q2**. Despite being an important partner of India in the Indian Ocean region, the relationship between India and Maldives faces various challenges. Discuss.

**Answers:** *1-d, 2-c, 3-a, 4-b, 5-a*

# SOCIETY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

## # GS PAPER I & GS PAPER II (MAIN)

## NATIONAL FAMILY HEALTH SURVEY (NFHS)- 5

### #HEALTH

**PRIMARY SOURCE** THE HINDU    **SECONDARY SOURCE** pib

*National Family Health Survey 5 is the recent round of the survey carried on by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW) to bring out reliable data on emerging health and family welfare issues. International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai and Population Research Centres are the coordinating and implementing agencies that helped to bring out this NFHS round. ICF International, a global consulting and technology services company,* *provided technical assistance for the NFHS 5 while the United States Agency for International Development provided financial assistance.*

- The NFHS provides estimates on key indicators related to population, family planning, child and maternal health, nutrition, adult health, and domestic violence, among others.

- The biggest positive headline news from NHFS-5 is that the total fertility rate (TFR), which is the average number of children born to a woman during her lifetime, has been falling over time and is now just below the replacement rate of 2.1.

**IMPORTANT FINDINGS**

### Key findings of National Family Health Survey-5

| Infant and child mortality rates | Maternal and child health | Anaemia among children and adults |
|---|---|---|
| (per 1,000 live births) **Neonatal mortality rate** **15.8** (18.5 in NFHS-4) | Mothers who had an antenatal check-up in the first trimester **71%** (65.9% in NFHS-4) | Children aged 6 to 59 months who are anaemic **65.5%** (60.9% in NFHS-4) |
| **Infant mortality rate 25.4** (26.9 in NFHS-4) | Mothers who consumed iron folic acid for 100 days or more when they were pregnant **44.7%** (45.2% in NFHS-4) | Non-pregnant women aged 15 to 49 years who are anaemic: 47.8% (44.8% in NFHS-4)All women aged 15 to 49 who are anaemic **47.8%** (44.8% in NFHS-4) |
| **Under-five mortality rate 29.5** (31.5 in NFHS-4) | Mothers who consumed iron-folic acid for 180 days or more when they were pregnant **26.7%** (32.6% in NFHS-4) | Men aged 15 to 49 who are anaemic **19.6%** (18.3% in NFHS-4) |

| Family planning methods | <ul><li>Use of family planning methods increased; most states reduce their fertility rate, below the target of 2.1.</li><li>All states (except Mizoram) have seen an increase in the use of family planning methods.</li><li>Goa and Bihar have seen the highest increase in the use of family planning methods.</li><li>Consequently, most states have seen a decrease in the total fertility rate (TFR). Bihar's TFR has declined from 3.4 (in NFHS-4) to 3.</li></ul> |
|---|---|

## SOCIETY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

| Sex ratio at birth | <ul><li>Sex ratio at birth has declined in a few states.</li><li>Sex ratio at birth for children born in the last five years is below 950 for seven (of the 17) states.</li><li>Sex ratio at birth is the number of female children born per 1,000 male children born.</li><li>In three states, the ratio is below 900 (Goa: 838, Himachal Pradesh: 875, and Telangana: 894).</li><li>The ratio has declined in seven states. The most notable decline was in Goa (from 966 to 838), and Kerala (from 1,047 to 951). Only Tripura has a sex ratio at birth above 1,000 (i.e., more females born than males).</li></ul> |
|---|---|
| Institutional births | <ul><li>Institutional births have increased; out of pocket expenditure on deliveries increased in some states.</li><li>In 7 states, more than 90% of the births in the last five years were institutional births. In Kerala, nearly 100% of the births were institutional births. Only 46% of the births in Nagaland were institutional births.</li><li>The average out of pocket expenditure on a delivery in a public health facility increased in 8 of the 17 states.</li><li>In West Bengal, the average expenditure on deliveries declined by Rs 5,236 per delivery (66% of the cost in 2015-16), and the proportion of institutional births increased from 75% to 92%.</li></ul> |
| Infant Mortality Rate | <ul><li>IMR has marginally declined in nearly all states.</li><li>Assam has seen one of the largest drops in IMR, from 48 deaths (per 1,000 live births) to 32 deaths.</li><li>IMR remains high in Bihar (47 deaths per 1,000 live births).</li></ul> |
| Malnourishment | <ul><li>Malnourishment among children is increasing.</li><li>Nutritional status of children below 5 years of age is worsening. Stunting or chronic malnutrition (i.e., low height with respect to age) has increased in 11 of the 17 states.</li><li>Proportion of severely wasted children has increased in 13 of the 17 states. Wasting or acute malnutrition refers to low weight with respect to height. Children who are stunted or wasted are more vulnerable to diseases and illness.</li><li>The proportion of children who are underweight (low weight with respect to age) has increased in 11 of the 17 states.</li><li>In Bihar and Gujarat, 40% or more of the children under the age of five years are underweight.</li></ul> |
| Obesity | <ul><li>Obesity is rising for both men and women across all states.</li><li>The proportion of women and men, between the age of 15-49 years, who are overweight or obese have increased across nearly all states (except Gujarat and Maharashtra).</li><li>Overweight or obesity is measured through the Body Mass Index of persons.</li><li>In Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Telangana, Kerala, and Himachal Pradesh, nearly one-third of men and women (between 15-49 years of age) are overweight or obese.</li></ul> |

## ASER 2021
### #EDUCATION

PRIMARY SOURCE THE HINDU        SECONDARY SOURCE hindustantimes

The **16th Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2021 (Rural) was released by Pratham.** ASER reports on the schooling status of children in the 5-16 age group across rural India and their ability to do basic reading and arithmetic tasks.

# SOCIETY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

## IMPORTANT FINDINGS



**ANNUAL STATUS OF EDUCATION - RURAL (ASER-2021)**

KEY FINDINGS

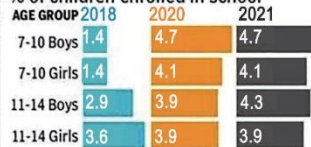% of children in the age of 6-14 enrolled in different types of schools

| | 2018 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 64.3 | 65.8 | 70.3 |
| Pvt | 32.5 | 28.8 | 24.4 |
| Others | 2.5 | 4.6 | 4.6 |

% of children enrolled in school

| AGE GROUP | 2018 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7-10 Boys | 1.4 | 4.7 | 4.7 |
| 7-10 Girls | 1.4 | 4.1 | 4.1 |
| 11-14 Boys | 2.9 | 3.9 | 4.3 |
| 11-14 Girls | 3.6 | 3.9 | 3.9 |

Increase in proportion of children taking paid tuition classes

| SCHOOL TYPE | 2018 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 29.6 | 33 | 39.5 |
| Pvt | 26.7 | 31.2 | 38.2 |
| Others | 28.6 | 32.5 | 39.2 |

% of enrolled children who have a smartphone at home

| CHILDREN IN | 2018 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Govt school | 29.6 | 56.4 | 63.7 |
| Pvt school | 49.9 | 74.2 | 79 |
| Total | 36.5 | 61.8 | 67.6 |

% of children who have textbooks for their current grade

| | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| Govt | 84.1 | 92.3 |
| Pvt | 72.2 | 90.7 |
| Total | 80.5 | 91.9 |

**26.1%** of children having a smartphone at home yet not having access to the device

SURVEY SAMPLE

**28** States/ UTs
**17,184** Villages
**76,706** households
**75,234** Children age 5-16
**7,299** schools

| | |
|---|---|
| **Enrolment increases in government schools** | • There has been an overall increase in the proportion of children enrolled in govt. schools between 2018 and 2020 i.e., from 64.3% to 65.8%. <br>• However, in the year 2021, the enrolment suddenly went up to 70.3%. |
| **Enrolment decreases in private schools** | • The enrolment rate in private schools has however gone down from last year. <br>• In 2020, the enrolment rate was 28.8% and in 2021 the enrolment rate went down to 24.4%. |
| **Tuition-dependent** | • It has reported a growing dependency on private tuition classes. <br>• Students, especially those from poor families, are dependent more than ever on private tuition. |
| **Digital Divide** | • There exists a stark digital divide, which carries the risk of severely affecting the learning abilities of primary grade students. <br>• Almost a third of all children in Classes I and II did not have a smartphone available at home. |
| **Problems with new** | From having no experience of pre-primary class or anganwadis to the |

| | |
|---|---|
| **entrants** | lack of access to digital devices, the pandemic has left the youngest entrants in formal education system particularly vulnerable. <br>• 1 in 3 children in Classes I and II have never attended an in-person class. <br>• Students who entered the school system after the pandemic will require time to settle down, get ready for the formal education system. |
| **Learning Gap** | • 65.4% teachers flagged the problem of children being "unable to catch up" as one of their biggest challenges. <br>• During the recent National Achievement Survey (NAS) of the central government, teachers and field investigators across the country reported that primary grade kids struggled to make sense of questions to test basic comprehension and numerical skills. |
| **Positive Trend** | • The report captured a decline in the proportion of children not currently enrolled in the 15-16 age group. <br>• This is one of the sections which faces the highest risk of dropping out. In 2010, the proportion of 15-16-year-olds who were out of school was 16.1%. |

# LOW LIFE EXPECTENCY AMONG URBAN POOR

#HEALTH #SOCIAL JUSTICE
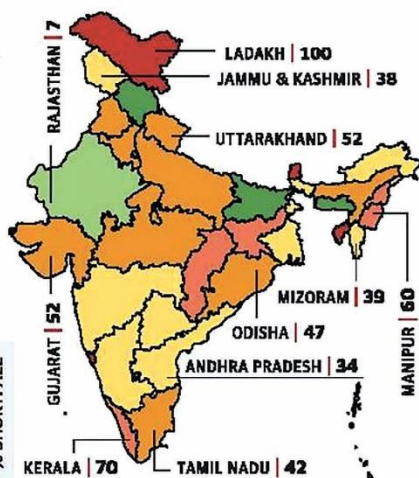
PRIMARY SOURCE | THE HINDU

*'Health Care Equity in Urban India'- a report released by Azim Premji University explored health vulnerabilities and inequalities in cities in India. It also looked at the availability,*

*accessibility and cost of healthcare facilities, and possibilities in future-proofing services in the next decade.*



**Health centre count**

The map shows the shortfall (%) of primary health centres (PHCs) in urban areas as of July 2020. The shortfall was more than 50% in 14 States/UTs

RAJASTHAN | 7
LADAKH | 100
JAMMU & KASHMIR | 38
UTTARAKHAND | 52
MIZORAM | 39
GUJARAT | 52
ODISHA | 47
ANDHRA PRADESH | 34
MANIPUR | 60
KERALA | 70
TAMIL NADU | 42

NO SHORTFALL
0-20
20-40
40-60
60-80
>80   % SHORTFALL

### FINDINGS

- Life expectancy among the poorest is lower by 9.1 years and 6.2 years among men and women, respectively, compared to the richest in urban areas.

- Multiplicity of healthcare providers both within and outside the government who work without coordination leading to chaotic urban health governance.

- Heavy financial burden on the poor, and less investment in healthcare by urban local bodies.

- Urban healthcare has received relatively less research and policy attention.

### WAY FORWARD

- Strengthening community participation and governance.

- Building a comprehensive and dynamic database on the health and nutrition status, including co-morbidities of the diverse, vulnerable populations.

- Strengthening healthcare provisioning through the National Urban Health Mission, especially for primary healthcare services.

- Putting in place policy measures to reduce the financial burden on the poor.

- Better mechanism for coordinated public healthcare services and better governed private healthcare institutions.

### CONCLUSION

A well-functioning, better coordinated and governed health care system is crucial at this point. The pandemic has brought to attention the need for a robust and resourced healthcare system. Addressing this now will benefit the most vulnerable and offer critical services to city dwellers across income groups.

# COVID-19 & ADVERSE IMPACT OF SCHOOL CLOSURE

#EDUCATION #SOCIAL JUSTICE

PRIMARY SOURCE   UNESCO

*According to UNESCO, school closures carry high social and economic costs for people across communities. Their impact, however, is particularly severe for the most vulnerable and marginalized children and their families. Educational disruption due to prolonged closure of schools across the globe will not only have alarming effects on learning loss but also poses threat to gender equality.*

The resulting disruptions exacerbate already existing disparities within the education system but also in other aspects of their lives. These include:

- **Interrupted learning:** Schooling provides essential learning and when schools close, children and youth are deprived opportunities for growth and development. The disadvantages are disproportionate for under-privileged learners who tend to have fewer educational opportunities beyond school.

- **Poor nutrition:** Many children and youth rely on free or discounted meals provided at schools for food and healthy nutrition. When schools close, nutrition is compromised.

- **Confusion and stress for teachers:** When schools close, especially unexpectedly and for unknown durations, teachers are often unsure of their obligations and how to maintain connections with students to support learning. Transitions to distance learning platforms tend to be messy and frustrating, even in the best circumstances. In many contexts, school closures lead to separation from teachers.

- **Parents unprepared for distance and home schooling:** When schools close, parents are often asked to facilitate the learning of children at home and can struggle to perform this task. This is especially true for parents with limited education and resources.

## SOCIETY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

- **Challenges creating, maintaining, and improving distance learning:** Demand for distance learning skyrockets when schools close and often overwhelms existing portals to remote education. Moving learning from classrooms to homes at scale and in a hurry presents enormous challenges, both human and technical.

- **Gaps in childcare:** In the absence of alternative options, working parents often leave children alone when schools close and this can lead to risky behaviours, including increased influence of peer pressure and substance abuse.

- **High economic costs:** Working parents are more likely to miss work when schools close to take care of their children. This results in wage loss and tend to negatively impact productivity.

- **Unintended strain on health-care systems:** Health-care workers with children cannot easily attend work because of childcare obligations that result from school closures. This means that many medical professionals are not at the facilities where they are most needed during a health crisis.

- **Rise in dropout rates:** It is a challenge to ensure children and youth return and stay in school when schools reopen after closures. This is especially true of protracted closures and when economic shocks place pressure on children to work and generate income for financially distressed families.

- **Increased exposure to violence and exploitation:** When schools shut down, early marriages increase, more children are recruited into militias, sexual exploitation of girls and young women rises, teenage pregnancies become more common, and child labour grows.

- **Social isolation:** Schools are hubs of social activity and human interaction. When schools close, many children and youth miss out of on social contact that is essential to learning and development.

- **Challenges measuring and validating learning:** Calendared assessments, notably high-stakes examinations that determine admission or advancement to new education levels and institutions, are thrown into disarray when schools close. Strategies to postpone, skip or administer examinations at a distance raise serious concerns about fairness, especially when access to learning becomes variable. Disruptions to assessments results

in stress for students and their families and can trigger disengagement.

# SURVEY OF DOMESTIC WORKERS

#### #LABOUR ISSUE #EMPOWERMENT

| PRIMARY SOURCE | THE HINDU | SECONDARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS |
|---|---|---|---|

*The Labour and Employment Ministry launched the fieldwork for the All-India Survey on Domestic Workers (DWs), covering 742 districts in 37 states and Union Territories. The survey is being carried out by the Labour Bureau. There are around 35 million Domestic Workers in India. The result of the All-India Survey on Domestic Workers is expected within a year.*

### AIM OF THE SURVEY

- This survey will cover all types of domestic services like cook, driver, housekeeping, tutor (for children), watchman, etc. This evidence-based study will help the government in policymaking for this segment of workers.

- Estimating the number of proportions of domestic workers at the national-level and in the States.

- Proportion of domestic workers who live-in/live-out, engaged in informal employment and migrant/non-migrant, wages of such workers.

- Details of the number of households with live-in/live-out domestic workers and the average number of workers engaged by various kinds of households.

- Other socio-economic factors.

A **Draft National Policy on Domestic Workers** is under consideration of the Central Government. The policy, if finalised, will benefit domestic workers in the country including maids and drivers amongst others.

### SALIENT FEATURES OF DRAFT NATIONAL POLICY ON DOMESTIC WORKERS

- Inclusion of Domestic Workers in the existing legislations.

- Domestic workers will have the right to register as workers. Such registration will facilitate their access to rights and benefits accruing to them as workers.

- Right to form their own associations, trade unions.

- Right to have minimum wages, access to social security, protection from abuse, harassment, violence.

- Right to enhance their professional skills.
- Protection of Domestic Workers from abuse and exploitation.
- Domestic Workers to have access to courts, tribunals, etc.
- Establishment of a mechanism for regulation of concerned placement agencies.

### MEASURES ALREADY BEING TAKEN FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS

- **Unorganized Workers' Social Security Act, 2008** was enacted for providing social security to all unorganized workers including domestic workers.
- **Social security schemes** like National Old Age Pension Scheme (Ministry of Rural Development); National Family Benefit Scheme (Ministry of Rural Development); Janani Suraksha Yojana (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare), Ayushman Bharat (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare).
- **Aam Aadmi Bima Yojana (AABY)** with Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) provide life and disability coverage to the unorganised workers for the age group of 18 to 50 years depending upon their eligibility.
- **Domestic Workers Sector Skills Council** has been established under the Ministry of Skills and Entrepreneurship to enable professionalisation of domestic workers and enable their career progression.

