



**VEDHIK**  
**IAS ACADEMY**  
The New Learning Mantra

ISSUE NO.2

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

DECEMBER 2021



FOR CIVIL SERVICES PRELIMINARY, MAINS, STATE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND ALL COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS UNDER UPSC, SSC AND STATE PSCs

petition seeks removal of articles relating to a criminal case  
to privacy is a fundamental right and it also includes the right to be forgotten; the  
country said. highlighted  
online articles related to their arrest in a 2002 case, from which they were acquitted in 2016.  
The petition argued that even though the business had been honoured the c



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A still life composition of historical artifacts. In the foreground, a large, dark brown telescope stands vertically on the left. A rolled-up scroll in reddish-brown leather lies horizontally in the middle ground. Below the scroll, a portion of an old map with a grid is visible. In the foreground, a metal ring and a chain are scattered on the map. The background is a textured, brown surface with faint, dark patterns. The text "HISTORY - ARTS AND CULTURE" is overlaid in the center in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

# HISTORY - ARTS AND CULTURE





**CHAR DHAM**

**DURGA PUJA CONFERRED WITH INTANGIBLE**

**CULTURAL HERITAGE TAG**

**NAMDA CRAFT**

**KASHI VISHWANATH CORRIDOR**

**PAIKA REBELLION TO BE IN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS**

**V D SAVARKAR**

**DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF GOA'S**

**LIBERATION DAY CELEBRATED**

**RAMPA REBELLION**

**CHAR DHAM MAHAMARG VIKAS PARIYOJANA**



# CHAR DHAM

The Char Dham is a group of four pilgrimage sites in India. According to Hinduism, pilgrimage to Char Dham - Badrinath, Dwarka, Puri and Rameswaram help achieve moksha (salvation).

## JAGANNATH TEMPLE, PURI

- PRINCIPAL DIETY: Shri Krishna, worshiped as Lord Jagannatha.
- NOTABLE FEATURE: Worship Goddess Subhadra, sister of Lord Krishna along with her brothers, Lord Jagannatha and Lord Balabhadra.
- PATRONAGE: Raja Choda Ganga Deva and Raja Tritiya Ananga Bhima Deva.

## RAMESWARAM TEMPLE, RAMESWARAM

- PRINCIPAL DIETY: Lord Shiva, worshiped as Sri Ramanatha Swamy in the form of a Linga.
- NOTABLE FEATURE: One of the twelve Jyotirlingas.
- PATRONAGE: King Kizhavan Sethupathi or Raghunatha Kilavan

## DWARAKADHEESH TEMPLE, DWARKA

- PRINCIPAL DIETY: Trivikrama form of Vishnu depicted with four arms, worshiped by the name Dwarkadhish, or 'King of Dwarka'.
- NOTABLE FEATURE: Chalukya style of architecture.
- PATRONAGE: Vajranabh, the great grand son of Krishna (Hindus beliefs)

## BADRINATH TEMPLE, BADRINATH

- PRINCIPAL DIETY: Lord Vishnu.
- NOTABLE FEATURE: Badrinath Dham only remains open for pilgrims' darshan from April to October each year, while the three other Dhams remain open throughout the year.
- NOTABLE FEATURE: Badrinath Dham only remains open for pilgrims' darshan from April to October each year, while the three other Dhams remain open throughout the year.



# DURGA PUJA CONFERRED WITH INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE TAG

UNESCO conferred Durga Puja in Kolkata, one of largest cultural carnivals and street art festival of the country with Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

## ABOUT CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage compiled 2 lists viz. Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. The Union Ministry of Culture has appointed the Sangeet Natak Akademi, an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Culture, as nodal office for matters relating to the intangible cultural heritage including for preparation of the nomination dossiers for the Representative List of UNESCO.

				
<p><b>RAMLILA</b></p>	<p><b>KUMBH MELA</b></p>	<p><b>CHHAU DANCE</b></p>	<p><b>VEDIC CHANTING</b></p>	
<p>The traditional performance of Ramayana performed across North India during the festival of Dussehra. Most representatives are those performed in Satna, Vrindavan, Varanasi, and Ramnagar.</p>	<p>The festival of a sacred pitcher where the pilgrims bathe or take a dip in the sacred river</p>	<p>A tradition from eastern India that enacts episodes from epics including the Mahabharat and Ramayana local folklore and abstract themes. It is closely connected to the regional festivals specifically to the Chitra Parva</p>	<p>The tradition of Vedic chanting, chanted during the sacred rituals and recited daily by the Vedic communities known not only for the rich content of its oral literature but also for the indigenous techniques employed by the Brahmin priests.</p>	
				
<p><b>KOODIYATTAM</b></p>	<p><b>RAMMAN</b></p>	<p><b>MUDDIYETT</b></p>	<p><b>KALBELIA</b></p>	<p><b>DURGA POOJA</b></p>
<p>A Sanskrit theatrical tradition practiced in Kerala, traditionally performed in theatres called as Kuthambalams located in Hindu temples</p>	<p>A religious festival in honour of the tutelary God, Bhumiya Deva practiced in the villages of Saloor-Dunra in the State Uttarakhand. Each of the caste and occupational groups has distinctive roles in the festival</p>	<p>A ritual dance drama from the state of Kerala based on a mythological tale of the battle between Darika - the demon and Goddess Kali</p>	<p>A folk song and dance form of Rajasthan. 'Khanjar' percussion instrument and 'Poongi', a wood wing instrument are used during the performance. Kalbelia songs disseminate mythological knowledge through stories. At times, the lyrics are spontaneously composed and improvised during the performance.</p>	<p>Durga Pooja, also known as Durgotsava or Sharodotsava, is an annual Hindu festival celebrated in the eastern Indian states. The festival observed in the Indian calendar month of Ashwin celebrates the victory of Hindu goddess Durga over Mahishasur.</p>
				
<p><b>BUDDHIST CHANTING</b></p>	<p><b>SANKIRTANA</b></p>	<p><b>TRADITIONAL BRASS &amp; COPPER CRAFT</b></p>	<p><b>YOGA</b></p>	<p><b>NAWRUZ</b></p>
<p>The sacred texts chanted by the Buddhist lamas (priest) in the Ladakh region. Each of the Buddhist sects has several forms of chanting</p>	<p>Includes a set of arts performed to mark religious occasions and various stages in the life of the Vaishnava people of the Manipur plains.</p>	<p>The craft of the Thalheras of Jandiala Guru constitutes the traditional techniques of manufacturing brass and copper utensils in Punjab.</p>	<p>The art of unifying the mind with the body and soul for greater spiritual, mental, and physical well-being. It consist of a series of poses, meditation, controlled breathing, word chanting etc.</p>	<p>Nowruz is the Iranian New Year, also known as the Persian New Year, which begins on the spring equinox, marking the first day of Farvardin, the first month of the Iranian solar calendar. It is celebrated worldwide by various ethnolinguistic</p>



## NAMDA CRAFT

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship launched a pilot project to revive the Namda craft of Kashmir.

### ABOUT PILOT PROJECT FOR NAMDA CRAFT

- ❖ COMPONENT: Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 3.0
- ❖ SIGNIFICANCE: Drastic decline in exports of Namda craft by 100% between 1998 and 2008 due to lack of skilled manpower and low availability of raw material.
- ❖ OBJECTIVE: Enhance the skills through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
- ❖ MAJOR MARKETS: Europe and Japan.



### ABOUT NAMDA CRAFT

- ❖ Rug made of sheep wool using felting technique instead of normal weaving process.
- ❖ Used to make mattresses and bed covers.
- ❖ Predominantly practiced in Jammu and Kashmir

#### SHRI KASHI VISHWANATH MANDIR PARISAR

A shaded colonnade that surrounds the temple, providing people with shelter within the Mandir Parisar

#### MANDIR CHOWK

#### YATRI SUVIDHA KENDRA

A place for pilgrims to leave their footwear and other belongings

#### VIEWING GALLERY

An elevated courtyard atop a heritage structure, which offers a vista of the River Ganga

#### GYANVAPI MASJID

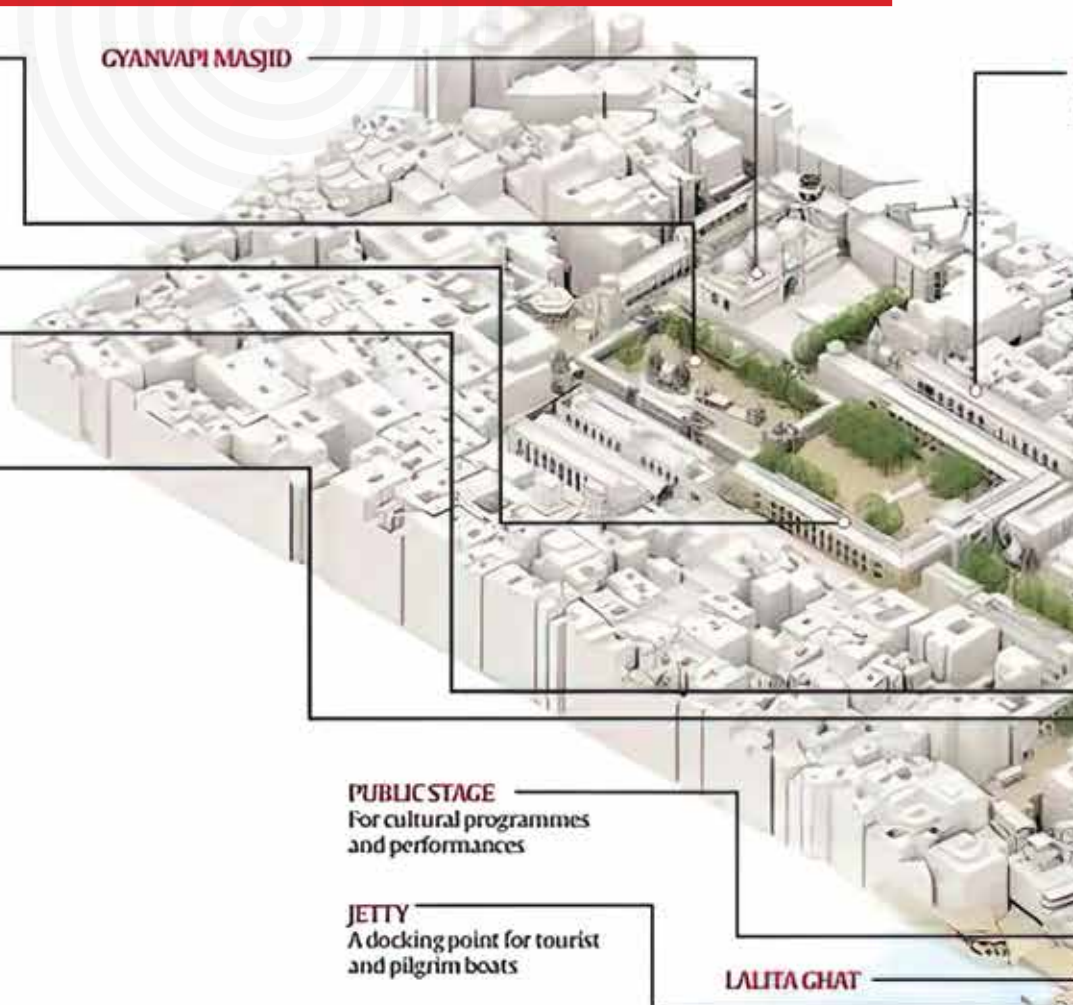
#### PUBLIC STAGE

For cultural programmes and performances

#### JETTY

A docking point for tourist and pilgrim boats

#### LALITA GHAT



# KASHI VISHWANATH CORRIDOR

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the 400 metre long Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in Varanasi connecting the ancient temple dedicated to Lord Shiva to the banks of the Ganges.

## ABOUT KASHI VISHWANATH TEMPLE

- PRINCIPAL DIETY: Shri Vishwanath and Vishweshwara (Vishveshvara or Vishveshvur)
- NOTABLE FEATURE: One of the 12 Jyotirlingas, the holiest of Shiva Temples.
- PATRONAGE: Maratha ruler, Ahilya Bai Holkar of Indore, 1780. (CURRENT STRUCTURE)

## HIGHLIGHTS OF PM SPEECH AT EVENT

### BATTLE BETWEEN SALAR MASUD AND RAJA SUHALDEV

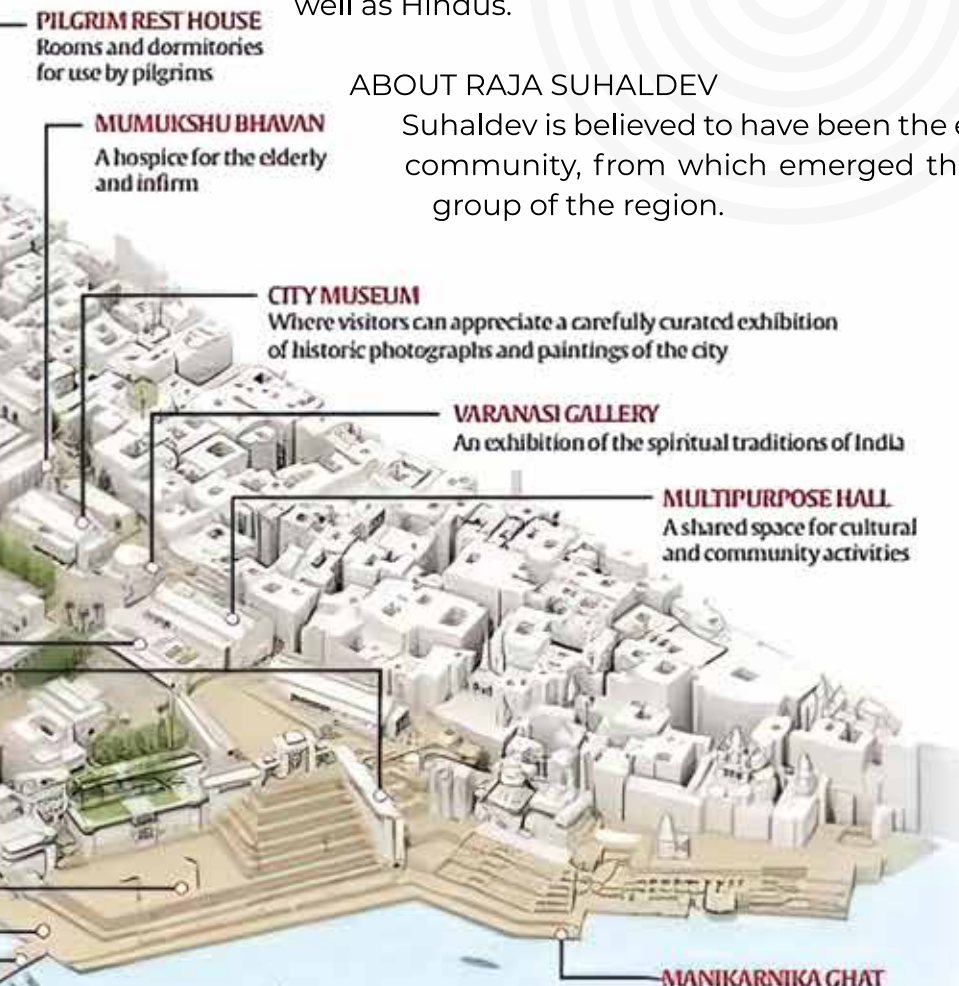
- YEAR: 1034 CE
- BELLIGERENTS: Salar Masud was also known as Ghazi Mian and Raja Suhalddev.
- END RESULT: Masud was wounded by an arrow and succumbed to death.

## ABOUT SALAR MASUD

A 12<sup>th</sup> century warrior, Salar Masud was the nephew of the 11<sup>th</sup> century Turkic invader, Mahmud of Ghazni. Salar Masud accompanied Mahmud in all his campaigns, including the expedition to Somnath in Kathiawar. The most comprehensive source of information about Ghazi Mian is the Mirat-e-Masaud (Mirror of Masaud), a 17<sup>th</sup> century Persian hagiography written by Abdur Rahman Chisti, a Sufi saint of the Chisti order. His tomb at Bahraich in Uttar Pradesh stands as a place of pilgrimage for a large number of Muslims as well as Hindus.

## ABOUT RAJA SUHALDEV

Suhalddev is believed to have been the eldest son of the king of the Bhar community, from which emerged the Pasi community, a Dalit caste group of the region.





## RAJA CHAIT SINGH

By the late 18th century, Benaras had declared independence from the Nawab of Awadh. In 1771, Maharaja Chait Singh succeeded to the throne of Banaras with the help of British authorities. Two years later, the Maharaja transferred the domain to the East India Company under the control of Hastings. Hastings pressed Maharaja Chait Singh to make additional revenue payments and supply troops to fight the Mysore War against Hyder Ali in 1778 and 1779. When Singh failed to comply, Hastings marched to Benaras with his troops to confront the king. Several of Hastings' men were killed in the conflict and, left with no other option, the Governor-General was forced to retreat.

## RANI BHABANI

Rani Bhabani from Bengal was instrumental in the development of the city. Bhabani was married to Raja Ramkanta Ray, the zamindar of the Natore estate in Rajshahi (present day Bangladesh). After the death of her husband in 1748, the zamindari passed on to the hands of Bhabani, making her one among the very few women zamindars of the time.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

- ✿ Bhabani is remembered most for her philanthropic efforts.
- ✿ Built several schools across Rajshahi district and offered a number of scholarships.
- ✿ Built more than 350 temples and guesthouses across different parts of the country.
- ✿ Invested heavily in roadways and water tanks.
- ✿ Built the Durga Kund Mandir in Varanasi.
- ✿ Built a complex consisting of a dozen temples in Baronagar in Murshidabad in 1755.

## PAIKA REBELLION TO BE IN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

*The Union Culture Minister reiterated the position of ICHR referring to 1817 Paika rebellion of Odisha. The Indian Council Of Historical Research (ICHR) earlier opined that Paika rebellion could not be called the first war of Independence. However, from a historical point of view, 'Paika Bidroha' set off in March 1817 and continued until May 1825, had set an example for the classes as well as the masses in India to follow later on.*

## ABOUT PAIKA REBELLION (1817)

- ✿ Paiks are traditional land-owning militia of Odisha recruited by kings in Odisha from a variety of social groups to render martial services in return for rent-free land (nish-kar jagirs) and titles.
- ✿ The Raja of Khurda and their warlords Paikas lost political significance following the expansion of the East India Company towards Odisha in 1803.
- ✿ The Walter Ewer Commission set up by the East India Company recommended for abolishing proprietary rights over the hereditary rent-free lands granted to the Paikas.
- ✿ Bakshi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar Mohapatra Bharamarbar Rai, the military chief along with peasants and disbanded Zamindars rebelled against the East India Company with the support of King Khorda Mukund Dev II.
- ✿ Other causes include rise in the price of salt, abolition of the cowrie currency for payment of taxes and an overtly extortionist land revenue policy.



- ✎ The East India Company suppressed the Paiks AND later acceded to certain demands of Paiks, namely over arrears due to Company, land revenue assessments, confiscation of lands etc.

## NATIONALIST MOVEMENT OR A PEASANT REBELLION?

The Paika Rebellion is one among the peasant rebellions that took place in India when the British East India Company was expanding its military enterprise. Because these uprisings violently clashed with European colonialists and missionaries on many occasions, their resistance can also be seen as the first expression of resistance against colonial rule — and therefore considered to be “nationalist” in nature.”

# V D SAVARKAR

## ABOUT V D SAVARKAR

- ✎ BORN: May 28, 1883, Nashik.
- ✎ KNOWN FOR: Architect of Hindutva ideology.

## AFFILIATION WITH ORGANISATIONS

- ✎ Founded Mitra Mela in 1904 at London as a revolutionary organisation.
- ✎ Founded Abhinav Bharat Society in 1904 at Pune along the lines of Young Italy.
- ✎ Founded Free India Society in 1905 at London as an intellectual grouping of Indian students in England which later became a revolutionary outfit committed to obtain the independence of India from British rule.
- ✎ Joined Swaraj Party founded by Bal Gangadhar Tilak.
- ✎ Served as a President of Hindu Mahasabha from 1937 - 1943.

## BELIEF SYSTEM

- ✎ Believed and advocated armed struggle against the British colonial rule
- ✎ Propagated boycotting foreign goods and spread the idea of Swadeshi
- ✎ Championed atheism and rationality
- ✎ Disapproved orthodox Hindu belief system
- ✎ Worked towards abolishment of untouchability

## NOTABLE WORKS

- ✎ Moplah Rebellion and the Transportation
- ✎ The Indian war of independence, 1857
- ✎ Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu?

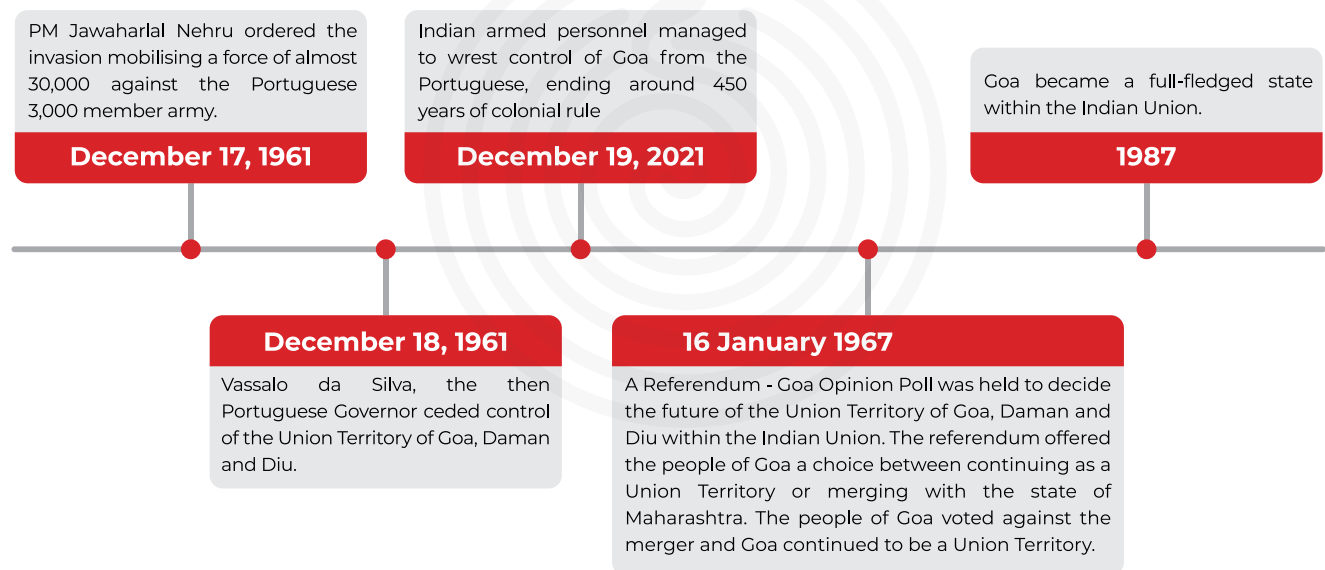
# DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF GOA'S LIBERATION DAY CELEBRATED

On the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Goa from Portugal in 1961, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a raft of development and public work projects and felicitated freedom fighters and veterans of Operation Vijay, the military action in 1961 by which India liberated the territories of Goa, Daman and Diu from Portuguese rule.

## ABOUT OPERATION VIJAY

- 🚫 **NATURE:** Armed action carried out by the Indian Armed Forces on December 19, 1961 to annex the then Portuguese Indian territories of Goa, Daman and Diu to the Republic of India
- 🚫 **BELLIGERENTS:** India and Portugal
- 🚫 **RESULT:** Ended 451 year Portuguese rule over Goa in 1961 and placed Goa under military administration headed by KunhIRaman Palat Candeth as Lieutenant Governor.

## TIMELINE



## RAMPA REBELLION

The State Government of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana recently commemorated the Rampa Rebellion.

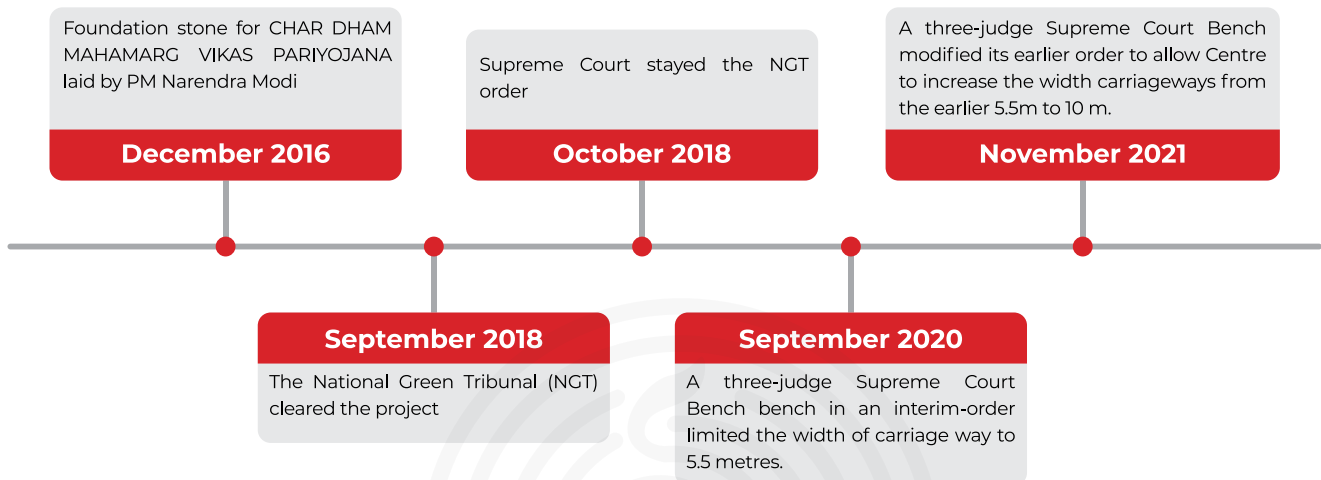
## ABOUT RAMPA REBELLION (August 1922 - May 1924)

- 🚫 **NATURE:** Militant guerrilla warfare attacking Police Stations and colonial establishments.
- 🚫 **CAUSE:** 1882 Madras Forest Act. The Act severely restricted the free movement of the tribal community within their own forests with the community was unable to fully carry out the traditional Podu agricultural system, which involved shifting cultivation.
- 🚫 **PLACE:** Godavari Agency of Madras Presidency
- 🚫 **NOTABLE LEADER:** Alluri Sitaram Raju and Kinaram Bheem
- 🚫 **RESULT:** Raju was captured by police forces, tied to a tree, and shot by a firing squad.

## CHAR DHAM MAHAMARG VIKAS PARIYOJANA

The Supreme Court allowed widening of three hill stretches in Uttarakhand — Rishikesh to Mana, Rishikesh to Gangotri and Tanakpur to Pithoragarh – forming part of the Chardham Mahamarg Vikas Pariyojna agreeing with security needs highlighted by the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

**OBJECTIVE:** Develop and widen 900-km of national highways connecting the holy Hindu pilgrimage sites of Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri, and Yamunotri



### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HIGH POWERED COMMITTEE

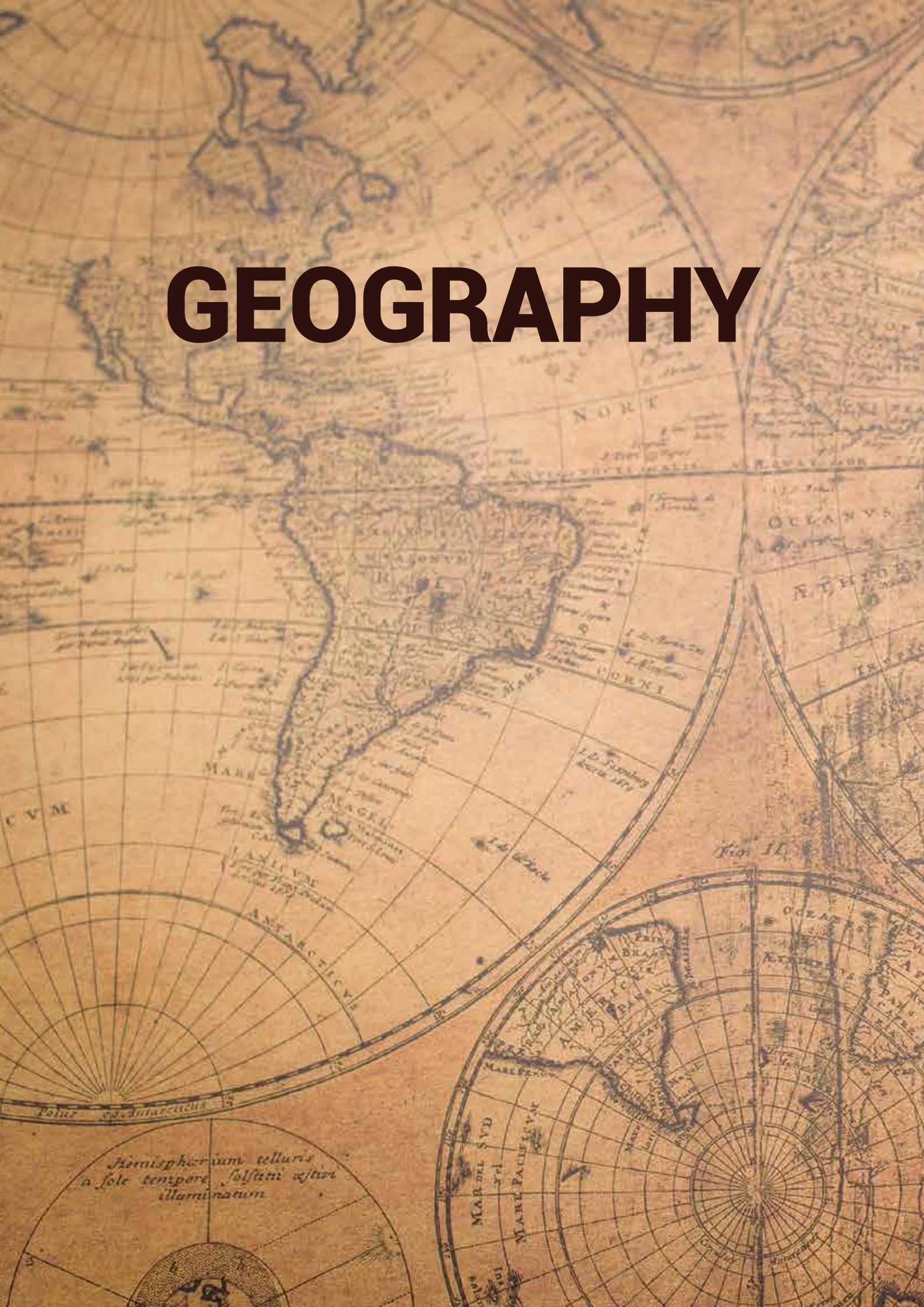
- ❖ The width should be allowed to be of 10m in view of the strategic importance of these highways.
- ❖ It would not be “feasible” to revisit those stretches where work has been already initiated on 10m width to reduce the same to 5.5m.
- ❖ It would not be possible to grow trees on the patches that had cleared to pave the way for road-building.
- ❖ It also ordered the setting up of an oversight committee led by former Supreme Court judge AK Sikri to ensure that the works were executed in an environmentally conscious manner, incorporating the recommendations of a high-powered committee in this regard.
- ❖ These are inhospitable terrains where Army needs to move heavy vehicles, machineries, weapons, missiles, tanks, troops and food supplies.

### Environmental Concerns

- ❖ Large-scale construction works in hilly terrain is a recipe for disaster as it leads to a heightened risk of landslides given the felling of trees and loosening of rocks.
- ❖ The project was being executed bypassing mandatory environment clearances and environment impact assessment (EIA) procedures.
- ❖ Over 25,000 trees that have reportedly been felled to make way for the project as a grave worry for the ecologically sensitive zone.
- ❖ Since wider carriageways would require more excavation and blasting, the purpose of having an all-weather highway may be compromised since the topography would become that much more sensitive to slippage and landslides.