# NATIONAL HEALTH ACCOUNTS

### #HEALTH

**PRIMARY SOURCE** pib

*Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare released findings of National Health Accounts (NHA) estimates for 2017-18. This is the 5th consecutive NHA report produced by National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC). The NHA estimates are prepared by using an accounting framework based on internationally accepted System of Health Accounts, 2011, provided by WHO.*

### FINDINGS OF 2017-18 NATIONAL HEALTH ACCOUNTS

**Increasing public health expenditure:** There has been an increase in the share of government health expenditure in the total GDP of the country. Public health expenditure has increased from 1.15% of GDP in 2013-14 to 1.35% in 2017-18.

- Share of government health expenditure in total health expenditure has also increased overtime. In 2017-18, the share of government expenditure was 40.8%, which is much higher than 28.6% in 2013-14.
- Government's health expenditure as a share of total Government expenditure has increased from 3.78% to 5.12% between 2013-14 and 2017-18, clearly indicating Government's priority for the health sector.
- In per capita terms, government health expenditure has increased from Rs 1042 to Rs 1753 between 2013-14 to 2017-18.

**More emphasis on primary healthcare:** The share of primary healthcare in total government health expenditure has increased from 51.1% in 2013-14 to 54.7% in 2017-18.

Expenditure on primary and secondary healthcare accounts for 80% of Government health expenditure. In case of private sector, share of tertiary care has increased but primary and secondary care show a declining trend. Between 2016-17 and 2017-18 in government the share of primary and secondary care has increased from 75% to 86%. In private sector, the share of primary and secondary care has declined from 84% to 74%.

- The share of social security expenditure on health, which includes social health insurance program, Government financed health insurance schemes, and medical reimbursements made to Government employees, has increased. As a percent of total health expenditure, the increase is from 6% in 2013-14 to around 9 % in 2017-18.

**Declining out-of-pocket-expenditure (OOPE):** Out-of-pocket-expenditure as a share of total health expenditure has come down to 48.8% in 2017-18 from 64.2% in 2013-14. On the per-capita basis, OOPE has declined from Rs 2336 to Rs 2097 between 2013-14 and 2017-18. One of the factors attributing to this decline is the increased utilisation and reduction in cost of services in government health facilities. If we compare NHA 2014-15 and 2017-18 there has been a decline in OOPE for government hospitals in the tune of 50%.

## SOCIETY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

# PRACTICE QUESTIONS

## MCQS

**Q1. Consider the following statements about NFHS-5:**

1. NFHS is conducted by National Statistical Office (NSO).
2. According to NFHS-5, Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is below replacement rate in all States.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only      (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2      (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Q2. Consider the following statements about National Health Accounts:**

1. India's public health expenditure on health has been declining in recent years.
2. Public expenditure of Primary Healthcare is less than Tertiary Healthcare.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only      (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2      (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Q3. Annual Status of Education Report is released by which of the following?**

(a) Ministry of Education
(b) UNESCO
(c) Pratham
(d) Azim Premji University

**Q4. Consider the following statements about Domestic Workers:**

1. Draft National Policy on Domestic Workers has been released by Niti Aayog.
2. Domestic Workers Sector Skills Council has been established by Ministry of Skill Development and Empowerment.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only      (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2      (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Q5. Consider the following statements about NFHS-5:**

1. Malnourishment among children is increasing.
2. Incidence of anemia has decreased considerably.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only      (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2      (d) Neither 1 nor 2

## DESCRIPTIVE QUESTION

**Q1.** The denial of salaries and loss of employment faced by domestic workers as well as harassment by employers and Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) meted out to them following the nationwide lockdown due to COVID-19 has brought into focus the need for safeguarding their rights. In this regard, highlight the importance of All India Survey on Domestic Workers in ensuring the entitlements and rights of Domestic Workers.

**Q2.** What are the common adverse learning gaps faced by children as a result school closures due to COVID-19 pandemic? Suggest measures to be taken the government and civil society in reducing learning gaps.

**Answers:** *1-d, 2-d, 3-c, 4-b, 5-a*

# GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY & DISASTER MANAGEMENT

## # GS PAPER (PRELIMS) AND GS PAPER I & III (MAIN)

## GLASGOW AGREEMENT

### #CLIMATE CHANGE

| PRIMARY SOURCE | United Nations Climate Change | SECONDARY SOURCE | DownToEarth |
|---|---|---|---|
| SECONDARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS | | |

*The Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), or COP26, met in Glasgow for the 26th time. Every year, these meetings are convened to develop a worldwide response to climate change. Each of these sessions results in a collection of choices with various names. This has been dubbed the Glasgow Climate Pact in this edition. Previously, these sessions resulted in the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 and the Paris Agreement in 2015, both of which are treaty-like international accords.*
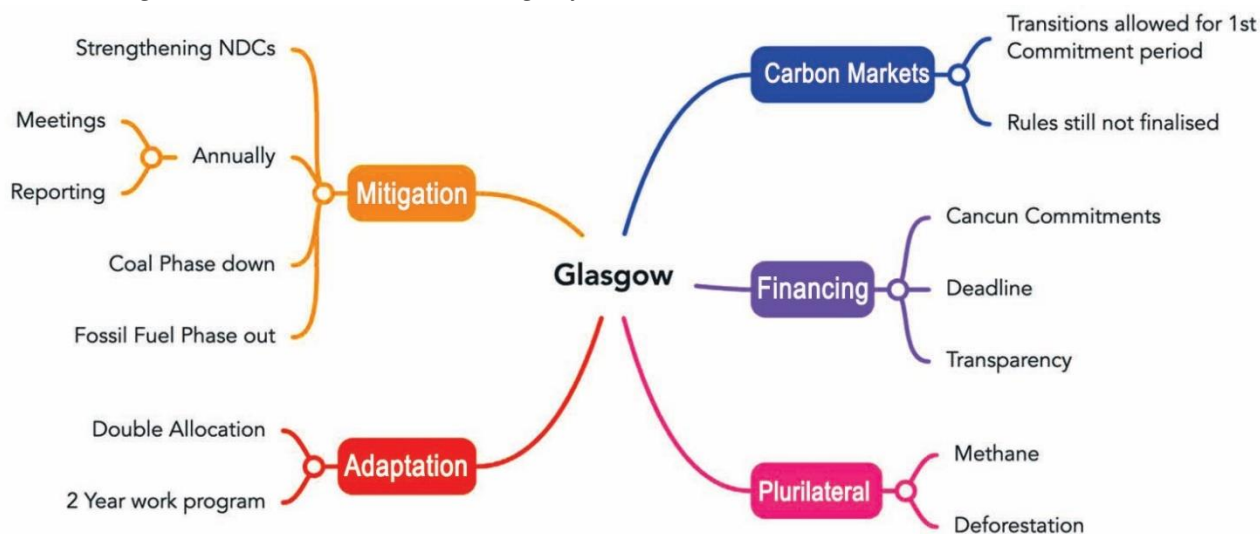


### SALIENT FEATURES OF GLASGOW ACCORD

**Mitigation**

- All the parties agreed that stronger action in the present decade is vital for meeting the 1.5-degree objective, according to the Glasgow Accord.
- As a result, it has requested/decided:

  o By the end of the year, they should have strengthened their 2030 climate action plans, or NDCs (nationally determined contributions).
  o Create a work plan to increase mitigation ambition and implementation as soon as possible.
  o Organize an annual summit of ministers to increase the ambition of climate action in 2030.
  o Annual synopsis of individual countries cations.

- o In 2023, a gathering of world leaders will be held to increase the ambition of climate action.
- o Countries should make steps to limit coal use as a source of energy and eliminate "inefficient" fossil fuel subsidies.
- o Coal will be phased down, and fossil fuels will be phased out. This is the **first-time coal has been mentioned clearly in a COP decision.**

## Adaptation

- Adaptation is regarded as the most crucial component of climate action by most countries, particularly the smaller and poorer ones, as well as small island governments.
- They have demanded that adaptation efforts receive at least half of all climate money.
- As a result, the Glasgow Climate Pact has the following provisions:
  - o Developed countries have been asked to at least double the amount of money allocated to adaptation by 2025, compared to current levels.
  - o Developed a two-year work plan to create a global adaptation goal.

## Finance

- Every step taken to address climate change has a monetary cost. It is now predicted that trillions of dollars will be required each year to pay all the initiatives required to meet the climate goals.
- As a result of their past culpability for greenhouse gas emissions, developed countries have a responsibility.
- They must help underdeveloped countries cope with climate change by providing funds and technology.
- Developed countries committed in 2009 that by 2020, they would raise at least $100 billion annually. Even though the 2020 deadline has passed, the $100 billion pledge has yet to be met.
- The industrialised countries have recently stated that they will raise this sum by 2023.

## Carbon Markets

- Carbon markets make trading emission reductions easier.
- They are regarded as a crucial and effective tool for reducing overall emissions.
- A carbon market existed under the Kyoto Protocol; however, it has since disappeared due to the Protocol's expiration last year.

- Because many countries abandoned their emission reduction commitments, developing countries such as India, China, and Brazil have substantial amounts of carbon credits left over.
- The Glasgow Pact has provided some relief to poor countries.
- It has enabled countries to use these carbon credits to satisfy their first NDC targets.
- **Announcement of Parallel Processes:** In Glasgow, a lot of important work was done in parallel procedures that were not part of the official COP debates.

**Prior failures in financing must be considered**

- "Deep regrets" were expressed over the rich countries' failure to deliver on their $100 billion promise.
- It has requested them to put this money together as soon as possible, and to do so every year until 2025.
- Discussions on creating a new climate finance target beyond $100 billion for the period after 2025 have begun.
- The wealthy countries have been asked to offer transparent information about the funds they intend to provide.

## Loss and Damage

- Climate disasters are becoming more common, and many of them have resulted in widespread devastation. There is no institutional system in place to reimburse these countries for their losses or to assist them with relief and reconstruction.
- The Paris Agreement's loss and damage provision attempts to remedy this. Substantive discussions on loss and damage could take place in Glasgow, thanks to a push from numerous countries.
- A provision for the establishment of a facility to coordinate loss and damage actions was included in one of the earlier draughts.
- India has announced a **Panchamrita (a five-point plan)** to combat climate change.
- Brazil's net-zero target year would be pushed back from 2060 to 2050.
- China agreed to release a clear strategy for meeting its commitment to peak emissions in 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2060. Israel has set a goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

- Over a hundred countries have committed to cutting methane emissions by at least 30% by 2030, compared to current levels.
- Over a hundred countries have pledged to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030.
- Over 30 countries signed a declaration vowing to work toward a transition to zero-emission vehicles by 2040, at least in the world's major car markets.

**Panchamrit Strategy of India**

Prime Minister of India announced a heightened commitment to address the issue of climate change. This was in line with the principle of **Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC),** wherein it is accepted that developed nations account for most of the legacy greenhouse emissions, which are the cause of present climate change. Hence, developing nations like India which have only very low per capita carbon emissions need lesser commitment. Also, developing countries like India need carbon space to pursue development path ensuring sustainable development of their country. The strategy includes:

- India will get its non-fossil energy capacity to 500 GW by 2030
- India will meet 50 per cent of its energy requirements till 2030 with renewable energy

- India will reduce its projected carbon emission by one billion tonnes by 2030
- India will reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by 45 per cent by 2030
- India will achieve net zero by 2070

'Panchamrita' is a traditional method of mixing five natural foods — milk, ghee, curd, honey and jaggery. These are used in Hindu and Jain worship rituals. It is also used as a technique in Ayurveda.
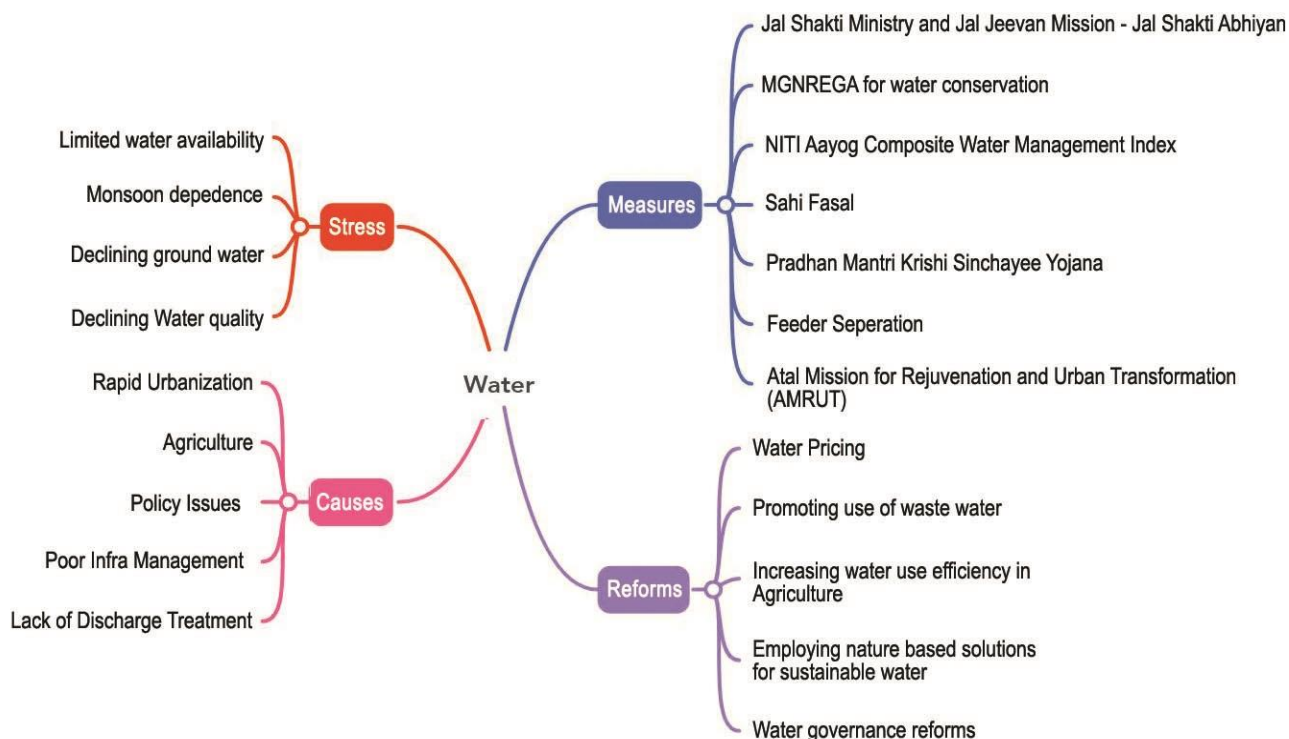
# DRAFT NATIONAL WATER POLICY

#WATER ISSUES

SECONDARY SOURCE | MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI      SECONDARY SOURCE | THE HINDU

SECONDARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS

*The committee set up by the government of India to formulate national water Policy has submitted its draft to the ministry of Jal Shakti.*

*According to recent predictions, approximately half of the country's water demand will remain unmet by 2030 if current trends continue. Water tables are dropping, and water quality is decreasing, necessitating a major shift in water management strategy.*



Mind map: Water — Stress (Limited water availability, Monsoon dependence, Declining ground water, Declining Water quality); Causes (Rapid Urbanization, Agriculture, Policy Issues, Poor Infra Management, Lack of Discharge Treatment); Measures (Jal Shakti Ministry and Jal Jeevan Mission - Jal Shakti Abhiyan, MGNREGA for water conservation, NITI Aayog Composite Water Management Index, Sahi Fasal, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana, Feeder Seperation, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)); Reforms (Water Pricing, Promoting use of waste water, Increasing water use efficiency in Agriculture, Employing nature based solutions for sustainable water, Water governance reforms)

The water cycle no longer operates within an invariant range of prediction, as seen by changing precipitation patterns and intensity, as well as river discharge rates. This necessitates a greater focus on water management's agility, resilience, and flexibility to respond appropriately to the future's increased uncertainty and unpredictability.

## ISSUES IN WATER POLICY 2012

- **Water Governance**
    - The strategy proposes fundamental changes to the way water is managed, which is plagued by three types of challenges:
        - That is, the distinction between irrigation and drinking water, surface and groundwater, and water and wastewater.
    - Because of over-extraction of groundwater, rivers are drying up, reducing the base-flows required for rivers to have water following the monsoon.
    - Dealing with drinking water and irrigation in silos has resulted in aquifers offering reliable sources of drinking water drying up because the same aquifers are also utilised for irrigation, which consumes far more water.
    - Water quality suffers when water and wastewater are separated during planning.

- **Demand Management:**
    - The policy recognises that increasing water supply indefinitely has limits and argues for a shift to demand management.
    - Irrigation:
        - Rice, wheat, and sugarcane use most of India's water, which is consumed by irrigation.
        - The basic water needs of millions of people cannot be addressed unless this pattern of water demand is drastically altered.

- **Groundwater:**
    - Sustainable and equitable groundwater management is a top concern for the NWP.
    - The key is community-based groundwater management. Stakeholders selected as custodians of their aquifers would be able to adopt guidelines for effective groundwater management if they were given information about aquifer boundaries, water storage capacities, and flows in a user-friendly way.

- **River:**

- Historically, rivers have been viewed as primarily an economic resource. Despite the economic value of rivers, the NWP prioritises river protection and rehabilitation.
- The NWP lays forth a plan for drafting a River Rights Act, which would protect rivers' rights to flow, meander, and reach the sea.

- **Water Quality**
    - It is the most critical neglected issue in India today.
    - It is proposed that a water quality department be included in every water ministry, both at the federal and state levels.

## NEW WATER POLICY IN DRAFT (NWP)

- The proposed NWP made two major recommendations:
    - **Shift the focus away from never-ending water supply increases and toward demand management strategies.**
        - In keeping with area agroecology, this entails changing our cropping pattern to incorporate fewer water-intensive crops.
        - We must reduce our industrial water footprint, which is among the highest in the world, by switching to recycled water and reducing freshwater use.
        - All non-potable applications, such as flushing, firefighting, vehicle washing, landscaping, gardening, and so on, must be shifted to treated wastewater by cities.
    - **A shift in concentration on the supply side is also since the country is running out of land for new major dams, and water tables and groundwater quality are declining in many locations.**
        - Trillions of litres of water are held in large dams but never reach the farmers who are supposed to benefit from them.
        - The policy specifies how this can be accomplished using pressured closed conveyance pipelines, SCADA systems, and pressurised micro-irrigation.
        - The case for "nature-based solutions" for water storage and supply is becoming increasingly compelling around the world.

## GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY & DISASTER MANAGEMENT

- As a result, the NWP lays a strong emphasis on water supply through watershed rejuvenation, which must be rewarded with ecosystem services compensation, particularly for vulnerable communities in upstream mountainous areas.

### RECOMMENDATIONS IN DRAFT WATER POLICY

- **Crop Diversification**
  - It is the single most critical step in alleviating India's water crisis, according to demand side options.
  - Diversifying public procurement activities to include Nutri-cereals, pulses, and oilseeds is suggested in the policy.
    - The Integrated Child Development Services, the mid-day meal scheme, and the public distribution system are the primary outlets for these procured crops.
    - Given the higher nutritional composition of these crops, establishing this link would also assist address the crisis of starvation and diabetes.
  - Farmers should be encouraged to diversify their cropping patterns, resulting in significant water savings.

- **Reduce-Recycle-Reuse**
  - This has been recommended as the basic motto of integrated urban water supply and wastewater management, with sewage treatment and eco-restoration of urban river sections achieved as far as practicable through decentralised wastewater management. Use of cleaned and treated wastewater for all non-potable purposes, such as flushing, firefighting, and vehicle washing.

- **Supply Side recommendations:**
  - The policy recommends utilizing water stored in large dams that are still not reaching farmers and explains how irrigated areas could be greatly expanded at a low cost by deploying pressurised closed conveyance pipelines, combined with Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems and pressurised micro-irrigation.
  - The NWP lays a strong emphasis on water supply via "nature-based solutions" such as catchment area rejuvenation, which will be rewarded with ecosystem services compensation.

- **Rain gardens and bio-swales** restored rivers with wet meadows, **bio-remediation wetlands**, urban parks, permeable pavements, green roofs, and other specially **curated "blue-green infrastructure"** are proposed for urban areas.

- **Water Quality:**
  - The policy encourages the use of cutting-edge sewage treatment technology that are low-cost, low-energy, and environmentally friendly.
  - The widespread use of reverse osmosis has resulted in significant water waste and harmed water quality.
  - If the total dissolved solids count in water is less than 500 mg/L, the guideline states that RO units should be avoided.
  - It proposes forming an emerging water pollutants task team to better understand and address the problems they are anticipated to pose.

- Re-vegetation of catchments, management of groundwater extraction, river-bed pumping, and sand and boulder mining are all steps in the process of restoring river flows.

## UNCBD
### #BIODIVERSITY
PRIMARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS

*15$^{th}$ meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was held virtually in Kunming, China. The COP 15's major goal was to create and accept a post-2020 **"Global Biodiversity Framework"** to replace and update the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (SPB) 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.*

*For the next ten years, the framework will comprise a set of global goals, targets, and indicators that will guide biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, protection, restoration, and sustainable management. The first draft of the GBF was released in July 2021, containing 21 targets for 2030 and 4 Goals to achieve humanity "living in harmony with nature," vision by 2050.*

Parties will reconvene in 2022 for further negotiations and to come to a final agreement on the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

### HIGHLIGHTING FEATURES OF THE COP

- **Kunming Declaration**

- The declaration called for immediate and comprehensive action in all areas of the global economy to reflect biodiversity concerns.
- More than a hundred countries, including India, have pledged to
  - Work together to design, adopt, and implement a viable post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
  - Reverse the current biodiversity loss.
  - Ensure that biodiversity is on the mend by 2030 at the very latest.
- China established the **Kunming Biodiversity Fund** with a budget of around USD 230 million to fund programmes that safeguard biodiversity in underdeveloped nations.
- It also praised many countries' efforts and commitments to safeguard **30% of their land and sea regions by 2030 (30 by 30 objective),** which is crucial for reversing a major cause of environmental degradation.
- The summit emphasised the importance of private sector participation, including an open letter from company CEOs to international leaders encouraging decisive action.
- The Global Environment Facility, the United Nations Development Programme, and the United Nations Environment Programme have pledged to expedite financial and technical assistance to developing countries to help them implement the Global Environment Facility.

**IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK**

- **Adoption of the 30 by 30 Goals**
  - In the absence of quality targets, places of low conservation value will be protected.
  - Might jeopardise indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights in biodiverse areas.
  - Challenges in international cooperation for cross-border land/ocean protection.
- **Benefit-sharing systems** do not currently include the commercial benefits of digital sequence information (DSI). Countries with a lot of genetic resources but not enough capacity to use them desire benefit-sharing mechanisms to include DSI, but countries with a lot of biotech research are against it. Data derived from

sequencing and analysing genetic material is referred to as DSI.

- **Current funding channels are insufficient** to meet the anticipated annual cost of USD 700 billion required to prevent biodiversity loss.
- While the scientific conclusion that more than a million species are threatened with extinction has horrified the globe, the **draft framework fails to define a goal or objective for ending extinctions** caused directly by human activities.
- **Lack of easy-to-use tools for tracking common goals and keeping track of progress:** Despite an increase in policies and measures to support biodiversity, this has resulted in a worsening of causes of biodiversity loss and a fall in biodiversity between 2011 and 2020.
- Because biodiversity loss, climate change, land degradation and desertification, ocean degradation, and pollution all share many underlying drivers of change, there is a **need for integrated efforts** to address these issues.
- Redirecting agricultural, forestry, and fishing subsidies in ways that threaten biodiversity will have a **negative impact on small-scale farmers,** fishers, and other small-scale producers in developing countries.
- It may lead to carbon emitters using tree-planting and other carbon offsets in developing countries to avoid their obligations to reduce emissions while expropriating indigenous peoples' and local residents' forest usage rights.

# KUNO TO GET 13 CHEETAHS NEXT YEAR WHO CAN CO-EXIST WITH LEOPARDS

#BIODIVERSITY #WILDLIFE

PRIMARY SOURCE | THE HINDU

*Kuno was selected as the habitat for the African cheetah by a Supreme Court mandated expert committee in January 2021, constituted by the apex court to implement the Cheetah Translocation Project. Kuno was preferred over the Mukundara Hills Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan and Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh because it was large*

## GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY & DISASTER MANAGEMENT

*enough for cheetahs to roam around and hunt freely, away from any human interference.*

### NEED FOR CHEETAH REINTRODUCTION

- Because the Cheetah species has got extinct in the country.
- And the plan is to revive the Indian Population of Cheetah.
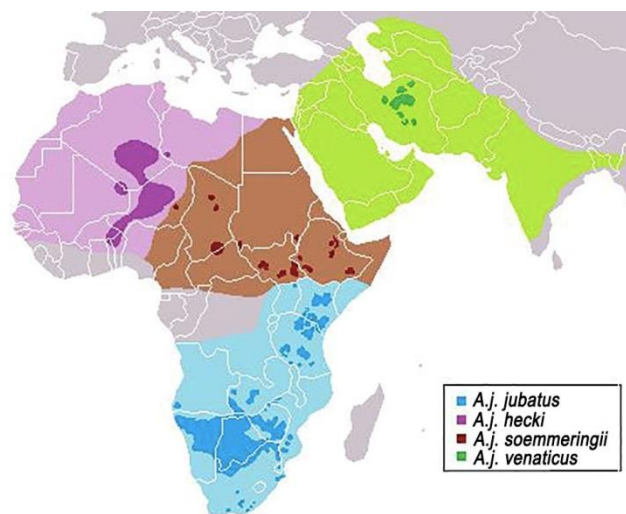
### ORIGINAL GEOGRAPHICAL RANGE



Fig: showing the range of Cheetah
**(India clearly lies in this range)**

### CAUSES FOR EXTINCTION OF CHEETAHS

- **Hunting**
  - They were hunted into extinction during and after the Mughal Period, largely by Rajput and Maratha Indian royalty and later by British colonialists, until the early 20th century when only several thousand remained.

- **Captive (help in hunting)**
  - Trapping of large numbers of adult Indian cheetahs, who had already learned hunting skills from wild mothers, for assisting in royal hunts is said to be another major cause of the species rapid decline in India as they never bred in captivity with only one record of a litter ever.

**Reintroduction of the cheetah in India involves the re-establishment of a population of cheetahs into areas where they had previously existed:** A part of the reintroduction process is the identification and restoration of their former grassland scrub forest habitats.

### METHODS OF REINTRODUCTION OF CHEETAHS

- **Biotechnology: Cloning**
  - India first proposed this method during last decade but it didn't work.
  - During the early 2000s, Indian scientists from the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad, proposed a plan to clone Asiatic cheetahs obtained from Iran.
  - Indian scientists requested Iran to allow them to collect some live cells of the cheetah pair in Iran itself, which can then be made into living cell lines. They planned to use the nucleus from these cells to manually reproduce their own cheetahs, over a significantly long amount of time.
  - Iran refused to cooperate (would neither send any cheetahs to India nor would allow Indian scientists to collect their tissue samples)
  - It is said that Iran wanted an Asiatic lion in exchange for a cheetah and that India was not willing to export any of its lions.

- **Reintroducing live Cheetahs**
  - So, it was decided that African Cheetah would be introduced in protected areas in India.

### ISSUES WITH CHEETAH REINTRODUCTION

- **Clash with lion and tiger conservation**
  - As the habitat for Asiatic lion and Tiger as well as the Cheetah is similar, many sites identified for Cheetah reintroduction clash with lion & Tiger conservation. As we know, that there is only a single population of Lion in India in Gir and that has become unsustainable due to rapid growth in their population and there is a need to relocate many lions from Gir.
  - An expert panel formed by the government shortlisted a number of protected areas where cheetahs could be relocated. These were **Kuno-Palpur and Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh, Velavadar National Park in Gujarat and the Shahgarh bulge in Rajasthan.**
  - **The Kuno reintroduction plan ran into trouble.** The protected area had also been shortlisted for introduction of Asiatic Lions from heavily populated Gir in Gujarat. To not give lions to Kuno, Gujarat's legal counsel had put forward the argument that Kuno was being used for the introduction of African cheetah which might take several years to fully settle down and repopulate the area and hence

reintroduction of lions should only be done after that.

**Perpetual problems with India's wildlife**

o As the import of the Cheetahs from Africa will be very limited, the problems being faced by the wildlife in the country might undo the efforts.

o It is advisable to resolve following issues first:

▪ Human-wildlife conflict,

▪ Loss of habitat and loss of prey

▪ Illegal trafficking.

▪ Climate change and growing human populations have only made these problems worse.

▪ With less available land for wildlife, species that require vast home range like the cheetah are placed in competition with other animals and humans, all fighting over less space.

# RIVER CITIES ALLIANCE

*The alliance is the result of partnership of Ministry of Jal Shakti and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. The Alliance will focus on three broad themes: Networking, Capacity Building and Technical Support. The Secretariat of the Alliance will be set up at National Institute for Urban Affairs (NIUA), with NMCG's support.*

**ABOUT RIVER CITIES ALLIANCE**

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**OBJECTIVE**

• It is a dedicated platform for river cities in India to ideate, discuss and exchange information for sustainable management of urban rivers.

• The focus will be on minimizing water footprint of cities, reducing impacts on rivers and water bodies, capitalising on natural, intangible, architectural heritage and associated services and develop self-sufficient, self-sustainable water resources through recycle, reuse strategy.

• The Alliance cities will work towards adopting and localising national policies and instruments with key river-related directions, prepare their Urban River Management Plans and develop city specific sectoral strategies that are required for sustainable urban river management.

• The Alliance gives opportunities to these cities to strengthen governance aspects for river cities and improves their liveability to attract external economic investments, access state of the art knowledge and frameworks as well as an opportunity to serve as the site for unique demonstration projects which will be implemented by NIUA and NMCG.

**Participating cities in the Alliance are: The member cities are from both Ganga basin and non-Ganga basin states.** They include: Dehradun, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Srinagar, Begusarai, Bhagalpur, Munger, Patna, Berhampore, Hooghly-Chinsurah, Howrah, Jangipur, Maheshtala, Rajmahal, Sahibganj, Ayodhya, Bijnor, Farrukhabad, Kanpur, Mathura-Vrindavan, Mirzapur, Prayagraj, Varanasi, Aurangabad, Chennai, Bhubaneswar, Hyderabad, Pune, Udaipur and Vijayawada.

# PRACTICE QUESTIONS

## MCQS

**Q.1) Consider the following statements about River Cities Alliance:**

1. All cities of this alliance are in the Ganga basin.

2. It is a joint program of Ministry of Jal Shakti and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only     (b) 2 only

## GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY & DISASTER MANAGEMENT

(c)     Both 1 and 2          (d)     Neither 1 nor 2

**Q.2)   Consider the following statements about Glasgow Climate Pact:**

1.     Coal was for first time called out to be reduced in COP of UNFCCC.

2.     Countries can use carbon credits under Kyoto Protocol to meet their NDC targets.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a)     1 only                (b)     2 only

(c)     Both 1 and 2          (d)     Neither 1 nor 2

**Q.3)   '30 by 30' strategy is related to which of the following?**

(a)     Protected areas

(b)     Renewable energy target

(c)     Access and Benefit Sharing

(d)     Emissions reduction

**Q.4)   Consider the following pairs:**

1.     Mukundra hills: Madhya Pradesh

2.     Kuno Palpur: Maharashtra

3.     Shahpur Bulge: Rajasthan

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

(a)     1 only                (b)     1 and 2 only

(c)     2 and 3 only          (d)     1, 2 and 3

**Q.5)   Which of the following are part of the 'Panchamrit Strategy' revealed by India, recently?**

1.     Net Zero timeline for India

2.     Enhanced commitment to renewable energy

3.     Phasing out of coal dependent power generation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a)     1 only                (b)     1 and 2 only

(c)     2 only                (d)     1, 2 and 3

## DESCRIPTIVE QUESTION

**Q1.**   Highlight the salient features of Global Biodiversity Framework, currently being negotiated. Also, highlight the issue of Digital Sequence Information.

**Q2.**   Glasgow Climate Pact fails to meet developing countries aspirations for climate finance. Analyse.

**Answers**: *1-b, 2-c, 3-a, 4-b, 5-b*

# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

## # GS PAPER (PRELIMS) & GS PAPER III (MAIN)

## AURORAE IN HIGH-LATITUDE COUNTRIES

### #PHYSICS #SPACE

**PRIMARY SOURCE** | THE HINDU

*The Sun lights up aurorae in high-latitude countries. A solar flare that occurred on the Sun triggered a magnetic storm causing spectacular displays of aurora in the high-latitude and polar regions. These observations are taken at Lagrange Point L1.*

### SOLAR FLARE

- A solar flare is a sudden flash of increased brightness on the Sun, **usually observed near its surface and near a sunspot group**. Powerful flares are often, but not always, accompanied by a coronal mass ejection.

- In a solar flare, energy stored in the sun's magnetic structures is converted into light and heat energy. This causes the emission of high energy x-ray radiation and highly accelerated charged particles to leave the sun's surface.

- Solar flares affect all layers of the solar atmosphere (photosphere, chromosphere, and corona).

- Flares occur in active regions around sunspots, where **intense magnetic fields penetrate the photosphere to link the corona to the solar interior.**

- **Flares are powered by the sudden release of magnetic energy stored in the corona.**

### SOLAR FLARES AND CORONAL MASS EJECTIONS (CMES)

- CMEs and Solar flares are both explosions that occur on the sun. Sometimes they occur together, but they are not the same thing - they emit different things, they look and travel differently, and they have different effects near planets.

- Both eruptions are created when the motion of the sun's interior contorts its own magnetic fields. Both originate from corona.

- Solar flares are giant burst of **X-rays and energy which travel at the speed of light in all directions.**

- CME are giant cloud of particles (mostly protons and electrons and powerful magnetic fields) hurled into the space, in particular direction. **CMEs take one to three days to reach the earth. Flares only takes eight minutes.**

- Flares and CMEs have different effects at Earth as well. The energy from a flare can **disrupt the area of the atmosphere through which radio waves** travel. This can lead to degradation and, at worst, temporary blackouts in navigation and communications signals. On the other hand, CMEs can funnel particles into near-Earth space. A CME can jostle Earth's magnetic fields creating currents that drive particles down toward Earth's poles. When these react with oxygen and nitrogen, they help **create the aurora,** also known as the Northern and Southern Lights.