# GEOGRAPHY



*Hemisphaerium telluris  
a sole tempore solstitii aestivi  
illuminatum*





**CYCLOGENESIS IN ARABIAN SEA**

**CYCLONE JAWAD**

**SUBDUED NORTHEAST MONSOON**

**KEN-BETWA RIVER LINKING PROJECT**

**SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTES**

**AGRO – CLIMATIC ZONES OF INDIA**

**MATUA**

**NATIONAL FAMILY HEALTH SURVEY (NFHS)-5**

**SMART CITIES MISSION (SCM)**

**SWACHH BHARAT MISSION URBAN 2.0**

**PACIFIC RING OF FIRE**

**IMD HAS PREDICTED A COLD WAVE IN**

**NORTHWEST INDIA**



## CYCLOGENESIS IN ARABIAN SEA

Past data analysis of cyclones over North Indian Ocean (Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea) during the period from 1891 to 2020 indicates significant changes in trends.

### SALIENT OBSERVATIONS

- ☞ Frequency of “Very Severe Cyclonic Storms” over the Arabian Sea increased in recent years
- ☞ The Eastern Coast of India are far more vulnerable to “Extremely Severe Cyclones” than the Western coast under the influence of easterlies in tropical regions.
- ☞ Advancements in IMD's Early Warning Systems and effective mitigation and mechanisms by the NDMA significantly reduced cyclone-related casualties.

### RESPONSIBLE FACTORS

- ☞ Global warming-induced abnormal increase in Sea Surface Temperatures (SSTs) over Arabian Sea during the past century. SSTs increased by 1.20 C –1.40 C over the last four decades.
  - Warmer temperatures support active convection, heavy rainfall, and intense cyclones.
  - Warmer temperatures enable supply of ample energy for the intensification of cyclones.
- ☞ Conductive wind shear for cyclones over Arabian Sea with a higher level easterly winds.

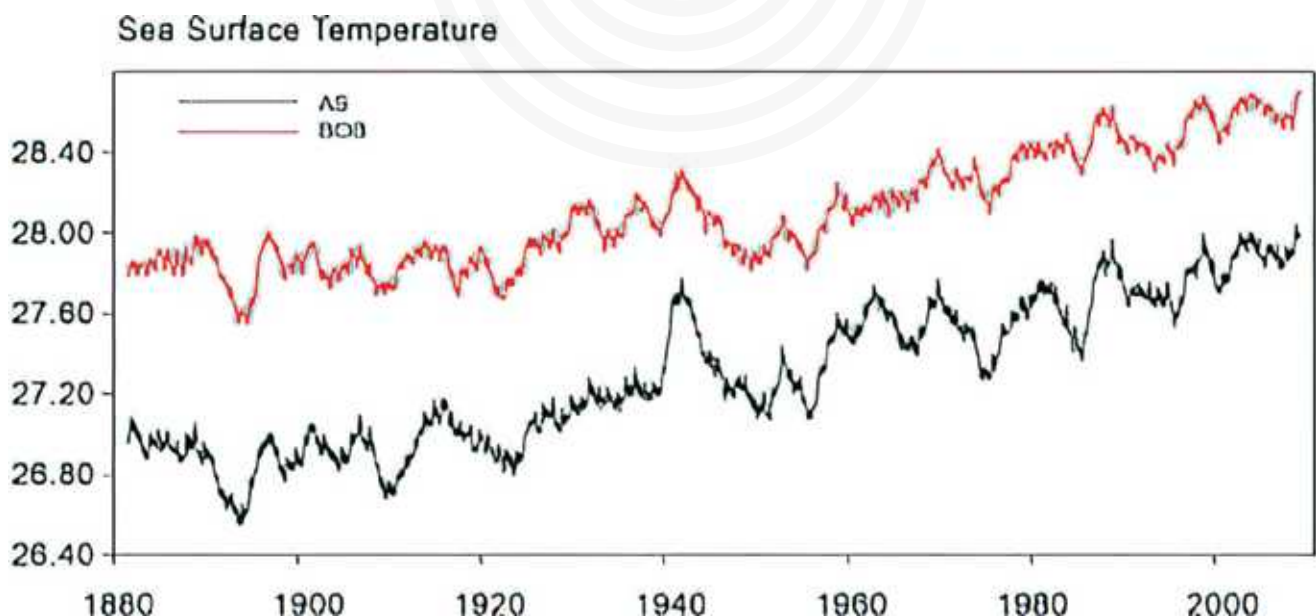


FIGURE: Chart representing the historical data of Sea Surface Temperatures (SSTs) in Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal.

## CYCLONE JAWAD

A deep depression in the Bay of Bengal has intensified into cyclonic storm Jawad and to make landfall near Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.

### FACTORS FAVOURABLE FOR TROPICAL CYCLOGENESIS

- ❌ Pre-existence of an unstable (disturbed) weather system like Madden–Julian Oscillation (MJO): MJO refers to a large scale unstable weather system developed by a westerly moist air mass developed over warm equatorial Indian oceans around Seychelles guided by subtropical westerlies.
- ❌ Warm ocean water column at least 50 m deep with SSTs of at least 26.50 C and high humidity: Cyclones are formed over the oceanic water in the tropical region. The relatively higher insolation results in warming of land and water surface. The warm moist air over the ocean rises upwards following which cool air rushes in to fill the void, they too get warm and rise — the cycle continues.
- ❌ Positive Adiabatic Lapse Rates: Favourable
- ❌ Low wind shears: High wind shears disrupt development of a circulatory storm.
- ❌ Coriolis forces: Sufficient Coriolis force should be available to develop a frontogenesis, deflecting winds to blow towards the low pressure center. The Coriolis force is absent at Equator and increase progressively towards the poles.

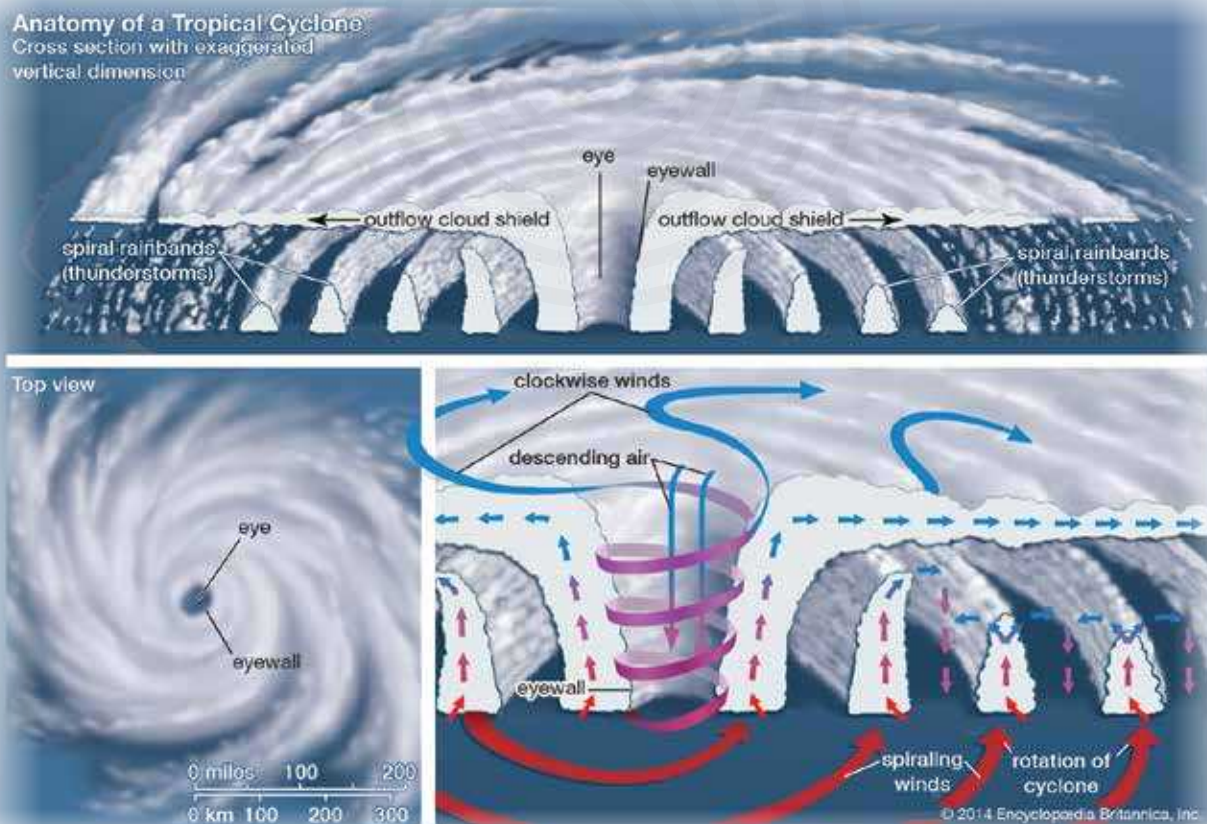
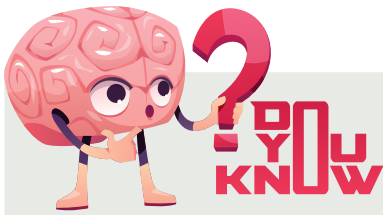


FIGURE: Anatomy of a tropical cyclone cross-section with exaggerated vertical dimension.



## TROPICAL CYCLONES-NAMES AROUND THE WORLD



*The roots of Education are bitter,  
but the fruit is sweet*

- ARISTOTLE

## SUBDUED NORTHEAST MONSOON

The northeast monsoon has caused massive losses in terms of damage to life, property, and crops. The overall estimated damage caused by the rain in October and November alone has been pegged at ₹11,916.3 crore and as per the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) norms, ₹1,281.92 crore.

### ABOUT NORTHEAST MONSOON

- ☞ North-East trade winds prevailing over Indian sub-continent blow from land to sea during the winter season from October to December.
- ☞ A part of North-East trade winds blowing over the Bay of Bengal gather moisture causing rainfall confined to the southern peninsula in the Coromandel coast.
- ☞ Northeast Monsoon is a small-scale monsoon compared to South- West Monsoon.





### EFFECT OF LA NINA THE NORTHEAST MONSOON

Strengthening of La Niña conditions weakens on rainfall associated with the Northeast monsoon. During La Niña years, the cyclonic systems developed in the Bay of Bengal significantly to the north compared to their normal position recurve causing not much rainfall occurs over southern regions like Tamil Nadu.

## KEN-BETWA RIVER LINKING PROJECT

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the funding and implementation of Ken-Betwa inter-linking of rivers project with a total cost of Rs 44,605 crore. The project will be completed in eight years.

### ABOUT KEN-BETWA RIVER LINKING PROJECT

- 🚧 OBJECTIVE: Transfer water from the Ken river to the Betwa river.
- 🚧 TARGETS
  - Irrigate 10.62 lakh hectares of Bundelkhand region, spread across Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh



- Provide drinking water supply to 62 lakh people
- Generate 103 MW of hydropower and 27 MW of solar power.

#### BENEFITS

- 🌀 Boost socio-economic prosperity in the backward Bundelkhand region with higher agriculture yields and employment generation.
- 🌀 Help arrest distress migration from this region.

#### CONCERNS

- 🌀 Daudhan dam, to be built on the Ken river with a gross capacity will be 2,853 million cubic metres.would submerge 9000 ha area, including 5803 ha of Panna Tiger Reserve. Approximately 4141 ha of forest area which is about 7.6% of the total Panna Tiger Reserve area.

#### BENEFITS OF INTERLINKING

- 🌀 Enhances water and food security.
- 🌀 Proper utilisation of water.
- 🌀 Boost to agriculture.
- 🌀 Disaster mitigation.
- 🌀 Boost to transportation.

#### DRAINAGE BASIN OF GANGA

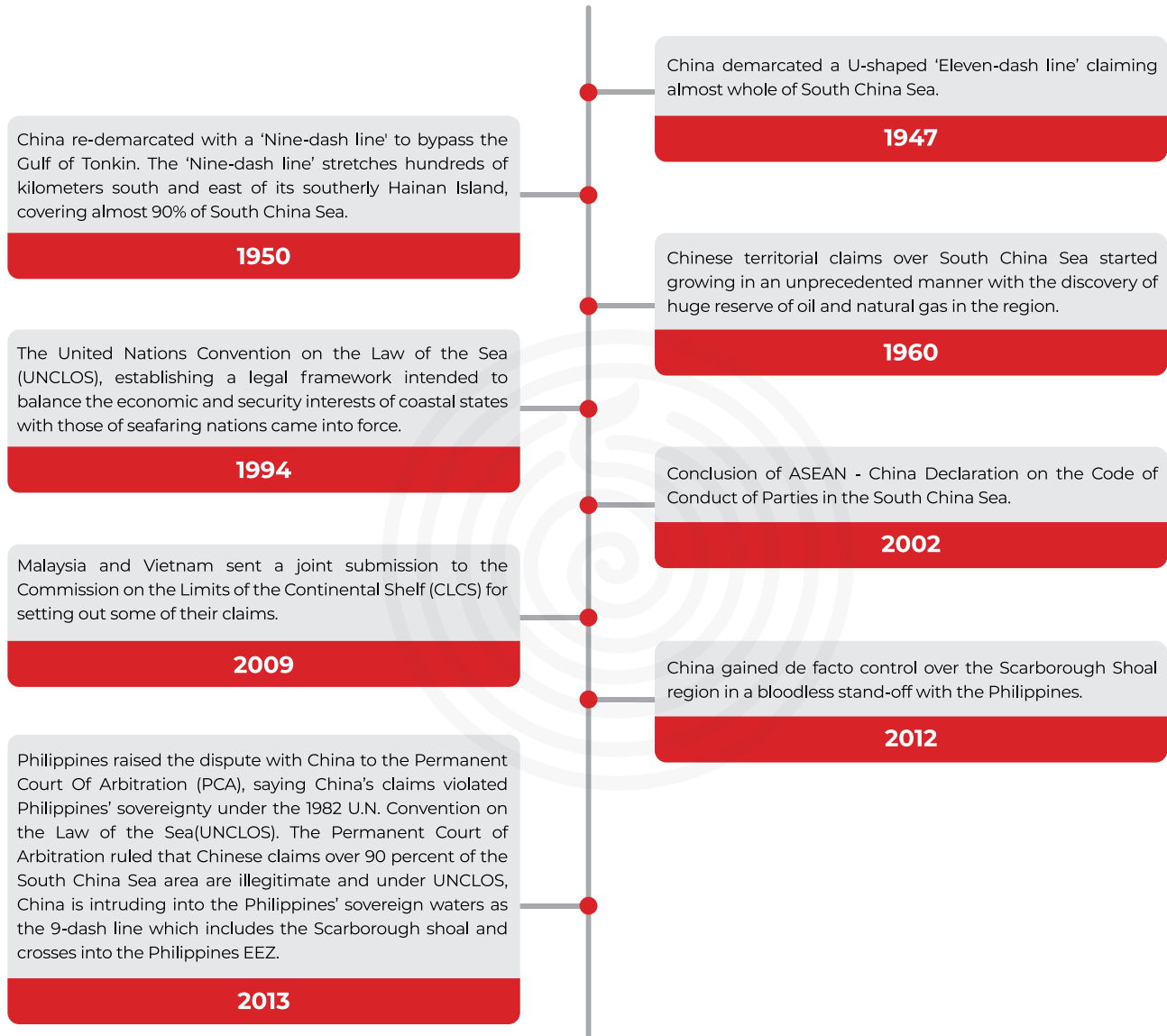




# SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTES

The Philippines has rejected China's demand to remove its naval ship anchored on a disputed shoal in the South China Sea. Since 2010, China has been converting uninhabited islets into artificial islets - Haven Reef, Johnson South Reef and Fiery Cross Reef to bring it under UNCLOS.

## TIMELINE



## ISSUE

**COMPETING CLAIMS AMONG LITTORAL STATES:** China claims almost all of the South China Sea with overlapping territorial claims with several Southeast Asian states in the South China Sea. China outrightly reject the historical claims of other littoral States over the South China Sea.

**MILITARISATION OF SOUTH CHINA SEA:** Beijing has been accused of deploying a range of military hardware, including anti-ship missiles and surface-to-air missiles in these islands. The United States of America in response too has bolstered its naval presence in the Indo-Pacific region.

## ABOUT SOUTH CHINA SEA

- 📍 **LOCATION:** Marginal sea of western Pacific Ocean in Southeast Asia, located to south of China, east & south of Vietnam, west of the Philippines and north of the island of Borneo.
- 📍 **LITTORAL STATES:** People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam.

## STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

### MAJOR SEA LANE OF COMMUNICATION:

Second most used sea lane in the world, while in terms of world annual merchant fleet tonnage, over 50% passes through the Strait of Malacca, the Sunda Strait, and the Lombok Strait. Over 1.6 million m<sup>3</sup> (10 million barrels) of crude oil a day are shipped through the Strait of Malacca,

### POTENTIAL SOURCE OF HYDROCARBONS AND NATURAL RESOURCES:

Region has proven oil reserves of around 1.2 km<sup>3</sup> (7.7 billion barrels), with an estimate of 4.5 km<sup>3</sup> (28 billion barrels) in total. Natural gas reserves are estimated to total around 7,500 km<sup>3</sup> (266 trillion cubic feet).

### CONTESTING CLAIMS OVER ISLANDS

Paracel Islands: China, Taiwan and Vietnam.

Spratly Islands: China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Brunei and Philippines.

Scarborough Shoal: Philippines, China and Taiwan.



## AGRO – CLIMATIC ZONES OF INDIA

*Agro – Climatic Zone is a land that is suitable for growing particular type of crop. It is essential to delineate the land in the country into agro – climatic zones for sustainable agricultural production.*

### AGRO – CLIMATIC ZONES OF INDIA

#### 📍 WESTERN HIMALAYAN REGION

Area - Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and the hill region of Uttarakhand  
Major crops - Saffron, maize, barley, oats and wheat; peaches, apricot, pears, cherry, almond, litchis, walnut

#### 📍 EASTERN HIMALAYAN REGION

Area - Arunachal Pradesh, the hills of Assam, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, and the Darjeeling district of West Bengal  
Major crops - Rice, maize, potato, and tea; orchards of pineapple, litchi, oranges and lime

#### 📍 LOWER GANGETIC PLAIN REGION

Area - West Bengal (except the hilly areas), eastern Bihar and the Brahmaputra valley

Major crops - Rice, jute, maize, potato, and pulses

❏ MIDDLE GANGETIC PLAIN REGION

Area - Parts of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar

Major crops - Rice, maize, millets, wheat, gram, barley, peas, mustard and potato

❏ UPPER GANGETIC PLAINS REGION

Area - Central and western parts of Uttar Pradesh and the Hardwar and Udham Nagar districts of Uttarakhand

Major crops - Wheat, rice, sugarcane, millets, maize, gram, barley, oilseeds, pulses and cotton

❏ TRANS-GANGA PLAINS REGION

Area - Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and the Ganganagar district of Rajasthan

Major crops - Wheat, sugarcane, cotton, rice, gram, maize, millets, pulses and oilseeds

❏ EASTERN PLATEAU AND HILLS

Area - Chhotanagpur Plateau, extending over Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh and Dandakaranya

Major Crops - Rice, millets, maize, oilseeds, ragi, gram, potato, tur, groundnut, soyabean, urad, castor, and groundnut

❏ CENTRAL PLATEAU AND HILLS

Area - Bundelkhand, Baghelkhand, Bhandar Plateau, Malwa Plateau, and Vindhyaachal Hills

Major crops - Millets, wheat, gram, oilseeds, cotton and sunflower

❏ WESTERN PLATEAU AND HILLS

Area - Southern part of Malwa plateau and Deccan plateau (Maharashtra)

Major crops - Wheat, gram, millets, cotton, pulses, groundnut, oilseeds, sugarcane, rice, wheat, oranges, grapes and bananas

❏ SOUTHERN PLATEAU AND HILLS

Area - Interior Deccan and includes parts of southern Maharashtra, the greater parts of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu uplands from Adilabad District in the north to Madurai District in the south

Major crops - Millets, oilseeds, pulses, coffee, tea, cardamom and spices

❏ EASTERN COASTAL PLAINS AND HILLS

Area - Coromandal and northern Circar coasts of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa

Major crops - Rice, jute, tobacco, sugarcane, maize, millets, groundnut and oilseeds

❏ WESTERN COASTAL PLAINS AND GHATS

Area - Malabar and Konkan coastal plains and the Sahyadris

Major crops - Rice, coconut, oilseeds, sugarcane, millets, pulses and cotton

❏ GUJARAT PLAINS AND HILLS

Area - Hills and plains of Kathiawar, and the fertile valleys of Mahi and Sabarmati rivers

Major crops - Groundnut, cotton, rice, millets, oilseeds, wheat and tobacco

❏ WESTERN DRY REGION

Area - West of Aravalli (Rajasthan)

Major crops - Bajra, jowar, moth, wheat and gram

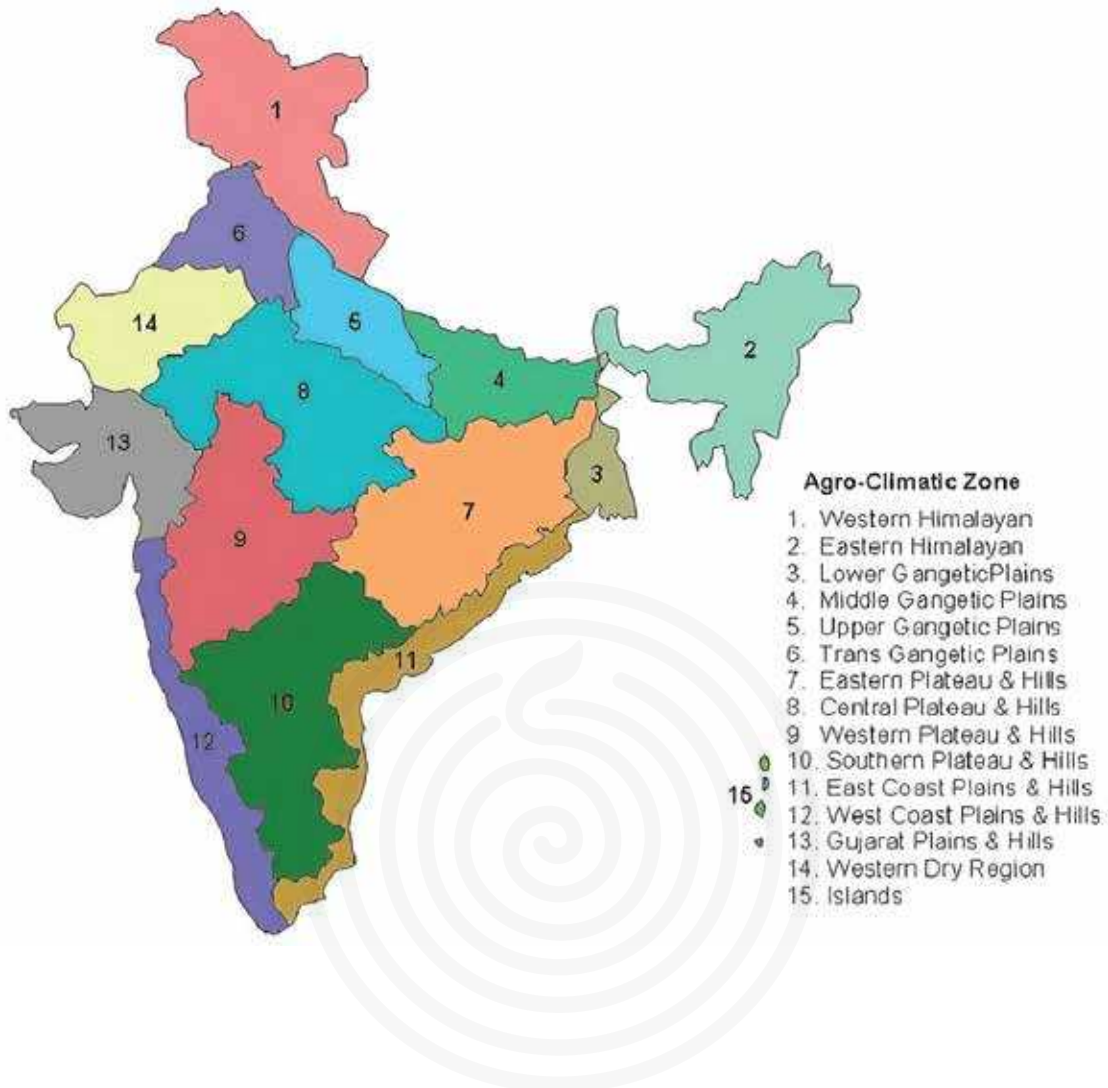
❏ ISLAND REGION

Area - Andaman-Nicobar and Lakshadweep

Major crops - Rice, maize, millets, pulses, arecanut, turmeric and cassava



# Agro-climatic zones of India



## MATUA

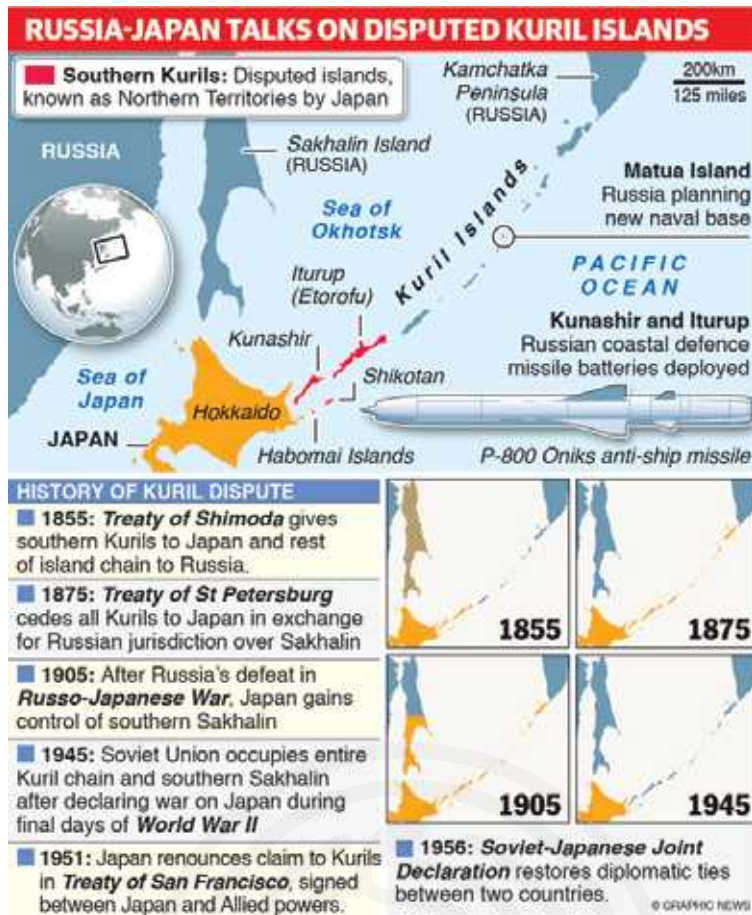
Recently, Russia deployed its defence missile systems called the BASTION SYSTEMS to the Matua Island.

### ABOUT MATUA ISLAND

- 🚫 Uninhabited volcanic island located in the Kuril Islands chain in the Sea of Okhotsk, marginal sea in the Pacific Ocean.
- 🚫 Kuril Islands are claimed by Japan and Russia.
- 🚫 Matua island is 16 km from Golovnin Strait.

### ABOUT BASTION SYSTEMS

- 🚫 Coastal defence missile system developed by Russia.
- Engage convoys, ships and carrier battle groups using supersonic anti ship missile
- 🚫 P – 800 Oniks
- 🚫 RANGE: 500 kilometres.



## NATIONAL FAMILY HEALTH SURVEY (NFHS)-5

The Indian Institute of Population Studies (IIPS), Mumbai published the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) V.

Note: AP = Andhra Pradesh, AS = Assam, BR = Bihar, GA = Goa, GJ = Gujarat, HP = Himachal Pradesh, KA = Karnataka, KL = Kerala, MH = Maharashtra, MG = Meghalaya, MZ = Mizoram, NL = Nagaland, SK = Sikkim, TS = Telangana, TR = Tripura, WB = West Bengal.

**Most states reduced their fertility rate, below the target of 2.1 with increased use of family planning methods**

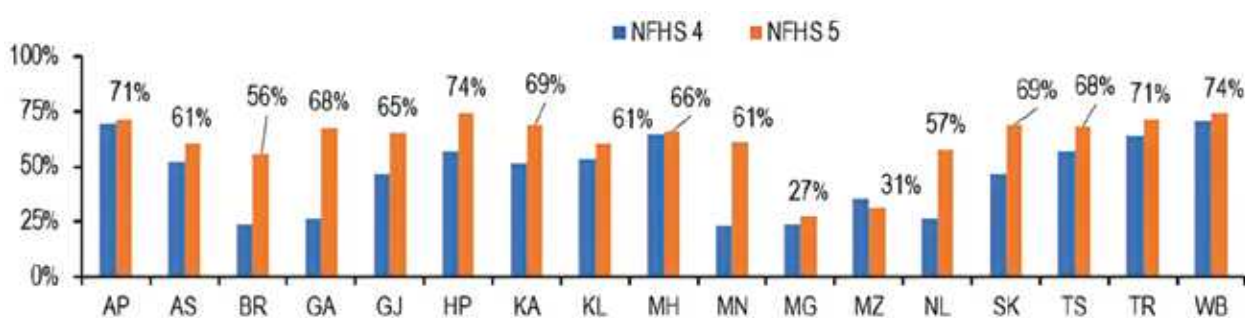


FIGURE 1: Use of Family Planning methods (in %)  
All states (except Mizoram) have seen an increase in the use of family planning methods. Goa (42%-point) and Bihar (32%-point) have seen the highest increase in the use of family planning methods

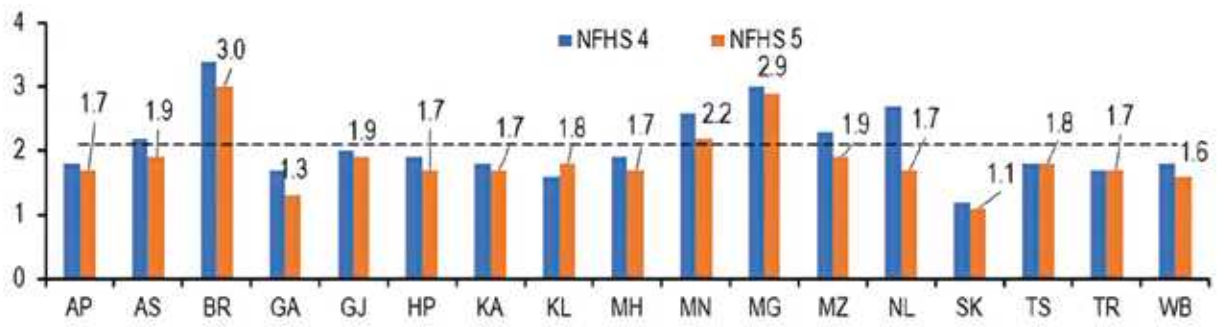


FIGURE 2: Total Fertility Rate across states

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. All other medium and large states in the survey (i.e., population above 1 crore) have a TFR below the replacement level rate of 2.1.

**Sex ratio at birth has declined in a few states**

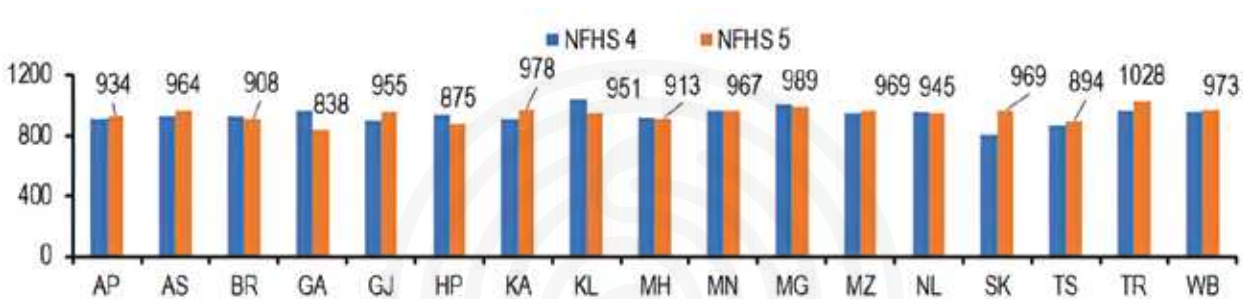


FIGURE 3: Sex ratio at birth for children born in the last five years

Sex ratio at birth for children born in the last five years is below 950 for seven (of the 17) states. Sex ratio at birth is the number of female children born per 1,000 male children born. In three states, the ratio is below 900 (Goa: 838, Himachal Pradesh: 875, and Telangana: 894).