**Solar winds** constantly occur due to the corona of the sun continually expanding. The solar wind is a stream of charged particles consisting of electrons, protons and alpha particles with kinetic energy between 0.5 and 10 keV. The composition of the solar wind plasma also includes a mixture of materials found in the solar plasma: trace amounts of heavy ions and atomic nuclei C, N, O, Ne, Mg, Si, S, and Fe.

### SOLAR ENERGETIC PARTICLES (SEP)

- They are high-energy particles coming from the Sun.

- They were first observed in the early 1940s.

- They consist of protons, electrons and high-energy nuclei with energy ranging from a few tens of keV to many GeV.

# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- **They are of particular interest and importance because they can endanger life in outer space** (especially particles above 40 MeV). But their onset is extraordinarily hard to predict, in part because **we still don't know exactly where on the Sun they come from.**

- For reasons still not fully understood, **SEPs contain a different mix of particles than the other solar material streaming off the Sun in the solar wind –** fewer carbon, sulfur, and phosphorous ions, for instance.

- Many scientists thought Solar Energetic Particles would be found at the edges of the active region where the magnetic field is already open and material can escape directly. But the **fingerprint matched only in regions where the magnetic field is still closed.**

- The SEPs had somehow broken free from strong magnetic loops connected to the Sun at both ends. These loops trap material near the top of the **chromosphere,** one layer below where solar flares and coronal mass ejections erupt.

## AURORAS

- An Aurora is a display of light in the sky predominantly seen in the high latitude regions (Arctic and Antarctic). It is also known as a Polar light.

- They commonly occur at high northern and southern latitudes, less frequent at mid-latitudes, and seldom seen near the equator.

- While usually a milky greenish colour, auroras can also show red, blue, violet, pink, and white. These colours appear in a variety of continuously changing shapes.

- Auroras are caused by the interaction of energetic particles (electrons and protons) of the solar wind with atoms of the upper atmosphere occurring primarily in high latitudes of both hemispheres.

- Auroras are not just something that happens on Earth. If a planet has an atmosphere and magnetic field, they probably have auroras.

## LAGRANGE POINT 1

- Lagrange Points, named after Italian French mathematician Josephy-Louis Lagrange, are positions in space where the gravitational forces of a two-body system (like the Sun and the Earth) produce enhanced regions of attraction and repulsion.

- L1 refers to Lagrange Point 1, one of 5 points in the orbital plane of the Earth-Sun system.

- The L1 point is about 1.5 million km from Earth, or about 1/100th of the way to the Sun.

- These can be used by spacecraft to reduce fuel consumption needed to remain in position.

- A Satellite placed in the halo orbit around L1 has the major advantage of continuously viewing the Sun without any occultation/ eclipses.

- The L1 point is home to the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory Satellite (SOHO), an international collaboration project of NASA and the European Space Agency.

# DOUBLE ASTEROID REDIRECTION TEST (DART) MISSION

## #PHYSICS #SPACE

PRIMARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS

*NASA will launch its first planetary defence test mission named the Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART) using SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket.*

## ABOUT DART MISSION

- The Mission aims to test technology to respond to a situation in case an asteroid heads towards Earth in future. It will develop new technology that would allow a spacecraft to crash into an asteroid and change its course.

- DART will be the first demonstration of the **kinetic impactor technique** to change the motion of an asteroid in space.

- The target of the spacecraft is a small moonlet called Dimorphos which orbits a larger asteroid named Didymos.

- It is a suicide mission, and the spacecraft will be destroyed. The collision is expected to take place between 26th September and 1st October 2022.

- Images from DRACO will be sent to Earth in real-time and will help study the impact site and surface of Dimorphos (the target asteroid).

- DART will also carry a small satellite or CubeSat named LICIACube (Light Italian CubeSat for Imaging of Asteroids).
- LICIACube is expected to capture images of the impact and the impact crater formed because of the collision.

**Didymos** is a perfect system for the test mission because it is an eclipsing binary which means it has a moonlet that regularly orbits the asteroid and which can be seen when it passes in front of the main asteroid.

Earth-based telescopes can study this variation in brightness to understand how long it takes Dimorphos to orbit Didymos.

# ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

#BIOTECH

PRIMARY SOURCE | pib

*During World Antimicrobial Awareness Week, the Ministry of Animal Husbandry and Dairying held a session on the National Action Plan to Combat Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). The theme of WAAW this year was "Spread awareness, end resistance." During WAAW, the AMR tripartite organisations (World Health Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and World Organization for Animal Health) launched an international colour campaign, dubbed "Go Blue," to raise awareness of AMR.*

## ABOUT ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

- Any microorganism (bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites etc.) may develop resistance to antimicrobial medications (such as antibiotics, antifungals, antivirals, antimalarials, and anthelmintics) used to treat infections.
- Consequently, traditional therapies are rendered ineffective, illnesses persist, and the risk of spreading infection to others increases.
- Antimicrobial-resistant microorganisms are frequently referred to as **"superbugs."**
- AMR has been named one of the top ten global health hazards by the WHO.

## REASONS FOR SPREAD OF AMR

- Contamination in the vicinity of pharmaceutical production plants, when untreated waste releases enormous volumes of active antimicrobials into the environment.
- Overuse and abuse of pharmaceuticals in people, animals, and agriculture, as well as limited access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene

## CONCERNS ABOUT AMR

- **Healthcare costs will rise:** AMR is currently responsible for up to 7,00,000 deaths each year. It also raises the expense of healthcare by requiring longer hospital stays, more testing, and the use of more costly medications.
- **Incurable infections:** AMR is undermining a century of medical progress; infections that were once treated and curable with our treatments have become (or are on the verge of becoming) incurable (as medicines are not working against infections).
- **Infections and surgeries are growing more dangerous:** Even ordinary infections are becoming more dangerous. Surgeries are growing more dangerous, and the root of the problem is human behaviour that misuses or overuses antimicrobials.
- **Insufficient financial incentives for new antibiotics:** In the previous three decades, no new classes of antibiotics have made it to market, owing to a lack of incentives for their research and manufacturing.
- **Antibiotic apocalypse:** Without immediate action, we are on the verge of an antibiotic apocalypse — a world without antibiotics, in which germs become entirely resistant to treatment, and in which routine diseases and small injuries may kill once again.

## AMR IN INDIA

- With a huge population, growing wages that promote the purchase of antibiotics, a high burden of infectious illnesses, and simple over-the-counter access to antibiotics, India is a key breeding ground for resistance genes (such genes help bacteria in surviving on being exposed to antibiotics).
- **New Delhi Metallo-beta-lactamase-1 (NDM-1)** is a multi-drug resistance determinant that originated in India and has since spread around the world.
- **Multidrug-resistant typhoid,** which originated in South Asia, has also spread to Africa, Europe, and other regions of Asia.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- In India, microbes resistant to first-line antibiotics cause about 56,000 neonatal fatalities each year owing to sepsis.

### MEASURES TAKEN FOR AMR

- The Surveillance Network has been reinforced by the establishment of laboratories in State Medical College as part of the National Programme on AMR Containment.

- The National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) focuses on a One Health strategy with the goal of incorporating many stakeholder ministries/ departments.

- The AMR Surveillance and Research Network (AMRSN) was established in 2013 with the goal of gathering data and identifying trends and patterns in drug-resistant illnesses throughout the nation.

- **Antibiotic Stewardship Program:** The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has launched an antibiotic stewardship programme (AMSP) as a pilot initiative throughout India to prevent antibiotic abuse and overuse in hospital wards and intensive care units.

- **Integrated One Health Surveillance Network for AMR:** Assessing Indian Veterinary Laboratories' readiness to participate in an integrated AMR surveillance network.

- India has launched several initiatives, such as **Mission Indradhanush,** to address poor vaccine coverage, increased micro-planning, and added monitoring and accountability measures.

- AMR is one of the top ten goals for the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's (MoHFW) joint effort with the World Health Organization (WHO).

### WAY FORWARD

- Detecting and preventing the sale of counterfeit medications, especially in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.

- Measurement of bioavailability at pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics, enforcement of antibiotic regulations through prescription databases, and pharmacy auditing are all things that are done on a regular basis.

- The study of the time course of medication absorption, distribution, metabolism, and excretion is known as pharmacokinetics.

- GST (Goods and Services Tax) tracking/matching of e-prescriptions is used to keep track of medicine sales.

- Use of modern technology such as imaging and bioinformatics, as well as geographic information systems, to move away from a syndromic approach to diagnostic therapy.

- Observance of the WASH strategy, antibiotic-free animal feed and antibiotics supplied to animals that are not the same as those ingested by people (e.g., marked by different colour schemes).

# 5G LEAP FOR TOMORROW
## #INFORMATIONAL & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

PRIMARY SOURCE | THE HINDU

*The fifth-generation mobile network, or 5G, is the next level of mobile network that will shape the Fourth Industrial Revolution or Industrial Revolution 4.0, quality of service delivery, innovation, etc. by facilitating smarter and developing societies. Commercial 5G networks began to be deployed in 2020 and are expected to reach 12% of world mobile connections (1.1 billion) and generate revenues up to U.S.$1.3 trillion by 2025 for operators.*

The technology that 5G uses will improve data transfer speed at unexpected higher levels — almost 100 times more — and reduce latency times helping mission-critical services. Thus, 5G is essential but India needs to look if it is ready for the deployment of the technology.

### POTENTIAL

- 5G has the transformative potential to provide a range of benefits to the Indian economy, which when enhanced with artificial intelligence provides a new dimension to connected and autonomous systems.

- **Socio-economic Benefits:** This may allow citizens and communities to get socio-economic benefits and comforts delivered by a well-advanced, more data-intensive, digital economy, educate and empower citizens and businesses & transform existing cities into smart and innovative cities.

- **Benefits of 5G:**
  o Encompass enhanced outdoor and indoor broadband
  o Internet of things
  o Smart cities
  o Smart agriculture
  o Energy monitoring

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- o Remote monitoring
- o Smart grids
- o Telehealth
- o Industrial automation
- o Remote patient monitoring
- o Industrial automation
- o There is great potential for India to move to an advanced digital revolution.

### ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH 5G

- **India as a Late Adopter:** India is late in adopting 5G technology, hence, will get insignificant revenue from the service.
- **Lesser Government Subsidies:** A low likelihood of government subsidies is expected, given high reserve prices set by the government for spectrum auctions amid ongoing fiscal deficits. This will increase the cost of access to 5G by end consumers.
- **Digital Divide:** 5G will not bridge the digital divide among the rural and urban areas in the short term, rather increase it as the business case of 5G even in urban areas is limited. Therefore, it will not be easily available in rural areas too.
- **5G, A Niche Service:** 5G will be a niche service unlike 3G and 4G which were pervasive services. It will get intensified over a comparatively longer period. The rollout of 5G technology will be different from the one seen in 4g; it will be introduced in specific sectors and areas.
- **Inadequate Accessibility of Previous Technology:** The consumers are still grappling with basic network issues like call drops and interrupted data services. There are still areas where 4G networks have not stabilised causing frequent disruptions in internet services. It is important to meet the quality-of-service parameters of existing 4G networks before embarking on a new 5G platform.
- **Enabling Critical Infrastructures:** 5G will require a fundamental change to the core architecture of the communication system. The major flaw of data transfer using 5G is that it can't carry data over longer distances. Hence, even 5G technology needs to be augmented to enable infrastructure.
- **Financial Liability on Consumers:** For transition from 4G to 5G technology, one must upgrade to the latest cellular technology, thereby creating financial liability on consumers.

### WAY FORWARD

- **Analysis of Existing Infrastructure and Capacity:** Priority for India will be in identifying end users and population to be covered, analysis of the existing network and operators, identification of cities for 5G roll out, working out an investment model, and minimisation of the digital risk and pricing based on the externalities and usage of various sectors.
- **Cost Benefit Analysis:** The deployment of 5G in India needs to be carefully planned after a cost benefit analysis by independent experts which will create a level-playing field through market mechanisms such as facilitating, simulating, auctioning, ensuring competition, functioning markets, etc.
- **Sector-friendly Steps:** As the deployment of 5G network is expensive, both the Central and State governments may need to consider measures which stimulate fibre investment, attract investment through public private partnerships (PPPs) and facilitate investment funds on a nominal interest basis. Allowing **100% foreign direct investment** in the telecom sector under the automatic route along with other policy reforms augurs well for the sector to attract investment. Implementation of 5G requires huge investment and the relief package is a welcome step.
- **Tax issues:** The Government needs to address information asymmetry and negative externalities through laws and regulations/taxes and subsidies.
  - o The deployment of 5G technology will also need the right of access to government infrastructure such as traffic lights, lamp posts, etc. where wireless operators can deploy electronic small cell apparatus.
  - o At the same time, reasonable fees may be charged by State and local governments to operators for affordable deployment of 5G equipment.
  - o Further, removing the tax burden for deploying fibre networks reduces associated costs, thereby promoting investment as was done by the Singapore government, could help in the smooth deployment of fibre in India.
- **Bridging the Rural-urban Gap:** 5G can be deployed at different band spectrums and at the low band

spectrum, the range is much longer which is helpful for the rural areas.

- **Government's Assistance:** The government has complete control over the inputs. One of the key inputs of 5G is the band spectrum.
  - By managing the design of the spectrum, the government can control the price to be paid by the people.
  - The government shall support the telecom companies to roll out networks which are sustainable and affordable for the public.
- **Tackling the Spectrum Pricing Issue:** The government in recent times, has had two failed auctions. The current high reserve price needs to be reduced to conduct a successful auction. The pricing will have to be worked out keeping in mind the financial stress in the sector and affordability of services.
- **Enabling the Manufacturing Sector in India:** As 5G starts taking shape in India, it is important to strengthen its domestic telecommunication manufacturing market so that it is not only the users of 5G in India, but also the manufacturers and providers of these technologies who will be able to make a mark in the global arena
- **Viable Technology from Consumers' Perspective:** For widespread 5G deployment, it needs to become financially viable otherwise rural integration will remain a pipe dream. 5G technology must be viable to the telecom operators too.

## CONCLUSION

As India has already witnessed digital revolution even in its remotest areas due to cost-effective 4G technology, the use of 5G can play a vital role in enhancing this sector and facilitating India's goal to emerge as a manufacturing and innovation hub. The negative implication of 5G is furthering the 'digital divide'. Therefore, Government policies should also focus on affordable coverage too.

# ELECTRIC VEHICLES

## #SUSTAINABILITY #GREEN TECHNOLOGIES

PRIMARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS

*India has 9 of the 10 most polluted cities in the world. Vehicular pollution is one of the primary factors behind the worsening air quality of Indian cities. In this context, India is encouraging electric vehicles. In this context, India must prepare itself with better charging infrastructure, battery-making factories and smart incentives for car companies and consumers to go electric.*

## ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EVS)

- An EV operates on an electric motor instead of an internal combustion engine and has a battery instead of a fuel tank.
- EVs have low running costs as they have fewer moving parts and are also environmentally friendly.
- Fuel cost for an EV is approximately 80 paisa per kilometre which is very low compared to petrol, diesel or gas-based transportation.

## CURRENT SITUATION

- According to International Energy Agency (IEA), Electric Vehicle has
  - Global growth rate ~ 75%.
  - Global sale ~ 5.2 million (2018)
  - Market share

| Norway | 46% |
|--------|-----|
| Iceland | 17% |
| China | 4.5% |
| U. S | 2.4% |
| India | 0.1% |

- **Annual sale**
  - China ~ 2.4 million (IEA)
  - India ~ 75, 000 (Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers) [60,000 vehicles are sold every day in India]

## BENEFITS OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE

- **Import bill reduction** ~ $60 billion in diesel and petrol. (Niti Aayog)
- **Environment sustainability**
  - Vehicular emission is major source of urban pollution.
  - Lower GHG emissions
- **Energy intensity reduction**
  - EVs ~ 60% conversion of the grid energy
  - ICE vehicles ~ 20% conversion of petrol energy
- **Indigenization of technology**

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- **Manufacturing hub**
- **Support to the power sector**

### REASONS FOR UNDERDEVELOPED EVS MARKET

- **Absence of robust government policy –** for a long time.
- **High rate of GST on EVs (**now reduced to 5% from 12%)
- **Low participation of OEM**
- **Lack of enabling infrastructure** like public charging stations (only 250 in India)
- **High charging time**
  - Fast charger ~30-45 mins
  - Slow charger ~ 8hrs
- Short range for a single battery charge
- **India does not have any known reserves of lithium and cobalt,** which makes it dependent on imports of lithium-ion batteries from Japan and China.
- **Lack of stable fiscal policy support to EV ecosystem.**
- **Underdeveloped electronics manufacturing ecosystem in India**

### GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

- As a member of *Clean Energy Ministerial*, India aims to achieve a 30 % EVs by 2030.
- The Union Budget 2019-20 has a vision of an **era of electric mobility.**
- **National Electric Mobility Mission Plan –** Target of 7 million sales EV by 2020.
- **National Mission on Transformative mobility and Battery Storage –** Production localization of batteries.
- **FAME phase-II** – Rs 10,000 crore outlay.
- Incentives
  - Income tax rebate on interest on EV loans.
  - GST rate cut - 5% to 12%
- **'Service status'** – *to charging of batteries,* to operate without licence.
- **Solar powered public charging stations** are being rolled out by Discoms like BHEL.
- **Smart cities** would also boost electric vehicles.