**Institutional births have increased; out of pocket expenditure on deliveries increased in some states**

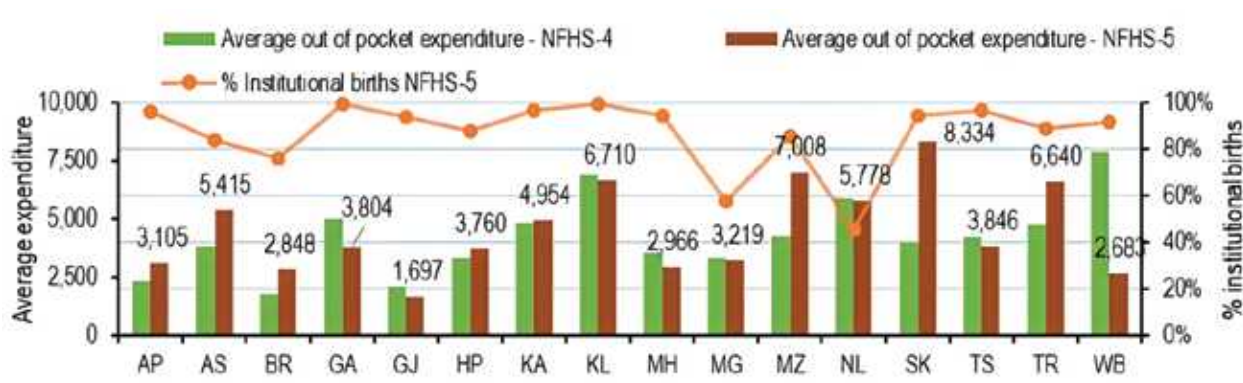


FIGURE 4: Institutional births (in %) and out of pocket expenditure on a delivery in public health facilities



**Infant Mortality Rate has declined across states; however, malnourishment among children is increasing**

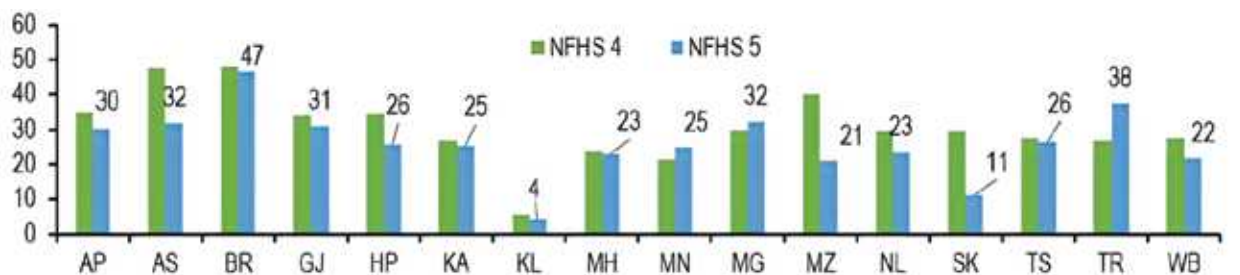


FIGURE 5: Infant Mortality Rate across states

IMR has marginally declined in nearly all states. Assam has seen one of the largest drops in IMR, from 48 deaths (per 1,000 live births) to 32 deaths. IMR remains high in Bihar (47 deaths per 1,000 live births).

The 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. 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.

The proportion of children who are underweight (low weight with respect to age) has increased in 11 of the 17 states. In Bihar and Gujarat, 40% or more of the children under the age of five years are underweight.

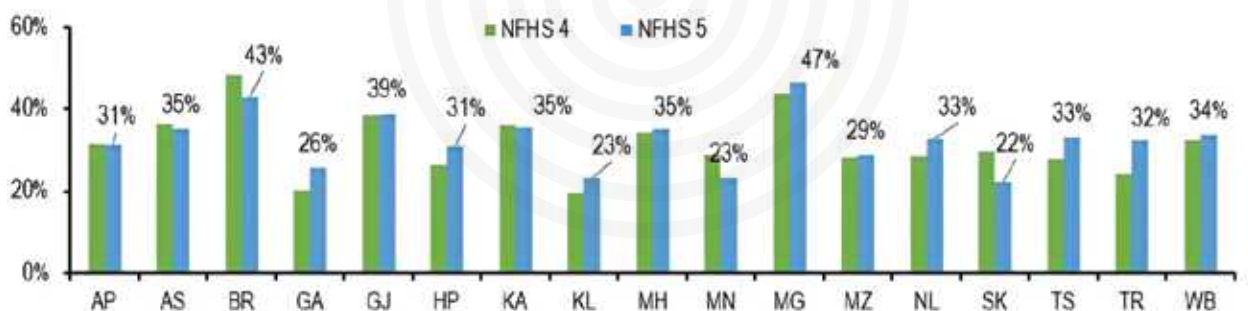


FIGURE 6: Proportion of children below five years who are stunted (low height for age)

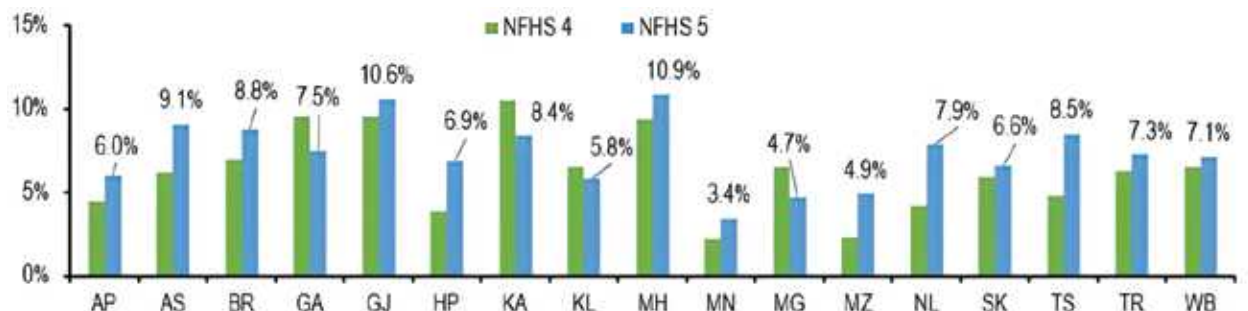


FIGURE 7: Proportion of children below five years who are severely wasted (low weight for height)

## Obesity is rising for both men and women across all states

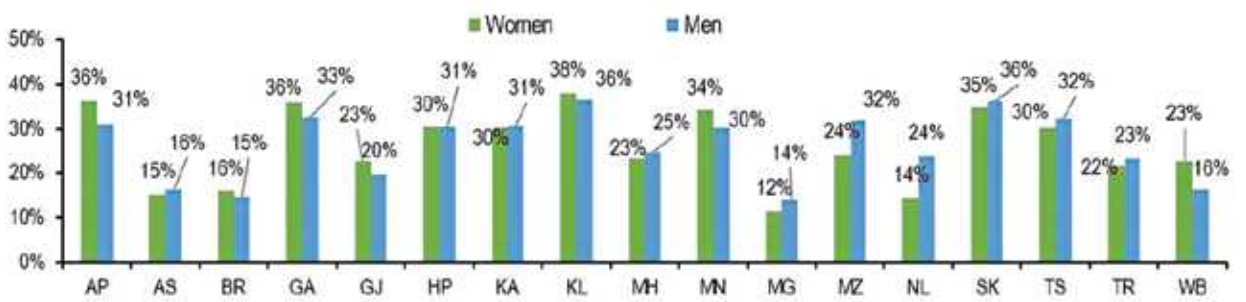


FIGURE 8: Obesity amongst adults between 15-49 years of age (in %)

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). Overweight or obesity is measured through the Body Mass Index of persons.

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.

## Access to electricity, improved source of drinking water and sanitation facility has increased

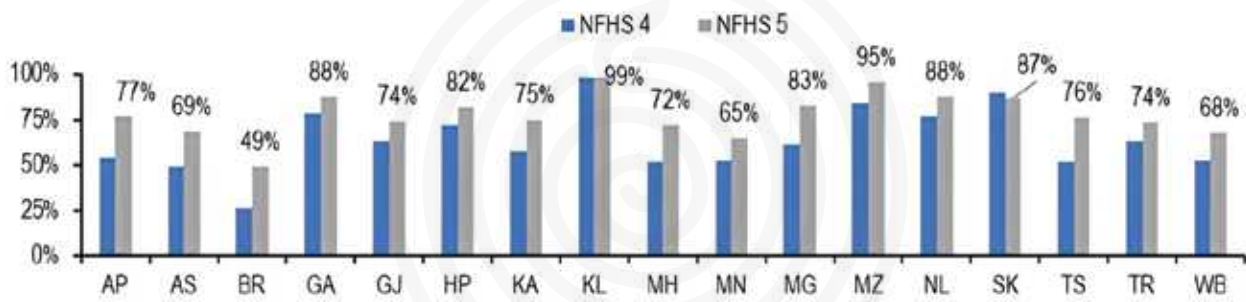


FIGURE 9: Proportion of households with an improved sanitation facility

The proportion of households with electricity and improved drinking water source has increased across all states. Households with an improved sanitation facility has also increased across all states. 99% households in Kerala have an improved sanitation facility, while only 49% households have it in Bihar.

Similarly, the proportion of households using clean fuel for cooking has also increased across nearly all states. Telangana has seen a nearly 25%-point increase in access to improved sanitation facility and clean cooking fuel as compared to NFHS-4.

## More women using mobile phones across all states; however, many of them do not have access to internet

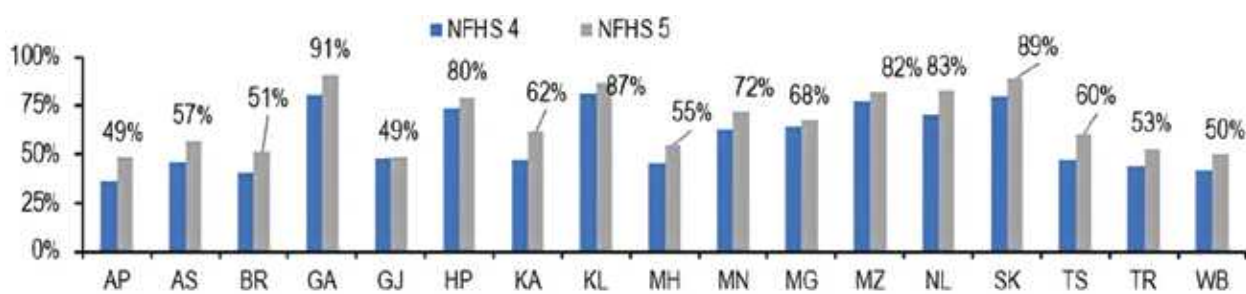


FIGURE 10: Proportion of women who own a mobile phone that they use themselves

The proportion of women who have a mobile phone has increased across all states. However, only about 50% women own and use a mobile phone in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, and West Bengal.

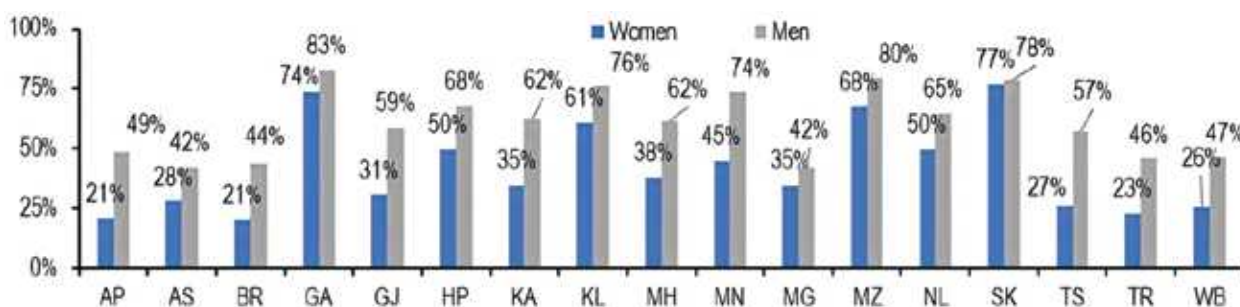


FIGURE 11: Men and women who have used internet (in %)

The Survey also measured the proportion of men and women (15-49 years of age) who have ever used the internet. Across all states, the proportion of men who have used the internet was higher than women, with the difference being higher than 25%-point in states such as Telangana, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh. In Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and Tripura, less than 25% women have used internet.

**More women using bank accounts; ownership of house/ land amongst women declines in several states**

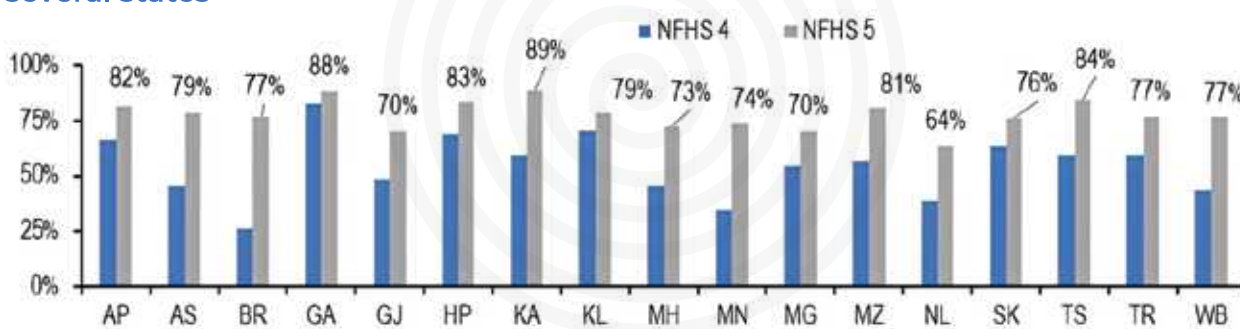


FIGURE 12: Proportion of women with savings or bank account

The proportion of women who have a savings or bank account has increased across all the 17 states. Bihar (51%-point) and Manipur (39%-point) have seen the highest increase in this regard. Across all 17 states, close to 80% women now have a savings or bank account, except in Gujarat (70%) and Nagaland (64%).

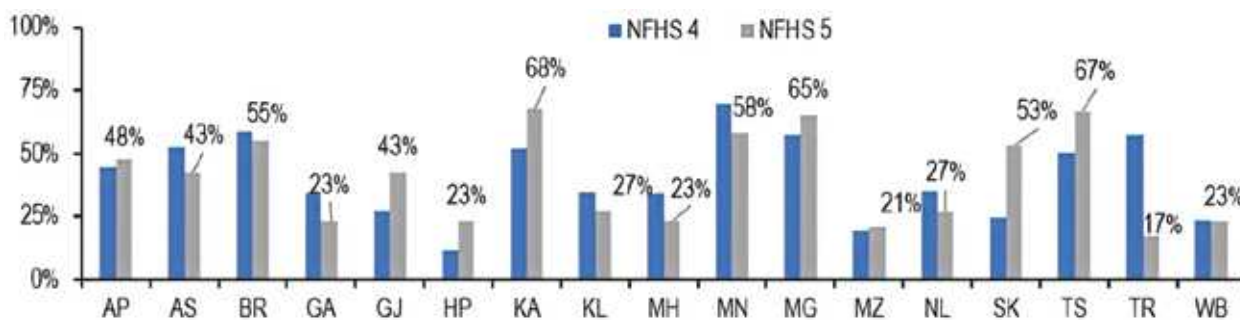


FIGURE 13: Proportion of women owning a house or land

However, the proportion of women who own a house or land (including joint



ownership) has declined in 9 of the 17 states. Tripura, Maharashtra and Assam have seen a large decline in women owning house/ land.