### WAY FORWARD

- **Establishing strong linkage between sustainable development and Electric mobility.**

- **Framework to phase out ICE vehicles by 2030.**
- **R&D in battery technology.**
- **Acquiring lithium fields in Bolivia, Australia, and Chile**
- **Incentives:** waiver of road tax and registration fees etc for EVs.
- Promotion of charging infrastructures (solar)
- **Awareness of adverse impact of air pollution.**

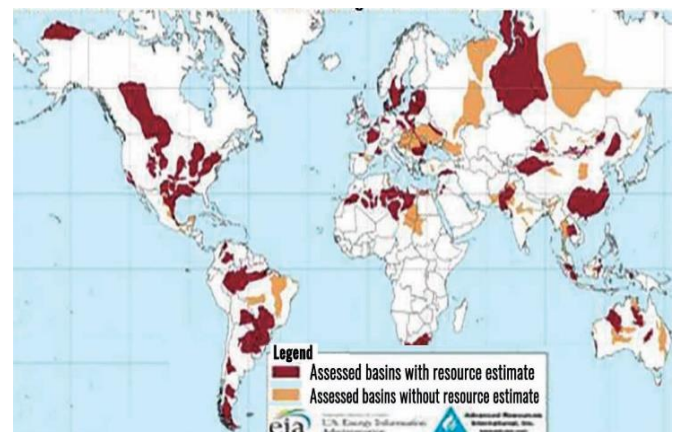# SHALE OIL

#RESOURCE #ENERGY TECHNOLOGY

PRIMARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS

*Cairn Oil & Gas has formed a joint venture with Halliburton, located in the United States, to begin shale exploration in the Lower Barmer Hill formation in Western Rajasthan. In collaboration with Halliburton, the corporation wants to boost the recoverable reserves of its offshore holdings by ten times.*
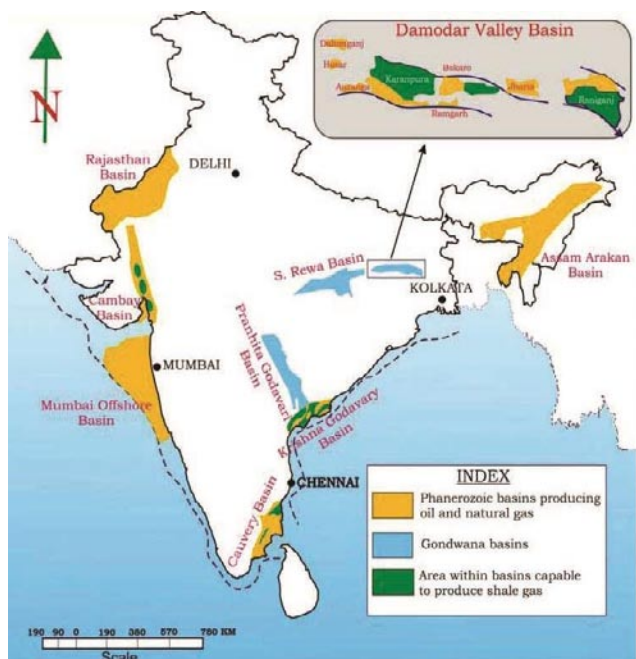
### ABOUT SHALE OIL

- Shale oil is an unconventional oil generated by pyrolysis, hydrogenation, or thermal dissolution from oil shale rock fragments.
- The organic substance inside the rock (kerogen) is converted into synthetic oil and gas via these procedures.
- The refined products may be utilised in the same ways as crude oil-derived goods can.

### SHALE DISTRIBUTION IN WORLD

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### SHALE DISTRIBUTION IN INDIA



Damodar Valley Basin

INDEX
- Phanerozoic basins producing oil and natural gas
- Gondwana basins
- Area within basins capable to produce shale gas

- According to the US EIA 2015 study, India possesses 96 trillion cubic feet of theoretically recoverable shale gas.
- The Cambay, Krishna – Godavari, Cauvery, Damodar Valley, Upper Assam, Pranahita – Godavari, Rajasthan, and Vindhya Basins have been recognised as having recoverable deposits.

### DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SHALE OIL AND CONVENTIONAL CRUDE

- The primary distinction between shale oil and conventional crude is that the former, sometimes known as 'tight oil,' is discovered in smaller quantities and at greater depths than conventional crude deposits.
- Hydraulic fracking is a procedure that involves creating fissures in oil and gas-rich shale to liberate hydrocarbons.

### ABOUT FRACKING

- Drilling deep into the soil before directing a high-pressure water combination at the rock to liberate the gas within is known as fracking.
- Water, sand, and chemicals are pumped under high pressure into the rock, allowing the gas to flow out to the well's head.
- The operation may be carried either vertically or horizontally to the rock layer, which can be utilised to construct new paths for gas escape or to expand existing channels.
- The high-pressure combination fractures the rock, which is known as hydraulic fracturing.



Fracking Hydraulic Fracturing
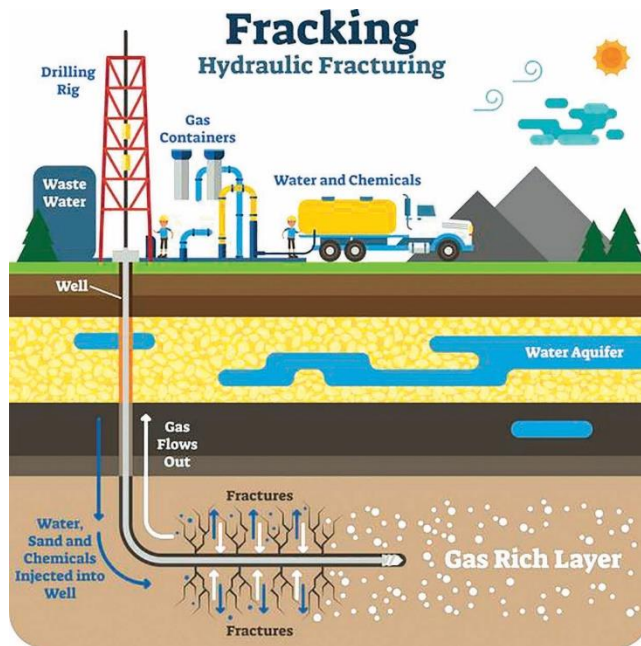
### SHALE PRODUCTION IN THE WORLD

- Russia and the United States are two of the world's top shale oil producers.
- With a boom in shale oil output in the United States, the nation has gone from being a net importer of petroleum to becoming a net exporter in 2019.
- In India, there is currently no large-scale commercial production of shale oil and gas.
- **Environmental concerns:** large water needs for fracking and the possibility for ground water pollution.

## MATOSINHOS MANIFESTO

#SPACE #TECHNOLOGY #POLICY

PRIMARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS

*The European Space Agency's (ESA) council has endorsed a manifesto to accelerate Europe's use of space "to address the critical and unprecedented social, economic, and security issues that Europe and its inhabitants confront." The Council of Ministers unanimously accepted this resolution during the Intermediate Ministerial Meeting in Matosinhos, Portugal, which puts forth a vision for the continent in terms of preserving and increasing its space operations.*

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

**ABOUT MATOSINHOS MANIFESTO**

- The resolution sets forth a vision for the continent in terms of preserving and growing European space operations, was unanimously accepted by the Council of Ministers in Matosinhos.

- The manifesto **identifies three "accelerators"** to help Europe achieve its space goals:
  - The first of these accelerators is for the European Space Agency to begin work on the **"Space for a Green Future" initiative.**

  - The second accelerator is named **"Rapid and Resilient Crisis Response,"** and it aims to help governments respond quickly to crises that affect Europe, such as floods and storms, as well as wildfires.

  - The third accelerator, **"Protection of Space Equipment,"** whose goal is to protect ESA personnel and assets against space debris and space weather.

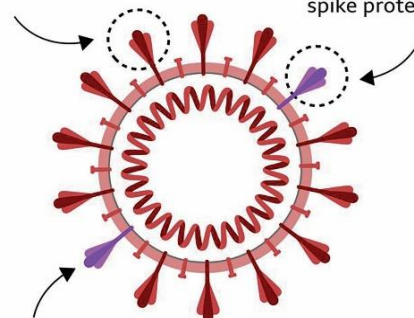

**EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY**

- The European Space Agency (ESA) is an international agency founded in 1975 with the goal of improving Europe's space capabilities.

- Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom are among the organization's 22 members.

- Associate Members include Slovenia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

# OMICRON VARIANT

#SPACE #TECHNOLOGY #POLICY

PRIMARY SOURCE | THE HINDU

*A novel lineage of SARS-CoV-2, designated B.1.1.529, was discovered in samples sequenced and released in the public domain from Botswana, South Africa, and Hong Kong. The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified the variation as a Variant of Concern (VoC), and it has been given the name Omicron.*



The new Covid-19 variant: B.1.1.529
More mutations may make it spread faster

**ABOUT OMICRON**

- WHO has been using Greek letters to refer to the most common coronavirus types, which have complex scientific names.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- Before the newest form appeared in South Africa, it had already utilised 12 letters from the Greek alphabet.

### NOVEL FEATURES OF OMICRON

- The Omicron variation has a substantial number of mutations when compared to other widely circulated variants.

- It has 32 spike protein mutations. Many of these mutations are found in the spike protein's receptor-binding domain, which is necessary for the protein to attach to human receptor proteins and gain access into the cell.

- It may therefore play a key role in the identification of antibodies produced because of a past infection or vaccinations.

- Mutations in the spike protein have been linked to antibody resistance as well as enhanced transmission.

- It is possible that this variety will be more likely to re-infect persons who have established immunity to prior viral types.

- Because some of the first people infected with the variation were also vaccinated against COVID-19, the variant has the potential to produce vaccine-breakthrough infections. (Breakthrough infections refers to a phenomenon when a fully infected person gets infected).

### PREPARATION FOR OMICRON

- More surveillance and genome sequencing efforts are required.

- Rapid sharing of the virus's genomic sequences and epidemiological data to publicly accessible databases.

- Existing public health and social interventions must be improved.

- Increasing vaccination coverage across diverse locations, as well as access to diagnostics, treatments, and support

- Equitable access to vaccinations especially in poorest parts of the world.

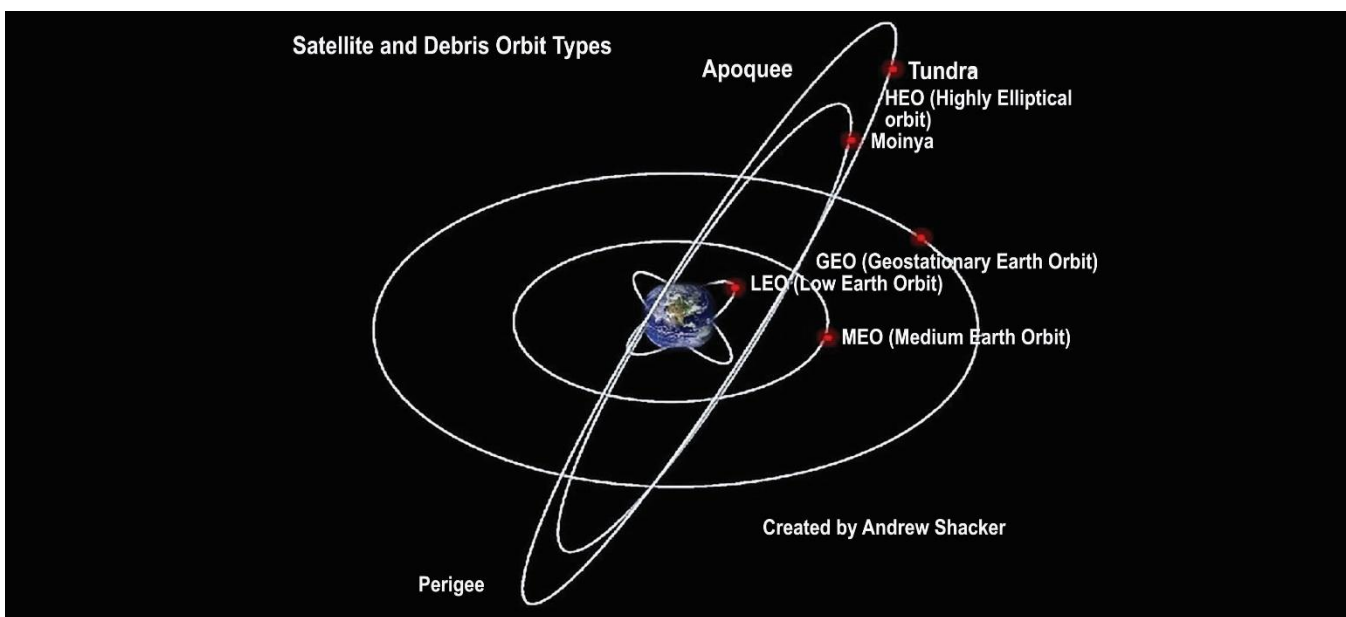# TUNDRA SATELLITE

#SPACE #TECHNOLOGY

**PRIMARY SOURCE** THE HINDU

*Russia has launched a military satellite into orbit that is thought to be part of the Kremlin's early warning anti-missile system. It's possible that this launch may carry a Tundra satellite.*

### TUNDRA SATELLITE

- The Tundra series of satellites, also known as EKS (Edinaya Kosmicheskaya Sistema), is the next generation of Russian early-warning satellites.

- The EKS was first developed in the year 2000.

- In the event of a nuclear war, these satellites will carry a secure emergency communications payload.

- They are launched into **Molniya-orbits,** which are inclined extremely elliptical 12 h orbits, using Soyuz-2-1b Fregat rockets.



Satellite and Debris Orbit Types

Created by Andrew Shacker

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### ABOUT TUNDRA ORBITS

- Tundra orbits are very elliptical geosynchronous orbits with a high inclination (about 63.4°) and a one sidereal day orbital period.
- The phenomenon known as apogee dwell occurs when a satellite in this orbit spends most of its time over a certain location of the Earth.
- This makes spacecraft ideal for communications satellites that serve high-latitude locations.
- A satellite on a Tundra orbit has a closed figure 8 ground track with a smaller loop over the northern or southern hemisphere.
- This distinguishes them from **Molniya orbits,** which have the same inclination but half the period and do not hover over a single location and are meant to serve high-latitude regions.

## MIS-C

### #HEALTH #BIOTECH

PRIMARY SOURCE | DownToEarth

*The World Health Organization (WHO) has issued new treatment recommendations for children who have acquired multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C) because of exposure to the novel coronavirus illness (COVID-19).*

### ABOUT MULTISYSTEM INFLAMMATORY SYNDROME (MIS-C)

- MIS-C is a disorder in which inflammation affects multiple organs of the body. The patient develops cardiac difficulties, and the degree of these problems may influence the treatment plan.
- It is an uncommon yet severe hyperinflammatory syndrome that affects children and adolescents 2-6 weeks following infection with Covid-19.
- It's a potentially fatal disorder in which diverse bodily components, such as the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, skin, eyes, or gastrointestinal organs, become inflamed.
- A fever and a variety of symptoms, such as abdominal (gut) discomfort, vomiting, diarrhoea, neck pain, rash, bloodshot eyes, or feeling unusually weary, are common in children with MIS-C.

### NEUROLOGICAL COMPLICATIONS IN MIS-C

- Young patients with the MIS-C syndrome were shown to have neurological abnormalities that were life-threatening, such as strokes or severe encephalopathy.
- Hallucinations, confusion, speech difficulties, and balance and coordination issues are among neurological symptoms.
- The new data support the idea that the sickness is linked to an inflammatory reaction to the virus induced by an immunological response.

### CAUSES OF MIS-C

- While some experts think that MIS-C is a delayed reaction to the coronavirus, which produces severe inflammation in the body and, consequently, organ damage.
- Others say it is the consequence of the children's immune system producing antibodies against the virus.
- Because not every kid gets MIS-C and the symptoms are so variable, there may be a hereditary component.

### WHO GUIDELINES FOR TREATMENT

- Further treatment with **corticosteroids** is advised for children hospitalised with Kawasaki illness (conditional recommendation, low assurance) (0-18 years of age).
- Corticosteroids are an anti-inflammatory medication. Corticosteroids with supportive care outperformed intravenous immunoglobulin plus supportive care or supportive care alone. The medication also worked well for children with Kawasaki illness and Covid-19.

## HAVANA SYNDROME

### #HEALTH #BIOTECH

PRIMARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS

*The FBI recently said that dealing with "anomalous health occurrences," also known as Havana Syndrome, is a key priority, and that it will continue to investigate the reason and how to safeguard employees.*

### ABOUT HAVANA SYNDROME

- Several US ambassadors and their staff reported symptoms in late 2016 while in Havana, Cuba. They felt nauseated following strange bodily feelings and strange noises.
- The US has even charged Cuba with sonic assaults. But Cuba denied the sonic bombardment and any such disease or condition.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- Many agencies and institutes have been exploring the aetiology of the Havana syndrome for many years. Nausea, severe headaches, fatigue, dizziness, sleep issues, and hearing loss are symptoms. Those who were more severely impacted experienced persistent vestibular and cognitive impairments.