### Use of hygienic methods of protection during menstrual period has increased across states

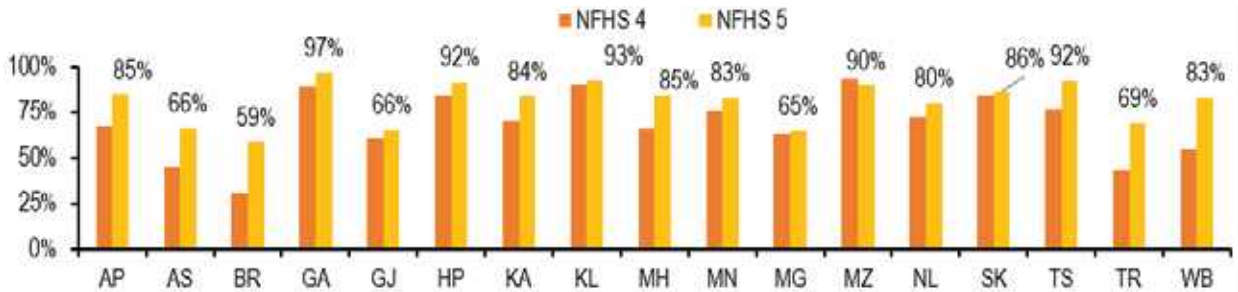


FIGURE 14: Proportion of women using hygienic methods of protection during menstrual period

The Survey measured the proportion of women (15-24 years) who are using hygienic methods of protection during their menstrual period. This has increased across almost all states. The largest increase was seen in Bihar and West Bengal (28%-point). However, it still remains low in Bihar (59%), Assam (66%) and Gujarat (66%).

### Gender based violence still remains high, has increased in some states

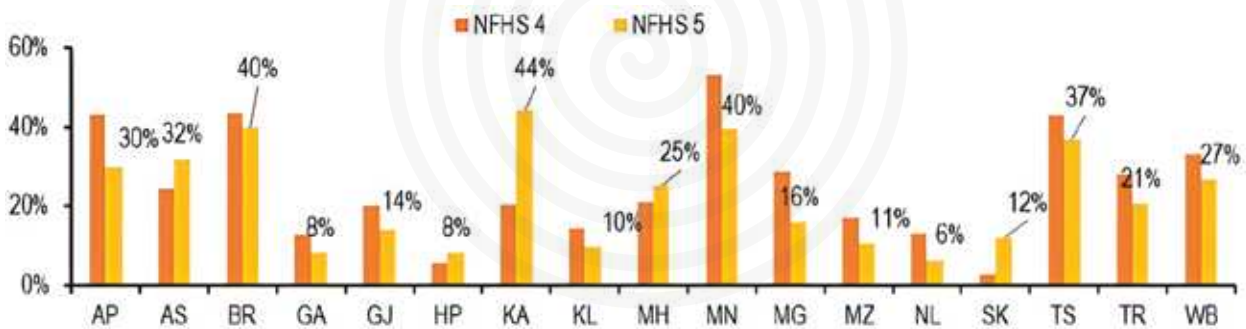


FIGURE 15: Proportion of women who have ever faced spousal violence

The proportion of married women (between 18-49 years of age) who have ever faced spousal violence has increased in 5 states. In Karnataka, it has doubled, from 21% to 44%. More than a third of the married women face spousal violence in Karnataka (44%), Bihar (40%), Manipur (40%), and Telangana (37%).

## SMART CITIES MISSION (SCM)

The deadline for completing projects under the Smart Cities Mission (SCM) has been extended for all 100 participating cities to June 2023 due to the delays caused by COVID-19 and based on a NITI Aayog recommendation in August.

### ABOUT SMART CITIES MISSION

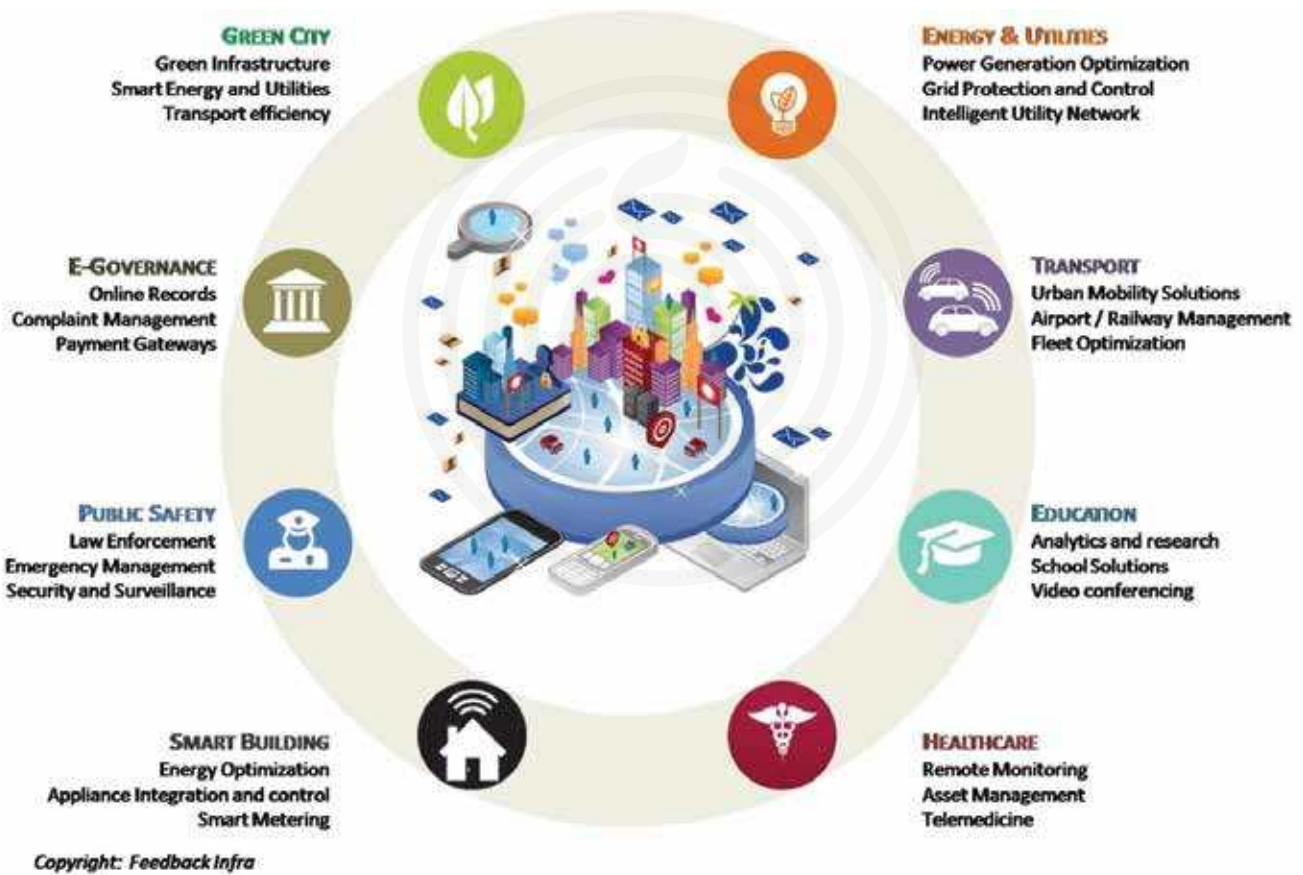
- NODAL MINISTRY: Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- OBJECTIVE: Develop 100 'Smart cities' delivering active and responsive basic services

in a time bound manner utilising ICT platforms between FY 2015-16 and FY 2019-20.  
**STRATEGY:**

- ❌ Formulate ‘Smart Cities’ Master Plans with citizen participation.
- ❌ Integration of ICT enabled ‘Smart’ active and responsive solutions to existing distribution networks to provide basic urban amenity services with optimal utilisation of resources for sustainable urbanisation.
- ❌ Focuses upon smart solutions to improve efficiency to deliver services in an environmentally sustainable manner.

**FOUR PILLARS**

- ❌ Social Infrastructure.
- ❌ Physical Infrastructure.
- ❌ Institutional Infrastructure (including Governance).
- ❌ Economic Infrastructure.



**APPROACHES**

**PAN-CITY INITIATIVES WITH SMART SOLUTIONS:** Smart solutions are incorporated across the four pillars of Smart City Initiative to benefit the entire population of the city. For example, setting up an Integrated Command and Control Centre (IC&CC) to ensure safety and security of citizens.

**AREA BASED DEVELOPMENT OF METROPOLITAN AREAS (MAs):** Smart solutions are incorporated across the four pillars of Smart City Initiative to a locality or area within city. For example, setting up a Park with wifi facilities to ensure access to robust IT connectivity.

## METHODOLOGY

Retrofitting existing infrastructure.

Brownfield redevelopment of the existing infrastructure.

Green-field installation of new features / infrastructure.

## ANALYSIS

ORGANISATION	
A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) headed by a CEO and comprising of expert nominees of Centre, State and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) would formulate, approve and release funds, monitor and evaluate the Smart City development projects and implement, manage and operate assets.	Smart city plans are often been criticised for being undemocratic in spirit, distant from elected democratic institutions and wider public discussion.
FINANCING	
The Centre would provide an initial Special Central Assistance of Rs. 200 Cr. in first year and Rs. 100 Cr. every subsequent year for CSS to be matched by State / Urban Local Bodies (ULBs). Additional funds can be raised via market financial instruments (Municipal Bonds) and Grants-in-aid for projects recommended by the Finance Commission.	The capability of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) without sufficient financial autonomy and expertise to independently raise funds are questionable.

## FACTS AND FIGURES

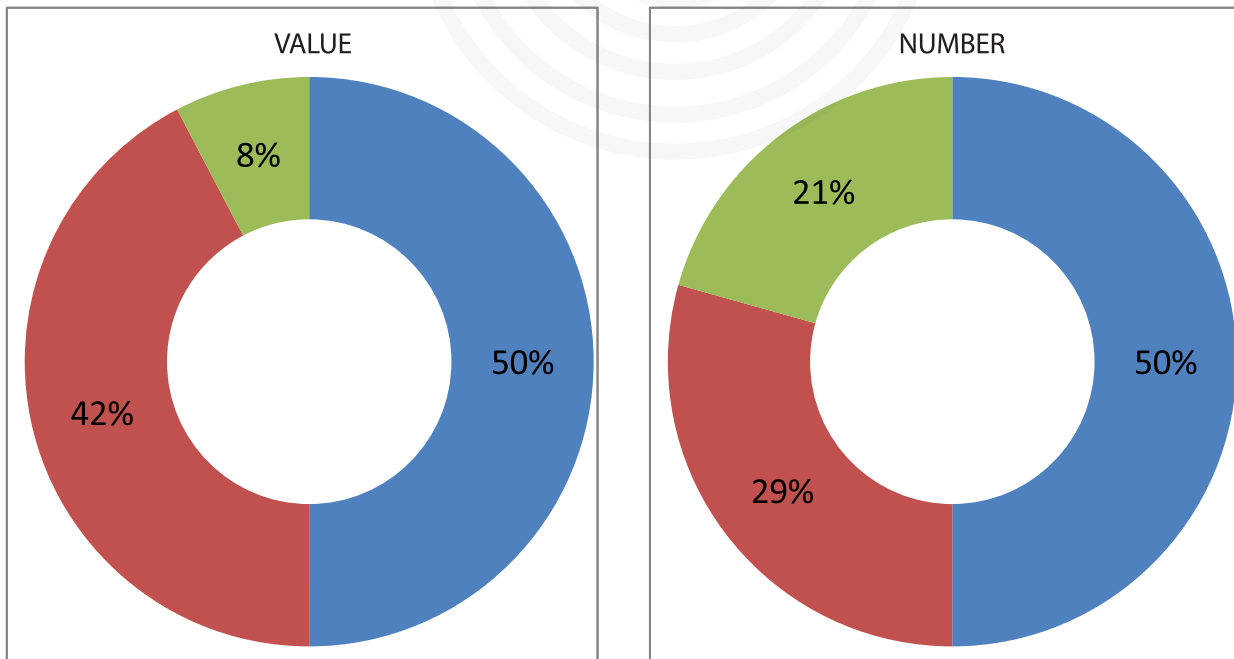


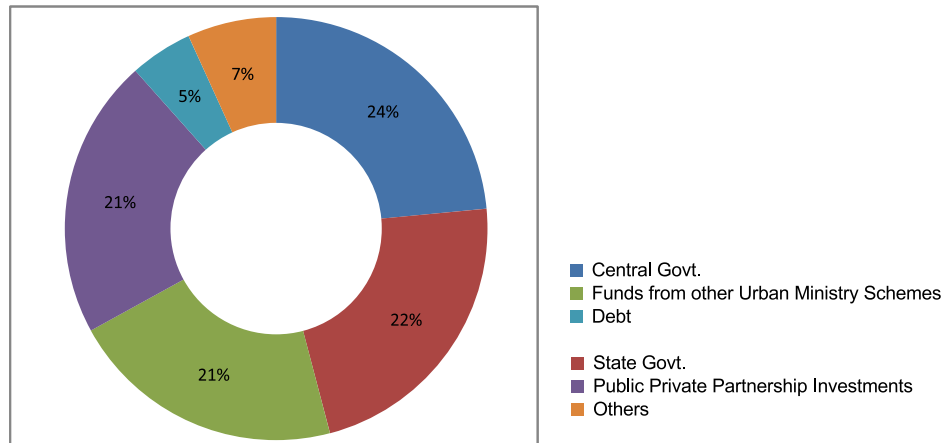
Figure: TOTAL PROJECTS TENDERED(■): 6,452 projects; Cost: ₹ 1,84,998 Cr.

PROJECTS UNDER IMPLEMENTATION(■): 3,787 projects; Cost: ₹ 1,56,571 Cr.

PROJECTS COMMISSIONED: 2,665 projects.DATA:

Union Ministry of Urban Affairs as of November 12, 2021 -





## SWACHH BHARAT MISSION URBAN 2.0

The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) signed a Memorandum of Understanding under the Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0 to strengthen the waste management sector in the country.

### ABOUT THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MoU)

- ❌ Help set up 75 Smart Swachhata Kendras in the country
- ❌ Help to integrate the informal waste pickers to formal system
- ❌ Assist India to link waste pickers with government welfare schemes
- ❌ Digitize the waste flow and streamline activities in Swachhata Kendras
- ❌ Encourage the use of machine learning and Artificial Intelligence
- ❌ Assist India in solid waste management and used water management.
- ❌ Help India to promote and replicate sustainable model for waste management
- ❌ Help Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0 to achieve its zero waste target.

### SIGNIFICANCE

Help Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban to focus on Solid Waste Management (SWM).

- ❌ Source-based waste segregation
- ❌ Doortodoor collection of waste;
- ❌ Separate transportation of different types of wastes;
- ❌ Scientific processing of wet waste, dry waste, and construction and demolition waste
- ❌ Budgetary support for remediating old waste disposed in all dumpsites across 4,372 cities in India before March 2023

STRATEGY: Circular approach based on 3R (reduce, reuse and recycle) principle.

### BENEFIT FOR INDIA

Help India in achieving its vision of making cities “Garbage Free”.

Help in achieving 100% waste processing as aimed by Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban 2.0.

Realize the vision of “Clean Air, Clean Water, Clean Land” in urban India.

CHALLENGES:

Lack of funding and technical knowledge for scientific processing

At present, India scientifically process only 25 % of 1.32 lakh tonnes of waste generated by urban areas daily. The remainder is disposed of in landfills every year. The SBM 2.0 with

a total budget of ₹1.41 lakh crore set aside ₹39,837 crore for solid waste management. This mission commits to providing financial assistance to set up fresh waste processing facilities and bioremediation projects across all the ULBs. Financial assistance to set up construction and demolition waste processing facilities is limited to a chosen 154 large cities such as Bengaluru, Mysore, Davanagere, Hubli, and Kalaburagi which have a population of over 5 lakh.

Delayed DPR approvals.

Urban local bodies (ULBs) in several States had prepared detailed project reports (DPRs) for setting up waste processing systems for wet and dry waste as part of SBM which were approved, but the process of setting up these facilities was delayed due to administrative and financial hurdles.

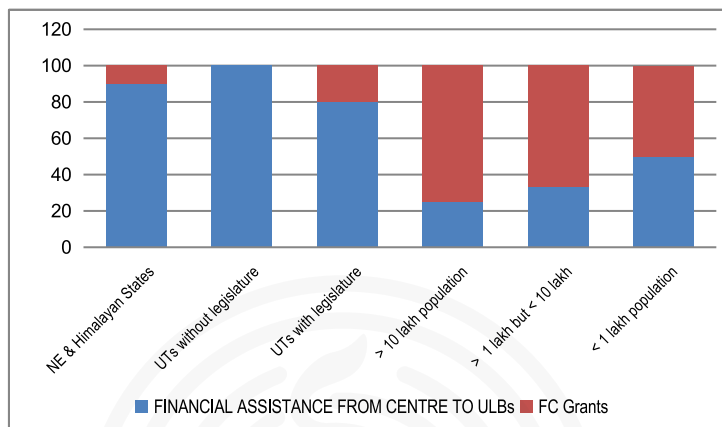


FIGURE: Bar chart representation of financing for Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0 OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

Transformation of waste disposal sites to processing sites is likely to produce 7.2 MTPA of organic compost from 48 MTPA of waste generated across all ULBs in the country. Organic compost recovered from the wet waste, which is 60% of the total waste, can be used to enrich the soil quality reducing the amount of chemical fertilizer imported and save about ₹ 2,600 crore of subsidy paid by the government.

#### ABOUT SWACH BHART MISSION 1.0

- 🕒 TENURE: October 02, 2014 – October 02, 2019
- 📜 MANDATE: End the practice of "open-defecation" in all villages, Gram Panchayats, Districts, States and Union Territories in India.

#### KEY COMPONENTS

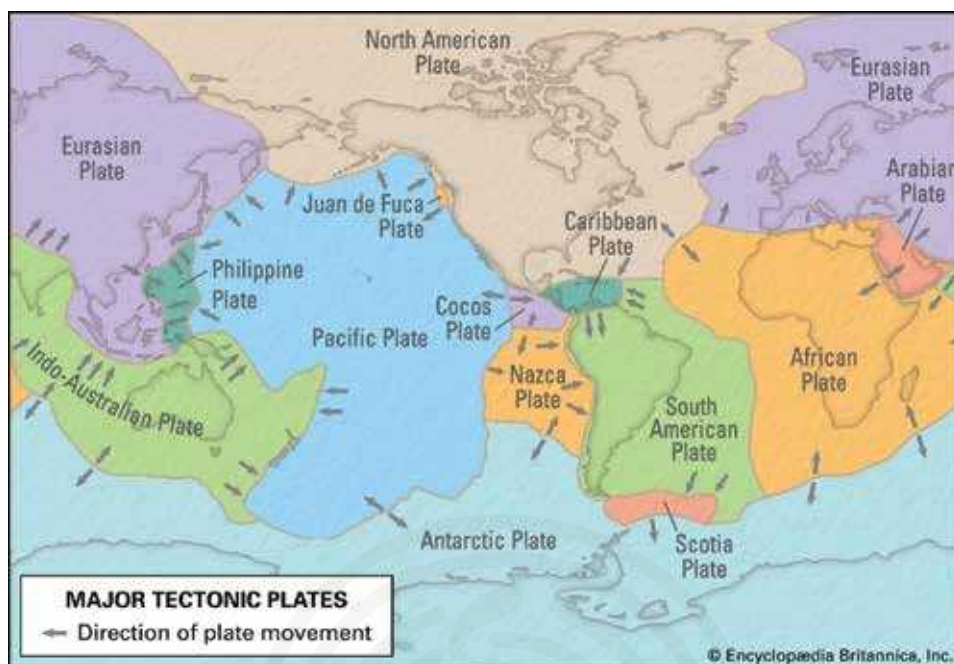
- 🎯 Swach Bhart Mission (Grameen) – Union Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation
- 🎯 Swach Bharat Mission (Urban) - Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

#### STRATEGY

- 🎯 Sustain Open defecation free behaviours in an inclusive manner.
- 🎯 Effecting behaviour change through Jan Andolan (public awareness)
- 🎯 Encourage cost effective and appropriate technologies for ecologically safe and sustainable sanitation.
- 🎯 Develop community managed sanitation systems focusing on scientific
- 🎯 Solid & Liquid Waste Management systems for overall cleanliness in the rural areas.

## PACIFIC RING OF FIRE

A 7.3-magnitude earthquake struck eastern Indonesia. The epicentre was in the Flores Sea, north of East Nusa Tenggara province.



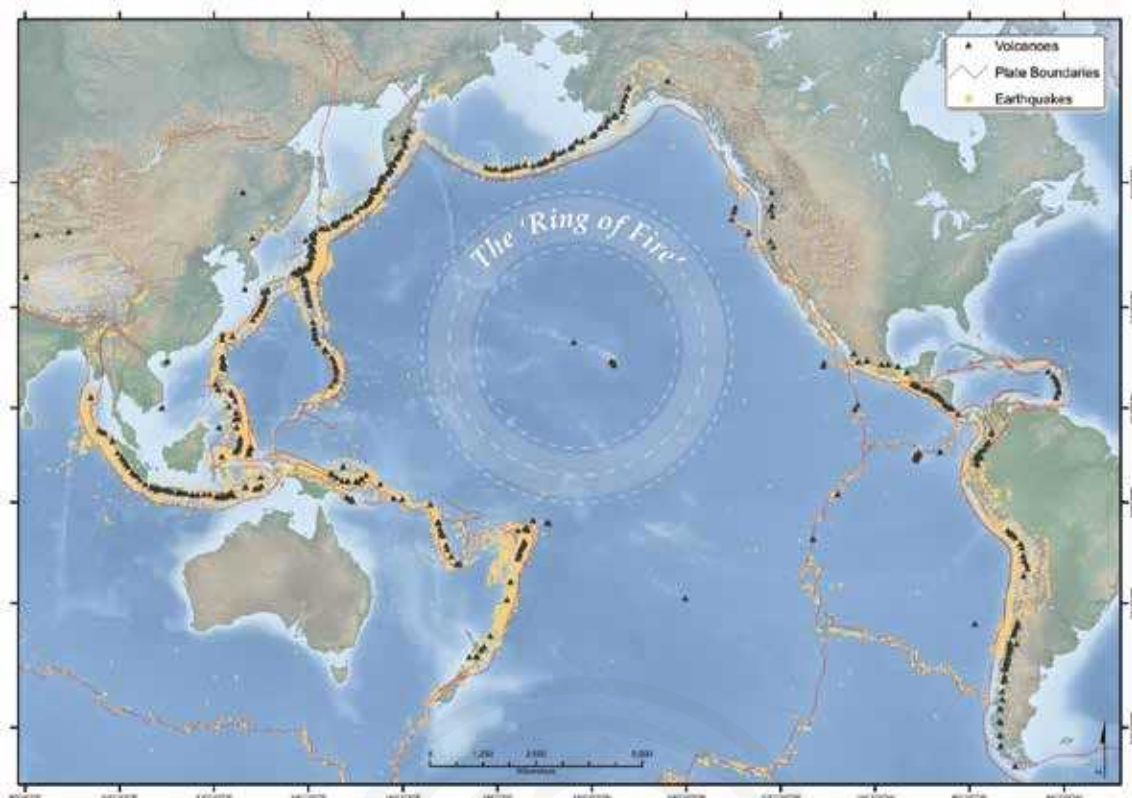
### WHY INDONESIA IS VULNERABLE TO EARTHQUAKES?

Indonesia is at the meeting point of three major continental plates – the Pacific, the Eurasian and the Indo-Australian plates – and the much smaller Philippine plate. Indonesia sits along the Ring of Fire region, an area where most of the world's volcanic eruptions occur. The Ring of Fire has seen a large amount of activity in recent days, but Indonesia has been hit hard due to its position on a large grid of tectonic plates. As a result, several volcanoes on the Indonesian islands are prone to erupting. Indonesia is home to roughly 400 volcanoes, out of which 127 are currently active, accounting for about a third of the world's active volcanoes.

### ABOUT THE PACIFIC RING OF FIRE

- 🌀 Horseshoe-shaped circum-Pacific basin 40,000 kilometre long, looping from New Zealand to Chile, passing through the coasts of Asia and the Americas.
- 🌀 Stretches along the Pacific Ocean coastlines, where the Pacific Plate grinds against other, smaller tectonic plates that form the Earth's crust – such as the Philippine Sea plate and the Cocos and Nazca Plates that line the edge of the Pacific Ocean.
- 🌀 The people most at risk from activity in the Ring of Fire are in the US west coast, Chile, Japan and island nations including the Solomon Islands. These areas are most at risk because they lie on so-called subduction zones – which are boundaries that mark the collision between two of the planet's tectonic plates.
- 🌀 Around 75 % of the world's active and dormant volcanoes is present in the "Pacific Ring of Fire".
- 🌀 About 90 % of the world's earthquakes and 81 % of the world's largest earthquakes occur along the "Pacific Ring of Fire".





### WHY DOES THE RING OF FIRE TRIGGER EARTHQUAKES

- ❌ The Ring of Fire has the world's biggest concentration of subduction zones with world's deepest earthquakes happen in subduction zone areas as tectonic plates scrape against each other.
- ❌ The energy released from the Earth's molten core forces tectonic plates to move and they crash up against each other, causing friction. The friction causes a build-up of energy and when this energy is finally released it causes an earthquake.
- ❌ Tectonic plates usually only move on average a few centimetres each year, but when an earthquake strikes, they speed up massively and can move at several metres per second.



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## IMD HAS PREDICTED A COLD WAVE IN NORTHWEST INDIA

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted a cold wave in parts of Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh over the next few days.

### CRITERION FOR DECLARING COLD WAVES

- ❌ PLAINS - Minimum temperature ( $t_{min}$  (WS)) is equal to or less than  $10^{\circ}\text{C}$  at a weather station in the plains and is  $4.5^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $6.4^{\circ}\text{C}$  below the normal temperature for that period.
- ❌ HILLY AREAS - Minimum temperature ( $t_{min}$  (WS)) is equal to or less than  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$  at a weather station in the plains and is  $4.5^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $6.4^{\circ}\text{C}$  below the normal temperature for that period.

### REASONS FOR THE COLD WAVE CONDITIONS IN INDIA

**IMPACT OF WESTERN DISTURBANCE:** Cold wave conditions form due to lack of western disturbances. Western disturbances create precipitation and bring down day temperatures, but night temperatures remain steady.

**SNOWFALL IN THE UPPER HIMALAYAS:** This creates a wind chill factor for the northern states of India

**DOWNWARD SUBSIDENCE OF COLD AIR:** Subsiding air (from the upper Himalayas) further cools down creating low-temperature conditions over North India for a longer period.

**EFFECT OF LA NINA:** La Nina is known to favor cold waves in North India. It increases the severity of cold conditions, also the frequency and area covered under the grip of a cold wave become larger e.g. winters of October 2020 were colder than usual (2 degrees Celsius, the lowest since 1962) due to the impact of La Nina in the pacific.


#### IMPACT OF COLD WAVE CONDITIONS:

**IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE IN NORTH INDIA:** It creates a wider gap between day and night temperatures, this creates erratic winter conditions impacting agricultural practices in the Rabi season.

**IMPACT ON CASH CROPS:** It might also affect the productivity of cash crops such as coffee (Coffee growth is extremely sensitive to variations in temperatures), which grows mainly in south India.

**IMPACT ON HUMAN LIFE:** Cold wave conditions increase the risk of contracting flu, and could also lead to symptoms like nosebleeds and runny nose. It was also said to be responsible for the 2nd wave of COVID 19 in many parts of North India.

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# POLITY AND GOVERNANCE







**BILL TO AMEND PREAMBLE**

**PERMANENT COMMISSION FOR WOMEN**

**BILLS TO EXTEND TENURE OF ED AND CBI CHIEFS**

**SIX LAKH INDIANS RENOUNCED CITIZENSHIP**

**PANEL TO REVIEW EWS QUOTA**

**HIGH COURT AND SUPREME COURT JUDGES (SALARIES AND  
CONDITIONS OF SERVICE) AMENDMENT BILL, 2021**

**DAM SAFETY BILL (8)**

**ASSISTED REPRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY**

**CRYPTOCURRENCY AND REGULATION OF  
OFFICIAL DIGITAL CURRENCY BILL, 2021**

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**RTI PLEA SEEKING SBI REPORTS ON POLL BONDS DISMISSED**

**ANTI-DEFECTION LAW**

**GENERAL CONSENT FOR CBI**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS**

**GREATER TIPRALAND**

**SRESTHA SCHEME**

**NAI MANZIL SCHEME**

**SEDITION LAW**

**NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES  
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021**

**BETI BACHAO, BETI PADHAO' (BBBP) SCHEME**

**LAW COMMISSION OF INDIA**

**CITIZENSHIP (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2019**

**NATIONAL EXPORT INSURANCE ACCOUNT (NEIA) SCHEME**

**BARBADOS**

**COLLEGIUM SYSTEM (\*)**

**PRIVILEGE MOTION**

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**

**KARNATAKA DRAFT ANTI-CONVERSION BILL**

**DELIMITATION OF JAMMU & KASHMIR**

## BILL TO AMEND PREAMBLE

Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh Narayan Singh reserved the decision to allow the introduction of a private member's Bill to amend the Preamble to the Constitution.

### ABOUT THE CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021

- INTRODUCER: K J Alphons. (BJP Member)
- AMENDMENTS PROPOSED
  - to modify "EQUALITY of status and of opportunity" to "EQUALITY of status and of opportunity to be born, to be fed, to be educated, to get a job and to be treated with dignity".
  - to replace "Socialist" with "Equitable".
  - Adding "access to information technology" and "happiness" as objectives.

### AMENDABILITY OF THE PREAMBLE

Kesavananda Bharati vs State of Kerala (1973): The basic elements or the fundamental features of the constitution as contained in the Preamble cannot be altered by an amendment under Article 368.

- The Constitution (Forty-second Amendment (42<sup>nd</sup>)) Act, 1976 inserted "Socialist" and "Secular" to the original draft Sovereign, Democratic and Republic.
- The Constitution (Forty-second Amendment (42<sup>nd</sup>)) Act, 1976 inserted "integrity" to the original draft Unity of nation.

## PERMANENT COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

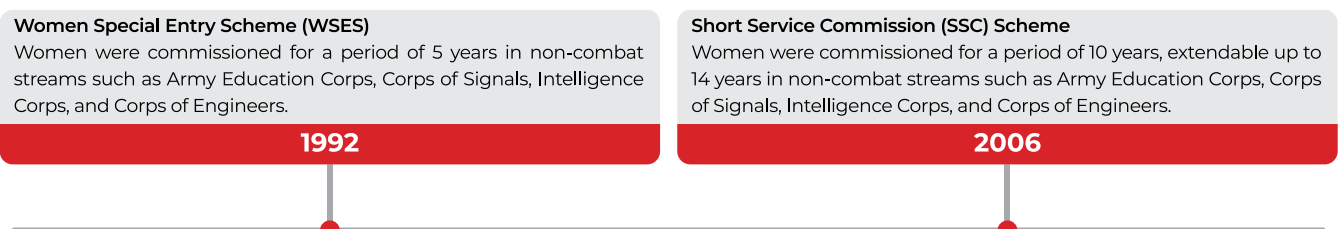
The Centre implemented Permanent Commission (PC) option to all eligible women Army officers. Earlier, the Supreme Court in February 2020 directed the Government to immediately grant Permanent Commission (PC) as well as command postings in all services other than combat for women officers in the Army.

*Lt. Col. Nitisha vs. Union of India Case:* On 25th March 2021, the Supreme Court held that the Army's selective evaluation process discriminated against and disproportionately affected women officers seeking permanent commission.

### TYPES OF COMMISSIONING IN INDIAN ARMY

- Permanent Commission:** Career in the army till the age of retirement.
- Short Service Commission:** Career in the army for 10 years, with the option to either leave, choose a 4 year extension or opt for Permanent Commission at the end of 10 years.