- The Havana syndrome may be caused by **focused microwave radiation,** according to a 2020 National Academies of Sciences research.

### SYMPTOMS OF HAVANA SYNDROME

**A wide array of varying symptoms have been reported by the afflicted**

- **Hearing harsh,** mechanical sounds followed by hearing loss
- Nausea **severe headaches,** ear pain, fatigue, insomnia and sluggishness
- Experiencing **uncomfortable pressure,** like the sensation of driving fast in a car with one window partially down
- **Vertigo,** vision problems and difficulty concentrating

- Pain only in **specific locations**–feeling symptoms in certain hotel rooms or apartments but nowhere else
- Sensation of **being hit** with a beam of energy
- Long-term issues, including severe headaches, **insomnia** and hearing problems in certain instances
- MRIS have **revealed signs of brain damage** without any impact to patients skuits

### ABOUT MICROWAVE WEAPONS

- They are direct energy weapons that shoot sonic, laser, or microwave energy at a target.

- They emit electromagnetic radiation. Electromagnetic radiation causes dizziness and nausea by heating the human body's fluids.

- There are several nations believed to have created these weapons. In 2014, China debuted the Poly WB-1 microwave weapon during an air show. The US has also created a "Active Denial Device", a non-lethal, directed-energy counter-personnel system with a range larger than existing deployed non-lethal weapons.

### CONCERNS

- **American diplomats** and members of their families in Cuba and China suspected to have been **targeted**

- Concerns raised on possibility of damage to the eyes, or **carcinogenic impact** in the long term

- Unclear yet whether **it is fatal** or can cause lasting damage in **human targets**

- The US holds that studies have shown that **natural blink reflex,** aversion response and head turn all protect the eyes from the weapon

### INDIA'S PLANS FOR DIRECTED ENERGY WEAPONS

- DRDO has revealed intentions to create (DEWs) that use high-energy lasers and microwaves.

- The development of DEWs is crucial considering India's deteriorating security situation, particularly its connections with China.

# KAMO'OALEWA

#SPACE

PRIMARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS

*Scientists have discovered a quasi-satellite dubbed Kamo'oalewa that is monitoring the Earth's orbit around the Sun and might be a moon fragment. In 2025, an expedition to gather Kamo'oalewa's samples is expected to commence.*

### ABOUT KAMO'OALEWA

- Kamo'oalewa is a term that is part of a Hawaiian chant and refers to an offspring that journeys on its own. It was discovered in 2016 (via the PanSTARRS telescope in Hawaii).

- It's a quasi-satellite, a space rock that circles the Sun yet stays very near to Earth — around 9 million miles distant in this instance.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- The asteroid is about the size of a Ferris wheel, with a diameter of 150 to 190 feet.

- Scientists have struggled to investigate this quasi-satellite because of its modest size (approximately 50 metres wide), and nothing is known about it so far.

### PART OF EARTH MOON

- It may have split away from the Moon because of a collision, orbiting the Sun instead of the Earth like its parent.

- Kamo'oalewa's reflected light spectrum closely matched lunar rocks from NASA's Apollo missions, indicating that it came from the moon.

- It is in a unique orbit, one that would be uncharacteristic of debris that fell toward Earth from the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter.

- Because there are no other known asteroids with lunar origins, researchers are puzzled how the fragment of moon ended up floating about in space. They did, however, narrow down the era to between 1,00,000 and 500 years ago for the terrible incident.

### ABOUT TROJAN ASTEROIDS

Trojans are a group of asteroids that share an orbit with a larger planet.

# S-400 TRIUMF SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE SYSTEM

#DEFENCE

PRIMARY SOURCE | THE HINDU

- S-400 is among the most advanced air-defence systems in the world. Equipped with four different missiles, it can engage enemy aircraft, ballistic missiles, and Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) planes at 400km, 250km, medium range 120km and short-range 40km.

- It has the capability to engage 80 targets at one time with a response time of 9-10 seconds.

- S-400 deal is important for India from perspective of national security considerations, as it faces new threats from China, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

- It will also offset the air defence capability gaps due to IAF's dwindling fighter squadron strength.

- However, S-400 deal became contentious amid a threat of sanctions under Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) of US.

  o CAATSA was passed in 2017 to ensure that no country can increase military engagement with Iran, North Korea and Russia without facing deterrent punitive action from U.S.

- U.S. has already placed sanctions on China and Turkey for purchase of S-400. India, however, has not backed down in the face of U.S. opposition.

# PROJECT 15B

#DEFENCE

PRIMARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS

*Y 12704 (Visakhapatnam), the lead ship of Project 15B stealth guided missile destroyers being built at Mazagaon Docks Limited (MDL), was delivered to the Indian Navy recently.*

### ABOUT PROJECT 15B

- It is a class of **guided missile destroyers being** build for the Indian Navy.

- The overall indigenous content of the project is 75%.

- This project 15B is a follow-on of the Kolkata class (Project 15A) destroyers commissioned in the last decade.

- Designed by Directorate of Naval Design, Indian Navy's in-house design organisation; and built by M/s Mazagaon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd, Mumbai.

- The four ships are christened after major cities from all four corners of the country viz. Visakhapatnam, Mormugao, Imphal and Surat.

- These ships are equipped with BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles and long-range surface to air missiles.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

# PRACTICE QUESTIONS

## MCQS

**Q.1)** Recently Tundra satellite an early warning satellite is launched in space. It is related to which country?

(a)   USA                    (b)   India

(c)   China                  (d)   Russia

**Q.2)** Matosinhos Manifesto is related to

(a)   Space                  (b)   Biology

(c)   Data security          (d)   Employment

**Q.3)** Consider the following statements regarding fracking:

1.   Hydraulic fracking is a procedure that involves creating fissures in oil and gas-rich shale in order to liberate hydrocarbons.

2.   The operation carried only vertically to the rock layer.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

(a)   1 only                 (b)   2 only

(c)   Both 1 and 2           (d)   Neither 1 nor 2

**Q.4)** Which of the following statements is/are correct?

1.   Solar wind and Solar flares emanates from the Corona of the Sun.

2.   Solar Energetic Particles originate from the edges of the active region where the magnetic field is already open and material can escape directly.

3.   Active sunspot gives rise to more solar flares.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a)   1 only                 (b)   1 and 2 only

(c)   1 and 3 only           (d)   1, 2 and 3

**Q.5)** Which of the following is/are advantages of 5G over 4G?

1.   Higher speed

2.   Reduced Latency

3.   Allowing for a higher number of users to connect simultaneously.

4.   Higher data security

Select the correct option using the code given below:

(a)   1 and 2 only           (b)   1, 2 and 3 only

(c)   1, 2 and 4 only        (d)   All of the above

## DESCRIPTIVE QUESTION

**Q1.**   Q.1) There is a hazard to human health and development posed by antimicrobial resistance (AMR). In order to attain the Sustainable Development Goals, urgent multi-sectoral action is required (SDGs). In the light of given statement write about concern related to AMR and measures to address the issue.

**Q2.**   What can be the application of 5G technologies in healthcare, agriculture and financial sector? illustrate.

**Answers:** *1-d, 2-a, 3-a, 4-c, 5-d*

# HISTORY, HERITAGE & CULTURE

## # GS PAPER (PRELIMS) & GS PAPER I (MAIN)

## SIR SYED AHMAD KHAN

### #PERSONALITIES #MODERN HISTORY

**PRIMARY SOURCE** | **The Indian EXPRESS**

- Syed Ahmed Khan was born in Delhi and educated in the Quran and the sciences including law degree from the University of Edinburgh.
- He was working as a clerk with the East India Company.
- During the 1857 revolt, he was highly affected by the defeat of the Mughal Empire. As a result, he wrote a profound booklet **'Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind' (Reasons for the Indian Revolt of 1857)** which cited British ignorance and aggressive expansion policies as the chief causes of the revolt.
- As he was a scholar of Christianity, he advocated interfaith understanding and wrote a book**, 'Commentary on the Holy Bible'**. He advocated the learning of English.

### EDUCATIONAL CONTRIBUTION

- He stressed on the importance of modern scientific education for Muslims to advance their conditions as he was against superstition and evil customs prevalent in society then. He believed that Muslim society could move ahead only if rigid orthodoxy was abandoned and pragmatism was adopted.
- He set up many educational institutes to propagate education, the most significant being the **Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College (MAOC)** in 1875 which later became the **Aligarh Muslim University**. The MAOC was instrumental in the Aligarh Movement of the 19th century which was an important movement of a renaissance among Indian Muslims.
- He founded the **Scientific Society of Aligarh** modelling it on the Royal Society of England. This society held annual conferences and published and distributed scientific material in English and Urdu.

### POLITICAL CAREER

- He was nominated to the **Viceroy's Legislative Council** in 1878.
- He supported Dadabhai Naoroji and Surendra Nath Banerjee in obtaining representation for Indians in the government and the civil services.
- In 1869, he **received the Order of the Star of India from the British government.**
- Sir Syed **was knighted by the British in 1888.**

### CONTROVERSY

- He was wary of the rise of Indian nationalism as he thought power would pass into the hands of the Hindus alone. He advocated Muslims to have loyalty to the British. In his own words, "we do not want to become subjects of the Hindus instead of the subjects of the people of the Book."
- Due to such ideologies, he is sometimes called as **originator of Two Nation Theory**, however, this is wrong interpretation of his ideas.

## GATKA MARTIAL ARTHHH

### #MARTIAL ARTS #INDIAN CULTURE

**PRIMARY SOURCE** | **THE HINDU**

- Gatka is a traditional martial art (battle technique) form associated with the Sikh gurus. It is believed to have originated when the **6th Sikh Guru Hargobind adopted 'Kirpan' for self-defence during the Mughal era.**
- It includes fighting skills and self-control using sword and sticks.
- It was earlier confined to gurudwaras, nagar kirtans and akharas, but now it finds presence in the sports category after the formation of the **Gatka Federation of India (GFI)** in 2008.
- Today, it is used to showcase self-defence and fighting skills and is open to people of all faiths and communities.

## HISTORY, HERITAGE & CULTURE

# SRINAGAR: NEW CREATIVE CITY

#INDIAN CULTURE

PRIMARY SOURCE | THE HINDU

- UNESCO has designated **Srinagar as a part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN).**

- It is the 6th creative city of India to achieve this feat after Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Varanasi and Jaipur.

- It has joined the club of 295' Creative Cities Network 'in the world.

- In India, creative cities list is prepared and forwarded to UNESCO by Ministry of Culture.

- Srinagar is designated as a creative megacity in the field of crafts and folk trades.

### BENEFITS OF CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK

- Give global recognition to the megacity of Srinagar.

- Help in transnational backing, collaboration with craft universities and' Pitching Craft 'in the form of product creation.

### ARTISTIC FORMS OF SRINAGAR

- **Silverware:** Jewellery, carved utensils, photo frames, show pieces

- **Brassware:** Lamp shades, show pieces, tumblers, cigarette cases etc.

- **Wood carvings and furniture:** Exquisitely carved furniture

- **Shawls**

- **Carpets and rugs:** hand woven woollen and silk & cotton carpets

- **Pashmina**

- **Pheron**

- **Namdas**

- **Naqqashi** worked cloth and garments- kameez, sarees, dress material

- **Silk garments**, sarees

- **Hand woven willow baskets**

- **Papier Mache-** boxes, Christmas decorations, vases

### UNESCO CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK (UCCN)

- It aims to" promote collaboration among metropolises that fete creativity as a strategic factor in their civic development."

- The ideal of Sustainable Development Thing-11 is related to sustainable metropolises and communities.

- The network includes seven creative sectors Crafts and Folk Trades, Media Trades, Film, Design, Gastronomy, Literature and Music.

- Started in 2004.

### METROPOLISES IN INDIA INCLUDED IN UCCN

- Jaipur- Crafts and Folk Art (2015).

- Varanasi-The Creative City of Music (2015).

- Chennai-The Creative City of Music (2017).

- Mumbai-Film (2019).

- Hyderabad-Gastronomy (2019).

- Srinagar- Crafts and Folk Art (2021)

### ABOUT UNESCO

- It is a technical agency of the United Nations (UN).

- It strives to establish peace through transnational cooperation in the fields of education, wisdom and culture.

- It was established in the time 1945 and it is headquartered in Paris (France).

### MAJOR ENTERPRISE OF UNESCO

- Man and Biosphere Program

- World Heritage Program

- Global Geo Park Network

- Network of Creative Metropolises

- Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger

### REPORTS PUBLISHED BY UNESCO

- UNESCO Science Report

- Global Education Monitoring Report

- State of the Education Report in India

# BIRSA MUNDA AND MUNDA REBELLION

#TRIBAL MOVEMENTS #MODERN HISTORY

PRIMARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS

*In an outreach to the tribal community, on Birsa Munda's birth anniversary, Prime Minister announced that the day*

*will be celebrated as **Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas** even as he inaugurated a slew of projects and lauded his contribution to strengthening the freedom movement.*

## ABOUT BIRSA MUNDA

- He was a folk hero and a tribal freedom fighter from the Munda tribe. He is **also known as 'Dharti Aaba' or the Earth Father**. He started anti-British movement in Bihar and Jharkhand during late 19th century.

- He stood firm against missionaries who were belittling tribal life and culture. At the same time, Birsa worked to refine and reform religious practices, discouraged many superstitious rites.

- He brought in new tenets, prayers and worked to restore tribal pride. Birsa impressed upon the Adivasis the importance of **"sirmare firun raja jai" or "victory to the ancestral king"**

- Bisra started a movement called **'Ulgulan', or 'The Great Tumult'.** His struggle against the exploitation and discrimination against tribals led to a big hit against the British government in the form of **the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act being passed in 1908.** The act restricted the passing on of land from the tribal people to non-tribals.

- Birth anniversary of Birsa Munda was observed on November 15th. In recognition of his impact on the national movement, the state of Jharkhand was created on his birth anniversary in 2000.

## MUNDA REBELLION

- It was led by Birsa Munda in the south of Ranchi in 1899-1900.

- The British introduced a feudal zamindari system in the Chhota Nagpur region, **destroying the tribal "Khuntkatti" agrarian system**. The Raj brought in the outsiders — moneylenders and contractors, as well as feudal landlords — who aided the British in their exploitation. The unrelenting missionary activity continued with the active support of the Raj, insulting and interfering with the religious-cultural ethos of Adivasis.

- During the 1880s, Birsa closely witnessed the **Sardari Larai movement in the region**, which demanded the restoration of tribal rights through non-violent methods like sending petitions to the Raj.

- However, the oppressive colonial regime paid no heed to these demands. The zamindari system soon reduced the tribals from the status of landowners to that of labourers. The feudal setup intensified the **forced labour (veth bigari)** in the forested tribal areas. The exploitation of tribals now reached a breaking point.

- The Munda Rebellion is also known as **Ulgulan.**

## OUTCOME

- It forced the colonial government to introduce laws so that the land of the tribals could not be easily taken over by **dikus (Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908).**

- It showed that the tribal people had the capacity to protest against injustice and express their anger against colonial rule.

# RANI GAIDINLIU

#MODERN HISTORY

PRIMARY SOURCE | pib

*Union Home Minister virtually laid the foundation stone for the 'Rani Gaidinliu Tribal Freedom Fighters Museum' in Manipur's Tamenglong district.*

- Rani Gaidinliu belonged to Rongmei Naga tribe of Nagaland and joined the **Heraka religious reform movement** begun by her **cousin Haipou Jadonang,** which sought to standardise the traditional Naga belief systems against the growing influence of Christianity and Vaishnavism.

- Rani Gandiliu's association with Jadonang prepared her to fight the British. After the execution of Jadonang, she took up the leadership of the movement — which slowly turned political from religious.

- Under her guidance, the movement later turned into a political movement seeking to kick the British out from the region.

- She urged the people not to pay taxes, not work for the British and even went underground to lead many attacks on the colonial administration.

- In 1938, the Nikhil Manipur Maha Sabha, the first political party of Manipur during the British colonial rule adopted a resolution to free Rani Gaidinliu from prison.

- She was arrested in 1932 at the age of 16 and sentenced to life imprisonment.

- **Jawaharlal Nehru met her at Shillong Jail in 1937 and gave her the title of Rani.**

# RANI KAMLAPATI AND GOND TRIBE

#MODERN HISTORY #PERSONALITIES
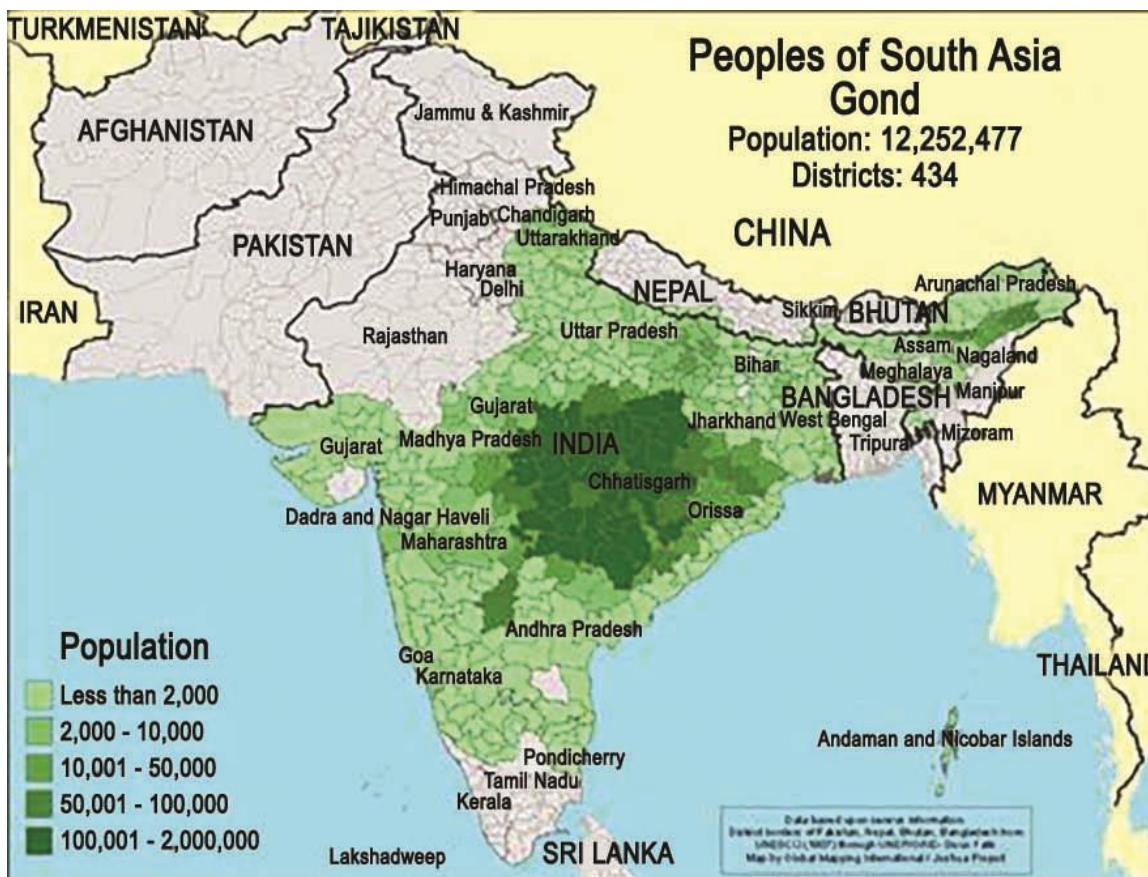
PRIMARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS

*The name of Bhopal's Habibganj railway station has been changed to Rani Kamlapati station. This is to coincide with the inauguration of the station, which has been redeveloped at a cost of around Rs 100 crore with private participation — a first such large-scale PPP model in station redevelopment in India, in the works for the past few years.*

## ABOUT RANI KAMLAPATI

- Rani Kamlapati was the widow of Nizam Shah, whose Gond dynasty ruled the then Ginnorgarh, 55 km from Bhopal, in the 18th century. Nizam Shah built the famous seven-storeyed Kamlapati Palace in her name in Bhopal.

## ABOUT GONDI PEOPLE

- The Gondi are a Dravidian ethno-linguistic group.

- They are one of the largest groups in India. They are spread over the states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Odisha. They are listed as a Scheduled Tribe for the purpose of India's system of positive discrimination.



Peoples of South Asia
Gond
Population: 12,252,477
Districts: 434

Population
Less than 2,000
2,000 - 10,000
10,001 - 50,000
50,001 - 100,000
100,001 - 2,000,000

## GONDS IN MODERN HISTORY

- During colonial rule, the Gonds were marginalized by colonial forest management practices. **The Bastar rebellion of 1910, better known in the tribal belt as the bhumkal,** was a partly successful armed struggle against colonial forest policy that denied the Madia

and Muria Gonds of Bastar, along with other tribes in the region, access to the forest for their livelihoods.

- In the early **1920s, Komaram Bheem,** a Gond leader from Adilabad in Hyderabad state, rebelled against the Nizam and sought a separate Gond raj. It was he who coined the well-known slogan jal, jangal, jameen

## HISTORY, HERITAGE & CULTURE

("water, forest, land") that has symbolized Adivasi movements since independence.

# ONAKE OBAVVA

## #PERSONALITIES #MODERN HISTORY

PRIMARY SOURCE | The Indian EXPRESS

*Karnataka Government has decided to celebrate the birthday of Onake Obavva.*

- She was a woman warrior who **fought the forces of Hyder Ali with a pestle in Chitradurga** in the 18th century. Obavva was the wife of soldier, who was guard of the fort. She killed many soldiers of Hyder Ali's army as they tried to enter the fort.

- Hyder Ali, then ruler of Mysore, had invaded the Chitradurga fort, which was ruled by Madakari Nayaka in the 18th century.

- Obavva is considered to be epitome of Kannada pride and celebrated along with other women warriors of Karnataka like:

  1. **Abbakka Rani:** first Tuluva Queen of Ullal in coastal Karnataka who fought the Portuguese.
  2. **Keeladi Chennamma:** Queen of the Keeladi Kingdom who fought against Aurangzeb.
  3. **Kittur Chennamma:** Queen of Kittur known for 1824 revolt against the British.

# PRACTICE QUESTIONS

## MCQS

**Q.1   Consider the following statements with reference to the Rani Gaidinliu:**

1. The title Rani to Rani Gaidinliu was given by Gandhiji.
2. She organised Naga tribe through political movement for their rights.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a)   1 only                    (b)   2 only
(c)   Both 1 and 2              (d)   Neither 1 nor 2

**Q.2   Consider the following regarding the Gond tribe of India:**

1. Gondi are a Dravidian ethno-linguistic group.
2. These tribal people reside in Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh only.
3. They belong to Particularly Venerable Tribal Groups of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a)   1 and 2 only             (b)   2 and 3 only
(c)   1 and 3 only             (d)   1 only

**Q.3   Traditional art form Gatka is**

(a)   a classical dance form
(b)   Miniature Painting design
(c)   Folk dance of Punjab
(d)   Martial art from Punjab

**Q.4   Which of the following is not a criterion to identify a city under creative city concept of UNESCO?**

(a)   Music                    (b)   Dance
(c)   Craft                    (d)   Financial activities

**Q.5   With reference to the history of India, "Ulgulan" or the Great Tumult is the description of which of the following events?**

(a)   The Revolt of 1857
(b)   The Mappila Rebellion of 1921
(c)   The Indigo Revolt of 1859 - 60
(d)   Birsa Munda's Revolt of 1899-1900

*Answers to above MCQs: 1(b), 2(d), 3(d), 4(d), 5(d)*

# PART TWO

# ETHICS, INTEGRITY & APTITUDE

**Coverage from varied sources**

**ETHICS, INTEGRITY & APTITUDE**

# AN ANALYSIS OF THE ETHICS OF LOCKDOWN

#ETHICS #INTEGRITY #APTITUDE

As COVID-19 is highly contagious, with no established cure, social distancing measures are necessary. However, the high population density and poor socioeconomic conditions in India do not allow easy implementation of social distancing and good hygiene practices. Employing restrictive measures under these conditions is fraught with ethical issues.

Containment measures for epidemics in India are based on the **Epidemic Diseases Act (1897).** However, this Act is more than a century old. It consists of the following four sections: title and the extent, the powers of the state and central Government in implementing measures to contain the disease spread, penalties for violation of the measures, and legal protection to the implementing officers.

This Act lacks description of the duties of the government and rights of the citizens, and a human rights perspective. Moreover, as public health is the responsibility of the state, different states follow different public health Acts; this leads to a lack of coordination in scientific responses in tackling the outbreak. They are also mostly "policing" in nature and deal with controlling and not preventing the outbreak. Other factors that need to be considered in the current scenario (which are lacking in the Epidemic Diseases Act of 1897) are increased urbanization, migration for livelihood, increased population density, extensive air travel as opposed to sea travel, ecological changes, and biosafety lapses. By biosafety lapses, we refer to lapses that may occur during the collection, handling, and storage of infectious samples. Considering all the above, the Epidemic Diseases Act of 1897 is not an appropriate yardstick for ethical analysis of the measures implemented by the Indian Government in the COVID-19 outbreak.

For an appropriate ethical analysis of these measures, we need to view it through the lens of public health ethics. In addition to the four basic principles of ethics (autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice), public health ethics also includes the principles of social justice, solidarity, reciprocity, and accountability and transparency (Indian Council of Medical Research 2017).

Before employing any restrictive measures, the Government should have performed a risk-benefit analysis, including an assessment of the long-term effects on society and the economy, potential harms, and effects on the vulnerable sections of the society. Although the pandemic spread very rapidly, India was affected quite late, and proactive steps could have and should have been taken by the Government. The authorities could have made better arrangements for the vulnerable sections of the society. WHO defines vulnerability as the degree to which a population, individual, or organization is unable to anticipate, cope with, resist, and recover from the impacts of disasters. Social distancing is possible for those with a place to stay, and restrictive measures can be applied to those with adequate food and water supply. The loss of daily wages and accommodation and lack of modes of transport increased vulnerability in these already vulnerable sections of the society, violating the principle of justice. People who were economically backward have been left economically and emotionally destitute. According to Rawls' difference principle, economic inequalities can be tolerated only if they make the least advantaged sections of society as well off as they could possibly be. The lockdown has resulted in quite the reverse. Although it may have protected people from COVID-19, it nevertheless caused more than 300 deaths (reported) from starvation, exhaustion, suicide, and other lockdown-related causes.

Several renowned bioethicists and philosophers consider autonomy to be primus inter pares among the four ethical principles. First, no form of ethics or morality is possible without respect for autonomy or right to self-determination; second, a fundamental requirement for the fulfilment of other principles, like beneficence and non-maleficence, is respect for autonomy. Although the WHO Guidance for Managing Ethical Issues in Infectious Disease Outbreaks allows restrictive measures to be applied in case of pandemics for the benefit of the

community, the restrictions should be least infringing; this is also advocated in the **Syracuse Principles on the Limitation and Derogation Provisions in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**.

Furthermore, certain guidelines should be followed in employing these restrictive measures. The abovementioned WHO guidelines stress on the obligations of the Government toward improving the social and environmental conditions, and the health system and accessibility. They also discuss the importance of engaging in public health surveillance and preventive activities. It is pointless advocating frequent hand sanitization to people who may not have access to clean water or to villagers who must walk miles to fetch water. Moreover, people who live on the footpaths or in slums cannot practice social distancing. The daily wage earners were also adversely affected by the lockdown. If people's autonomy was to be restricted, the Government should have exercised reciprocity. Arrangements should have been made to provide people with a place to stay, clean water, and adequate rations. Lockdown implementation dates should have been announced well in advance allowing people to prepare for the lockdown. Although travel might have increased the spread of the disease, migrants should have been allowed to return to their villages instead of starving on the streets in cities or walking several hundred miles to their villages. The authorities could also have assisted in making necessary arrangements for farmers to harvest and transport their produce.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The guidelines also highlight the importance of community engagement, from the initial stage through the decision-making and implementation, in understanding the perspectives, needs, and requirements of various sections of the society. Community engagement encourages compliance with the lockdown, and this compliance is reflective of the trustworthiness of the system. However, in India, no two-way dialogue was facilitated. Most of the population was unaware of the gravity of the situation. Furthermore, there was no involvement of the vulnerable sections of the society, who were adversely affected by the lockdown, in the decision-making process. Had arrangements been made to involve the community,

explain the magnitude of the problem, address their requirements, and respect their autonomy, compliance with the lockdown would likely have been better. The implementation of the lockdown clearly lacked transparency and accountability.

### IMPLEMENTATION

The guidelines put forth the need for additional safeguards for particularly vulnerable groups. In the current scenario, this also includes the senior citizens. Not only are they particularly vulnerable to the virus but also to other factors. They may be old and living alone; many also suffer from various ailments requiring regular visits to the hospital and nursing care. For them, an adequate supply of food, medicines, and regular access to the hospital become a necessity.

According to the guidelines, the effectiveness of restrictive measures, including isolation, quarantine, travel advisory or restrictions, and community-based measures to reduce contact between people, lies in their acceptance by society, which would again require societal involvement in the decision-making and implementation. Furthermore, implementation of lockdown should be equal for all; it should not differ for some based on their social, political, or economic status, because disobedience by even a few would pose a risk to the rest of the community. In India, while the authorities and police employ stringent measures with the vulnerable sections (like the migrants who were sprayed with disinfectants), people of certain affiliations have been able to conduct marriages and other ceremonies. This violates the principle of social justice.

The guidelines also suggest collaborative networking with other nations affected by the pandemic to understand and learn from their experiences, needs, and the measures employed. A very important lesson can be learnt from how Kerala, a very small state in India, by using a framework of equality, social rights, and public trust, has managed to successfully combat this outbreak. The first few recorded cases of COVID-19 in India occurred in Kerala. Kerala's proactiveness, good healthcare system and contact tracing initiative, appropriate resource allocation, and good community involvement fostered public trust and compliance, allowing them to overcome the situation better and

faster than the rest of the nation. In addition to a good healthcare system, Kerala also has good ground-level democracy (Panchayat system). The panchayat system in India refers to self-governance; it is a system followed at grass-root levels in rural areas. The village panchayats are basic units of the local administration. All posts at the panchayat level in Kerala are filled and have been actively working in a collaborative manner in the panchayat-initiated programs, such as "Ashraya" (which deals with feeding the destitute). These programs were initiated and are being managed by the panchayats, and this has also facilitated them in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

**CONCLUSION**

Although the social distancing measures implemented by the Government of India were partly effective in preventing the spread of the disease, large sections of the population have been adversely affected in the process. Many have been rendered homeless and left stranded in the cities, and the economy has also taken a setback. People who avoided COVID-19, in many instances, succumbed to starvation and the indignity of begging. Ethical implementation of these measures could have made them more effective. Furthermore, social distancing measures have only bought time. COVID-19 is here to stay. An important issue to consider is whether at the end of the lockdown period, our healthcare system will be able to bear the onslaught of COVID-19 victims. Will the gain be proportional to the harm caused by the lockdown? Only time will tell.

# ETHICS, INTEGRITY & APTITUDE

# CASE STUDIES FOR PRACTICE

## MAINS GS PAPER IV

**Case 1:** Mass cheating in examinations is not a recent phenomenon in India. In fact, in recent times it has become organized. Recently Indian and foreign media featured prominently parents and relatives scaling school walls and buildings, to pass answer chits to students taking secondary school examinations in Bihar. Recent topper's scam of Bihar is another blot on Indian education system. It has dented India's Image at global forum. With the advent of technology, it has become more sophisticated. These rackets are run by doctors, teachers, engineers and exam invigilators. Still a stringent law to tackle the menace is a distant dream.

What are the ethical issues involved in the case? Write your stand on the same and suggest measures to tackle the menace.

Cheating in exam is an act of deceiving self and the system. Ethical issues involved are:

- It gives unfair advantage to the one who cheats, thus leading to injustice.
- Others are put to unfair competition. This will tempt them to indulge in cheating behaviour, especially when more value is given to marks today.
- Cheating kills the motivation to work hard. Quality of dedication, perseverance etc. are diluted.
- Dignity and self-respect are lost.
- The habit to cheat continues later in life and results in corruption and administrative inefficiency.
- Will be detrimental to economy and professionalism as inefficient people will join the work force.
- People will lose trust in education system and certification (common good will be destroyed)

Following steps can be taken to control this menace:

- Values like dignity, truthfulness, self-respect, honour, honesty, which are violated by cheating, must be inculcated in students from the very beginning.
- Strict action must be taken against regular offenders and even against those who assist students to cheat.

- Students must be encouraged to acquire knowledge, innovate and not just run before marks.
- Parents should not put pressure on students to race for better marks.
- The exam pattern should be changed to inculcate innovation and creativity among students rather than cramming bookish information. Open book exams can be held at different levels.
- Students must be given freedom to choose the subjects they like, and they must not be forced to study subjects in which they have no aptitude, so that they are not forced to cheat.
- Technological up gradation, strengthening school management, accountability of school authority etc. will also help.

**Case 2:** You have been appointed as the district magistrate (DM) of a region in the eastern part of India. Being a DM, you have the authority to issue arms license (or deny it) to those who apply for it. In last few days, your office is receiving many applications from doctors and businessman for issuing a license for gun. When you enquired into the matter, you found that most of these people are victim of extortion and protection money demanded by the local goons. If not paid, these people are beaten or sometimes even shot. Police is also not doing its part to control the situation.

Explain, what can be the various repercussions of issuing or not issuing the gun license to these people. Also analyse the various repercussions such crimes have on society and economy. What steps you can take as a DM to control the situation?

Issue of arms license is based on degree of perceived threat. It may help in reducing the number of extortion cases as criminals will be deterred. It will, give the Doctors and businessman a sense of safety. It will help them to focus on their work, and not get intimidated by criminals. If they are issued arm license, this situation may be averted. However, issuing more licenses may

open the floodgates for such applications. It may develop a gun-culture in the society. People, instead of having trust on the law enforcement agencies, will try to take law into their own hands.

Such crimes have serious repercussions for society and economy. It instils fear among the law-abiding citizens. Productive capacity of people is seriously affected in environment of fear. Also, many times these people must move out of the state. So, it has bearing on the economy as well. High degree of prevalent crime also prohibits investments in the state. It acts as a deterrent for industries and business to be setup in the state.

Not, issuing of arms license needs to be supplemented by increased law and order condition in the state. Police protection should be provided to those who are under threat. Police should also intensify steps to crackdown on criminals. As a DM, these are some of the steps which I will be taking:

(i) Meeting the concerned senior police officials and appraising them of the situation.

(ii) Informing the concerned ministry through detailed report.

(iii) Intensifying police operations to crackdown on criminal gangs.

(iv) Providing police protection to those receiving threat calls.

(v) Activating local intelligence sources

(vi) Persuading people to register complaint

(vii) Issuing of arms license, in selective cases.

(viii) Assuring people of protection of their life and property.

Such crimes have serious consequences for the society and economy. So, the district administration should put in all efforts to curb it and ensure peaceful environment for people to develop their full potential.

# PART THREE

# ESSAYS

# *of*

# THE MONTH

## Selected essays from Rau's GSI students

## ESSAYS OF THE MONTH

# CLIMATE CHANGE: WHEN HUMANS ARE THE CAUSE, HUMANS MUST BE THE SOLUTION.

## #ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

### SUBMITTED BY: ANKUR PANDEY

*Disclaimer: The viewpoints in the topic are strictly personal of the writer above. The role of Rau's IAS Study Circle is to present the write-up in its original form, hence the study circle neither endorses nor rejects any viewpoint in the submission. The purpose is only to showcase the manner of writing.*

*Therefore, it is the sole responsibility of the reader to use his/her intellect to check the veracity of viewpoints.*

Recent floods in Europe and China, heatwaves in Alaska, cyclones in India, forest-fires in Australia, desertification in Africa, melting of glaciers in Arctic and Antarctica among many others, have raised alarm to act urgently against the increasing incidence of climate related disasters. But who is the culprit for these? Several people say that these incidents, though natural, have increased in intensity and frequency due to climate change.

Though, these incidents are indeed attributed to climate change, the real culprit are human and their insatiable desire. (We will analyse shortly after). Before that we must understand that the term Climate Change, which is discussed in policy circles is very often, came to limelight not very long ago. It was only 30 years before that we acknowledged that Earth is warming and we must cooperate to check the rising temperature. This shared understanding led to the creation of United Nations Framework Convention to Combat Climate Change (UNFCCC).

In this essay, we will understand as to why humans have the principal responsibility for climate change, issues as to why UNFCCC is unable to function effectively, progress made so far, and how humans can arrive at a solution to the problem of climate change and make earth out beautiful home.

Before getting started, what do we mean by climate change? As per UNFCCC, Climate Change refers to long term shifts in temperature and weather pattern. The Earth has witnessed several climate change events in the past as well.

So, why are we concerned now? The concern is because this time, the change in climate is driven by anthropogenic activities and this change is happening very rapidly, hitherto unknown to Earth. As per IPCC, global temperature has increased by 1.1°C from pre-Industrial era (1750's). This has led to drastic change in weather patterns and ecosystems, to the result that today we are witnessing the Sixth Extinction Event.

How can humans change Earth's climate? Is it possible? This question seems outdated and obnoxious, but this question has been validated very recently due to conclusive research.

Innovation, discovery and inventions are the bedrock for human progress. In the middle of 18th century, Industrial Revolution changed the way we live, commute and even think. Production of goods increased rapidly resulting in increase in wealth generation. Taking cue from Britain's success story, other nations also promoted industrialisation in 19th century. The same model was replicated by newly independent countries like India in the 20th century. This rapid industrialisation was fuelled by fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas etc. But at the same time, it was also fuelled by human greed and ignorance.

Large scale release of Greenhouse gases raised the global temperatures. In this backdrop, several nations have agreed to take concrete steps to check this temperature to 2°C, and if possible 1.5°C. This was committed in 2015 Paris Summit of UNFCCC. Six years later, member countries met again in Glasgow to discuss future course of actions. The success of Glasgow will depend on several factors, the most important being

rising above narrow self-interest to take the responsibility for climate change.

Historically, developed countries are the ones who were responsible for emission of greenhouse gases. Climate Justice, based on common but differentiated responsibilities – Respective capabilities (CBDR-RC) should be the guiding principle to tackle this problem.

CBDR-RC requires developed nations to scale down their carbon emissions, finance green transition for developing countries and assisting technology transfer. For these, developed nations need to come out of their small eco-chambers and see the larger picture.

Moreover, behavioural change needs to be promoted. This can be done through awareness generation, providing alternatives and using incentives to nudge the people.

Further, nature-based solutions need to be explored and utilised wherever possible. E.g. – having an urban forest provides a cooling affect and trees reduces the need for air conditioning.

As it is rightly said that "whatever gets measured gets managed", we should invest in continuous data collection and monitoring systems to track the progress. This should be supplemented by better R&D at both national and global level.

Thus, as we have seen, humans are real culprits and only human spirit can make things right. It should be highlighted that "We get what we sow". In this context, India has presented revised NDC targets in terms of "Panchamrit Strategy". Moreover, India has taken the lead in solar energy in the form of International Solar Alliance.

India can and should become a role model to replicate by other developing and least developed countries. Sustainable development must be promoted based on Indian ethos of living in harmony with nature. All of us should take guidance from following wisdom of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore – "The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence."

# HAPPINESS IS WHEN, WHAT YOU THINK, WHAT YOU SAY AND WHAT YOU DO, ARE IN HARMONY.

## #PHILOSOPHICAL

### SUBMITTED BY: ANKUR PANDEY
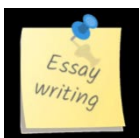
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It is often said that happiness is an end in itself. All human actions and efforts should be directed to maximise his/her happiness. Yet, human history has shown us that pursuit of happiness is a challenging task. Since time immemorial, we have been engaged in brutal wars, battles and blind accumulation of wealth etc. There are clear divisions in terms of haves and haves not. Large scale poverty, acute hunger and lack of any social security is a lived reality for millions.

Recently a movie Jai Bhim, has described the life of a poor tribal girl Singhni. Her husband was killed in police custody. She got no social support from her village. She can't afford health check-ups (She was pregnant). How

can Singhni remain happy after all this? It seems that happiness is a luxury only for the rich and powerful.

In this essay, we will understand the meaning of happiness, state of happiness in India and the world, reasons as to why people are not happy, and lastly some ways to promote and increase the happiness level throughout the world.

Happiness is a state of joy marked by satisfaction and contentment. It is an emotional state in which we feel good and worthy. Though it seems that happiness is an individualistic thing it also has a societal aspect. As it is said that "Good of an individual is contained in Good of All." Similarly, happiness of an individual depends on societal wellbeing as well.

Gross happiness index tries to calculate and compare happiness level of different countries. India ranks poorly at 139th position, while Bhutan is the happiest country in the world.

This is a serious issue as it seems that despite increasing wealth, India's happiness levels are not increasing. Why is this so? Firstly, as we have previously discussed, pursuit of happiness is a challenging task. Different people have different idea of happiness. As it is said that we are living in an age of "Guided Missiles and Unguided Humans." Thus, people are not seeking happiness because they are not on the right path. [We will later discuss what is the right path.]

Secondly, at the societal level, we have a narrow conception of good life in which happiness is equated with more and more accumulation of wealth and resources. This accumulation is an endless process and never stops.

Thirdly, values are declining all around. Indifference and intolerance have promoted hate, jealousy etc. Along with greed, tense negative emotions hinder us from attaining happiness. This was also said by Buddha – "Desire is the root cause of suffering."

Fourthly, basic necessities have to be fulfilled. One cannot seek happiness when basic survival is at stake. In Maslow's theory of Needs, the highest need is self-actualisation. In other words, reaching one's highest potential is true happiness.

Now, let us chart a roadmap to promote broad based and sustainable happiness in the society. At the fundamental level, there is a need to promote right conception of life. This may be done through value-based education, sports, highlighting right role models etc. This is vital to move on the right path to attain happiness.

After understanding the right path, there is a need to be courageous. There should be a wholesome character and a person should reflect integrity. This is essential because we will not be happy if our actions are not aligned with our values. Inner dissonance will kick in and make us feel sad. Let us understand this through some examples –

Ashoka understood the futility of war and later denounced violence after the Kalinga war. He did not stop there. He aligned his actions with Dhamma by spreading the message of love and brotherhood through rock edicts and appointment of special officers. This was the secret of happiness for Ashoka and that's why we call him "The Great".

On the other hand, take the case of corporates. Companies which exhibit double standards in their way of functioning as against their stated vision are destined to suffer. E.g. – Chanda Kochhar case, Vijay Mallya etc.

There is also a societal role in promoting happiness. Community support is essential for promoting happiness. Moreover, Governance should be effective and work to achieve the constitutional goals of justice, equality and fraternity. Investment in health and inclusive education will prepare individuals to reach their highest potential. Further, there should be a social ecosystem in which everyone is given opportunity to express himself/herself and attain happiness. Thus, there needs to be clean and safe environment to live, jobs for everyone and respect towards everyone (social justice).

India is in a phase of transition which seems to be full of contradictions and paradoxes. Despite great strides in food production, India still faces serious issues of hunger. Notwithstanding the rise in GDP, the gaps between haves and have nots keep expanding.

But at the same time, it is important to understand that India is transforming fast. As the Prime Minister has said, we need exponential leap and not incremental steps.

—— ESSAYS OF THE MONTH ——

This should be the nation's spirit which is preparing for a larger role in the global arena.

Every Indian should understand his/her role in nation building and promote well-being of all. Only then can Singhni and her upcoming child can aspire for happiness.

Thus, we should promote wellbeing of others and look inwards to remain happy. We should be guided by following message of Swami Vivekanand – "Service to Man is service to God."

# VIRTUE IS WISDOM

## #PHILOSOPHICAL

### SUBMITTED BY: TANUJ KOTHARI
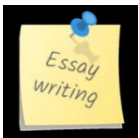
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*Therefore, it is the sole responsibility of the reader to use his/her intellect to check the veracity of viewpoints.*

"The fool doth thinks he wise, but a wise man knows himself to be a fool." - William Shakespeare

Wisdom is not inherent in a person; it is a burgeoning product of the experiences which a man encounters through his interaction with society. Virtues develop because of a person's experiences. These virtues set the path towards the treasures of wisdom.

William Harvey considers society as 'Sui Generis'. He brings out analogy of society as a social organism. Culture is the blood of society. Virtues are shaped by the experiences of a person embedded in his culture. Virtues develops morals and values which further acts as norms of the society shaping its folklores and moores.

"Wisdom can be acquired by right knowledge." – Aristotle

Aristotle believes that knowledge is the sole harbinger to attain wisdom and he further emphasises that not just any knowledge, but good knowledge is the path bearer to the high morals and virtues. On the other hand, bad knowledge can lead to colossal devastation by infiltrating the virtues of society.

How does, virtues shape culture? Virtues evolve due to long emphasised, socially accepted practices and ethos which merges in the ethnicity and later reflects in the culture of a civilisation over a period. Virtues evolve with time and takes reformed shapes in different cultures.

The early civilizations such as Indus Valley Civilization had their own set of practices and norms. Their life was much in tandem with nature. Nature was worshipped. Forces of nature were personified into Sun God, Water God, Fire God, River God etc. It was upon their wisdom not to bring any kind of change in the working of forces of nature. With emergence of new technology such as discovery of copper and making of plough; they started to become self-sufficient in their food requirements. Virtues of society transformed from personification of Gods to worshipping the 'Mother Earth'. Wisdom took new shape.

Further in Vedic Age, discovery of iron led to revolution in the emergence of new technology. It shaped the world from hunters & food gatherers to emerge into a Global village. The rise of 'Jana' into 'Janapads' and later into 'Mahajanpads'. The virtues of society took shape at each stage.

"True wisdom lies in the complete knowledge and consciousness of the actions done by a person." – Gautam Buddha.

Buddhism through its 'Ashtanga Marg' had an important role to play in shaping the virtues of the ancient culture. Buddhism talked about Right Faith and Right Knowledge. It talked of high morals, practice of non-violence and attaining highest state of mind through Nirvana. Overall,

it tried to awaken the consciousness of the society to shape the highest virtues.

Jainism on similar lines, talked about Right Knowledge, Right Belief and Right conduct. These principles shaped the virtues of the society. These gave a chance to the oppressed section of society to have an equal status with equal opportunities. Wisdom was the ultimate goal through practice of these virtues. Wisdom was defined as 'Self Liberation' from the evils which reside inside the person.

Ashoka conquered length and breadth of territories across North-South & East – West, after the Kalinga war. But at what cost? Massacred soldiers butchered dead bodies, orphaned children, widowed ladies and a kingdom in perils. It was the awakening of the virtues which led to self-realization and wisdom sprouted from the seed of virtues.

Virtues have a deep impact on the society. Kindness is considered as biggest virtue. A kind heart is comparable to none. Similarly, it is said 'Honesty is the best policy'. The social structure is very much dependent on the bedrock of moral ethos. A society whose people have sympathy and kindness; chivalry and honesty are the one on the path towards progress. Wisdom will certainly prevail over the minds of people. Foresight results in less crimes, high social solidarity, feeling of oneness, respect of an individual. These virtues lead to a society oriented towards shared values and collective effort towards a common goal. Such a society is the flag bearer of utopian world, rising towards prosperity.

Virtues if not channelized properly in the heart of people could bring devastating outcomes. Wisdom if lost can cause destruction and wreak havoc. Virtues hold the morals which acts as conscience keeper of the society. If morals are lost, greed for possession of resources emerges. Society develops a tendency of capturing more power. A power-hungry state rises, authoritarian regimes are formed. History has instances of how lack of virtues resulted in World Wars and gave rise to evil ideas of Nazism and Fascism. When virtues are lost, could the leaders of society can be said to be wise? Hitler and Mussolini created history. But it rests upon the wisdom of a society to draw parallels and find if the virtues laid down were progressive or not.

With the establishment of United Nations, once again virtues were laid emphasis on. The consciousness of the society was restored. It did very well in promoting peace and prevented a Third World War. Virtues are certainly the principles of wisdom. However, since in each era virtues constantly take new forms. There is always a likelihood of clashes of virtues. The Cold War between the erstwhile USSR and United States was a war of ideology. Virtues were at loggerheads of both the groups. Society faced the consequences. At such a time, the idea of non-Alignment was an example of amicable wisdom shrouded by virtues such as non-violence and Panchsheel.

Various historians and philosophers have laid down that society has been divided into haves and have-nots. Karl Marx is the major proponent of this theory of class divide. He foresees violent revolution which will establish an egalitarian world order and will give rise to a utopian society. His idea of 'Communism' is very well revered in many political institutions.

Marx talks about the virtues in terms of class consciousness. He sees society is driven by false class consciousness and the Lumpen Proletariat are being suppressed by the Elite Bourgeoisie. True awakening of society is yet to happen, and false virtues are not letting the rise of wisdom. He predicts a violent revolution which will bring true class consciousness and setting of right ethos, morals and virtues in the society. According to Marx, true wisdom lies in Communism.

French Revolution ushered the virtues such as Equality, Liberty, Fraternity which are now the eminent core principles of democratic governments around the world. Wisdom is the ultimate objective these states want to achieve through these virtues. The Preamble to the Constitution of India also enshrines these ethos and virtues with its ultimate goal is to be a welfare state.

Similarly, fundamentals duties in the Indian Constitution also embarks on virtues such as – 'awakening of scientific temper' and 'promoting feeling of common brotherhood'. These are meant to inculcate virtues of highest order to awaken the sense of wisdom which should prevail in a society.

Freedom struggle of India is another story of virtues. Be it principles of Satyagraha and Non-violence of Gandhi or

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the virtues of Rabindranath Tagore to spread rationality. It led to awakening of society and brought Indians under the ambit of feeling of Nationalism. The virtues of equal land rights and Bhoodan Movement of Vinobha Bhave, the virtue of equal right of education to girls and the rise of Satyashodak Samaj are some of examples of the right virtues which could lead to progress of society. Virtues are the path which our constitution makers have embedded in Constitution so that society could reach to collective wisdom.

In the contemporary world, virtues are eminent in the fast-changing society. In the age of Fourth Industrial Revolution, our virtues have taken a turn. With the emergence of Hitler, Nazism was on rise but with WW-II story of Nazism ended and virtues turned back. A new story of 'Socialism' was being written. Virtues of Socialist society was shaping the world and India. With fall of USSR these virtues also shredded. India in 1991 post LPG Reforms, shifted to Liberalism. Virtues again turned tide. US was capitalising with new World order. With 2008, Financial Mortgage Crisis, Liberalism also waved and virtues from there are shaping into a new world order.

The future course of action will decide the modern virtues which will head towards a new set of Wisdoms. However, so far, we have been clear on the fact, that our wisdom is a product of virtues shaped around in the fabric of time, era and culture.