### TIMELINE OF WOMEN IN ARMY



- ☒ Serving WSES officers were given the option to move to the new SSC scheme, or to continue under the erstwhile WSES.
- ☒ Command appointment
- ☒ Could not qualify for government pension

## ANALYSIS - GRANTING A PERMANENT COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

<p><b>MOTHERHOOD, CHILDCARE, PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS:</b> Family separation, career prospects of spouses, education of children, prolonged absence due to pregnancy, motherhood were a greater challenge for women to meet the exigencies of service.</p>	<p><b>DOUBLE BURDEN:</b> Such forceful and exclusive transfer of household roles and responsibilities to women goes against the principle of gender equality. Such a premise of household duties as the exclusive responsibility of women exclude them from mainstream of society.</p>
<p><b>PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS:</b> Working in difficult terrains, isolated posts and adverse climate conditions can be challenging for women. They should be in prime physical condition to undertake combat tasks. The Govt. said women were not fit to serve in ground combat roles.</p>	<p><b>GENDER STEREOTYPING:</b> The premise of women as weak compared to men was meant to limit the growth of women. Proper training of women cadets can make them equally capable as men. Many countries including United States and Israel have inducted women in combat roles</p>
<p><b>BEHAVIOURAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CHALLENGES:</b> Army units were a "unique all-male environment". The presence of women officers would require "moderated behaviour". The male troop predominantly comes from a rural background and may not be in a position to accept commands from a female leader.</p>	<p><b>GENDER INCLUSIVE WORKSPACES:</b> It has been globally accepted that inclusive work space - gender neutral and gender diverse can improve the overall performance and efficacy of the organisation.</p>



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## BILLS TO EXTEND TENURE OF ED AND CBI CHIEFS

The Lok Sabha passed two Bills allowing the Centre to extend the tenure of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) chief and the CBI Director up to five years from the current fixed tenure of two years.

### ABOUT THE BILLS

- 🚫 OBJECTIVE: Provide up to three annual extensions for Directors of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) beyond their current fixed tenure of at least two years up to a maximum of five years.

### LAWS AMENDED

- 🚫 Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946
- 🚫 Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003

### ISSUES:

- 🚫 leave the heads of the two top investigative bodies insecure about their tenure and erode their professional independence.
- 🚫 Also, no criteria has been provided save for a vague reference to 'public interest' which is based on the subjective satisfaction of the Respondents.

## SIX LAKH INDIANS RENOUNCED CITIZENSHIP

More than six lakh Indians renounced citizenship in the past five years. In 2018, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) revised Form XXII under Citizenship Rules for Declaration of renunciation of citizenship, included a column on "circumstances/ reasons due to which applicant intends to acquire foreign citizenship and renounce Indian citizenship".

### CLAUSES - PART II OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

- 🚫 ARTICLE 5: Citizenship at the commencement of the Constitution.
- 🚫 ARTICLE 6: Rights of citizenship of certain persons who have migrated to India from Pakistan.
- 🚫 ARTICLE 7: Rights of citizenship of certain migrants to Pakistan.
- 🚫 ARTICLE 8: Rights of citizenship of certain persons of Indian origin residing outside India
- 🚫 ARTICLE 9: Persons voluntarily acquiring citizenship of a foreign State not to be citizens. India adopted single citizenship from British Constitution.
- 🚫 ARTICLE 10: Continuance of the rights of citizenship.
- 🚫 ARTICLE 11: Parliament to regulate the right of citizenship by law.

### DISQUALIFICATION FOR INDIAN CITIZENSHIP

The Citizenship Act, 1955 provide three ways of losing citizenship whether acquired under the Act or prior to it under the Constitution, viz, renunciation, termination and deprivation.

- 🚫 BY RENUNCIATION: Any major citizen of India of full capacity can renounce the citizenship through a declaration. The person ceases to be a citizen of India upon registration of that declaration. The Centre can withhold such a declaration made by the citizen during the period of war in which India is engaged. Further, when a

person renounces his Indian citizenship, every minor child of that person also loses Indian citizenship. However, when such a child attains the age of eighteen, he may resume Indian citizenship.

- ✂ BY TERMINATION: The Indian citizenship would be automatically terminated with the Indian citizen voluntarily acquiring the citizenship of another country. This provision is suspended during the period of war in which India is engaged.
- ✂ BY DEPRIVATION: It is a compulsory termination of Indian citizenship by the Central government, if:
  - the citizen has obtained the citizenship by fraud;
  - the citizen has shown disloyalty to the Constitution of India
  - the citizen has unlawfully traded or communicated with the enemy during a war
  - the citizen has, within five years after registration or naturalisation, been imprisoned in any country for two years; and
  - the citizen has been ordinarily resident out of India for seven years continuously.

## PANEL TO REVIEW EWS QUOTA

*The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment appointed a three-member committee to revisit the criteria for 10% reservation for economically weaker sections (EWS) in educational institutions and Government jobs.*

### MANDATE OF THE PANEL

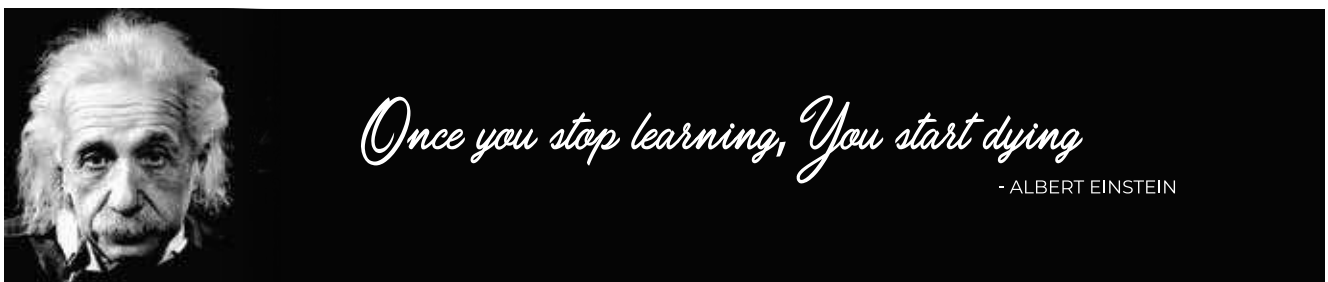
- ✂ Review the criteria determining the EWS category.
- ✂ Examine methodologies followed in identifying EWS category.
- ✂ Analyse and recommend a new criteria to identify the EWS in the country.

### PRESENT CRITERIA - ECONOMICALLY WEAKER SECTIONS (EWS)

- ✂ Individuals belonging to 'General Class' with an annual income below Rs 8 lakhs
- ✂ Ownership of agricultural land up to 5 acres
- ✂ Ownership of residential plot up to 1,000 square feet
- ✂ Owning residential plot of 100 square feet in notified municipalities
- ✂ Owning residential plot of 200 square yards in areas other than the notified municipalities

### PANEL CONSTITUTED UNDER ARTICLE 15

Article 15 (4) says that nothing shall prevent the state from making special provisions for the advancement of the socially and educationally backward classes or scheduled tribes or scheduled caste.



## HIGH COURT AND SUPREME COURT JUDGES (SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE) AMENDMENT BILL, 2021

*The Union Law Minister Kiren Rijju introduced the High Court and Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Amendment Bill, 2021 in Lok Sabha to amend the High Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act and Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Condition of Service) Act.*

### STORY SO FAR

**CURRENT PENSION SLABS:** Retired judges of the Supreme Court and State High Courts are entitled to get an additional quantum of pension, referred to as Family Pension on completing 80 years or 85 years or 90 years or 95 years or 100 years whichever the case may be.

**LACK OF CLARITY REGARDING THE DATE OF MIGRATION TO THE NEXT PENSION SLAB:** First day of the month when he completes the age or the first day of the month when he enters the age.

- 2018: The Guwahati High Court pronounced that the additional quantum of pension shall be made available from the first day of the month when he enters the age
- 2020: The Madhya Pradesh High Court also pronounced that the additional quantum of pension shall be made available from the first day of the month when he enters the age.

**BILL INSERTS Section 17B and Section 16B:** Pension shall be provided on the first day of completing the age and not in the first day of the month when he enters the age.

### CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS REGARDING SALARIES / PENSIONS

Article 125. The Article 125 says that the salaries of SC judges are determined by the parliament by law. Also, the parliament shall decide on the privileges and allowances provided to the judges in respect of leave of absence and pension.

## DAM SAFETY BILL

*The Rajya Sabha passed the Dam Safety Bill, 2019. The Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha on August 02, 2019.*

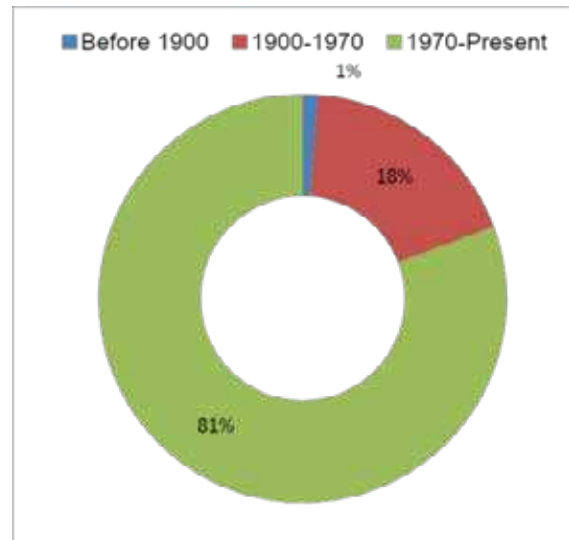
### SIGNIFICANCE

- UNIFORM STANDARDS:** Help all the States and Union Territories of India to adopt uniform standards relating to dam safety;
- SAFEGUARD LIVES AND PROPERTY:** Help in safeguarding human life, livestock and property.
- Addresses all issues concerning dam safety including regular inspection of dams, Emergency Action Plan, comprehensive dam safety review, adequate repair and maintenance funds for dam safety, Instrumentation and Safety Manuals.
- Lays onus of dam safety on the dam owner and provides for penal provisions for commission and omission of certain acts.



**Concerns raised:**

- ❌ Focused on structural safety and not on operational safety.
- ❌ Inadequate compensation to the people affected by dams.
- ❌ Need for an independent regulator as well as for a precise definition of stakeholders.
- ❌ Encroaches upon the sovereignty of states to manage their dams, and violates the principles of federalism enshrined in the constitution.



According to the National Register of Large Dams - 2019, 67 dams were built prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century and 1,039 dams during the first 70 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<p>India ranks third globally with 5,745 large dams in operation. There were 42 instances of dam failure since 1979, the latest being Annamayya reservoir in Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh that led to the death of at least 20 people in November 2021. There has been a long-felt need for a uniform law and administrative structure for ensuring dam safety.</p>	<p>Provides for all the States and Union Territories of India to adopt uniform dam safety procedures to ensure safety of dams and safeguarding human life, livestock and property. Addresses all issues concerning dam safety including regular inspection of dams, Emergency Action Plan, comprehensive dam safety review, adequate repair and maintenance funds for dam safety, Instrumentation and Safety Manuals. Lays onus of dam safety on the dam owner and provides for penal provisions for commission and comission of certain acts.</p>
<p>Limited powers with The Central Water Commission, through the National Committee on Dam Safety (NCDS), Central Dam Safety Organization (CDSO) and State Dam Safety Organizations (SDSO) to make recommendations of advisory in nature</p>	<p><b>INSTITUTIONS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON DAM SAFETY: Evolve policies and recommend regulations regarding dam safety;</li> <li>2. NATIONAL DAM SAFETY AUTHORITY: Implement policies of the National Committee, and resolving matters between State Dam Safety Organisations (SDSOs), or between a SDSO and any dam owner in that state.</li> </ol> <p><b>INSTITUTIONS AT THE STATE LEVEL</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. STATE DAM SAFETY ORGANISATIONS (SDSOs): Surveillance, inspecting, and monitoring dams;</li> <li>2. STATE COMMITTEE ON DAM SAFETY: Supervise state dam rehabilitation programs,</li> </ol>

	review the progress on measures recommended in relation to dam safety, among others.
Several States, including Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Odisha, opposed the legislation on the ground that it encroached upon the sovereignty of States to manage their dams. Critics also raised the constitutional validity of the legislation in the light of water being a State subject. Entry 17 of State List: Irrigation, water supply, canals, embankments, drainage, water power and water storage. The Parliament would have the jurisdiction to frame a law for dams on rivers where the river and its valley are entirely within a State.	The Parliamentary Standing Committee Report on Water Resources-2011 recommended for the Centre to frame the legislation to prescribe the regulation of uniform dam safety procedure for specified dams invoking Entry 56 of the Union List. The Centre should be competent to enact such a law with inter-State basins covering 92% of the country's area and most of the dams. Entry 56 of the Union List: Regulation of river valleys and inter state rivers.
Even though the Central Water Commission (CWC), along with the Central Dam Safety Organisation (CDSO), has been functioning as the apex body to advise States on issues of dam safety, there is no specific Central law that governs the subject, given the situation that the ownership of dams and their maintenance predominantly falls in the purview of the States. In July 1986, a panel of experts recommended to the Centre that a legislation be framed. In 2007, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal Assemblies passed resolutions empowering Parliament to come up with a law on dam safety, under Article 252. Since 2010, different versions of the Bill were introduced.	A pan India law that would provide uniform provisions for the dams in India can ensure effective management of the dam.

## DAM SAFETY ACT - OVERSTEPPING BOUNDARIES

The construction of a dam is not a disaster, but the mismanagement and poor planning of the dam is a disaster that affects all of us in a severe manner. Hence, the government must consider the issue of dam safety holistically and avoid building large dams for political gains in fragile regions. While dams have played a key role in fostering rapid and sustained agricultural growth and development in India, there has been a long felt need for a uniform law and administrative structure for ensuring dam safety. This can be a matter of concern,

especially since about 75 percent of the large dams in India are more than 25 years old and about 164 dams are more than 100 years old. A badly maintained, unsafe dam can be a hazard to human life, flora and fauna, public and private assets and the environment.

## ASSISTED REPRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY

*The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2020 was introduced in Lok Sabha on September 14, 2020. The Bill seeks to provide for the regulation of Assisted Reproductive Technology services in the country.*

<p>Defines Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) to include all techniques that seek to obtain a pregnancy.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Donation of gamete (sperm or oocyte);</li> <li>2. In-vitro-fertilisation;</li> <li>3. Gestational surrogacy</li> </ol>	
<p>REGULATION OF ART CLINICS AND BANKS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a National Registry of Banks and Clinics of India to act as a central database with details of all ART clinics and banks in the country</li> <li>2. State Governments appoint registration authorities to facilitate the registration process of clinics and banks</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Constituted a National Board to lay down and implement a code of conduct for people working at IVF clinics.</li> <li>2. Determined the minimum standards of physical infrastructure, laboratory, diagnostic equipment and expert manpower to be employed by ART clinics and banks.</li> </ol>
<p>CONDITIONS FOR DONATION AND SUPPLY OF GAMETES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Registered ART bank can collect semen from males between 21 and 55 years of age, and oocytes from females between 23 and 35 years of age.</li> <li>2. An oocyte donor should be an ever-married woman having at least one alive child of her own (minimum three years of age). The woman can donate oocyte only once in her life and not more than seven oocytes can be retrieved from her.</li> </ol>	<p>Excluded members of the LGBTQIA+ community and single men on grounds of Indian family structure and social milieu and norms.</p>
<p>REGULATION OF ART CLINICS</p> <p>National and State Boards for Surrogacy constituted under Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2019 regulate ART services at national and State levels respectively.</p> <p>POWERS &amp; FUNCTIONS- NATIONAL BOARD:</p>	<p>Prohibits any clinic or bank to advertise or offer sex-selective ART as a criminal offence with imprisonment between five and ten years, or fine between Rs 10 lakh and Rs 25 lakh, or both.</p>



<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advise the Centre on ART related policy matters</li> <li>2. Review and monitor the implementation of the Bill</li> <li>3. Formulate code of conduct and standards for ART clinics and banks</li> <li>4. Oversee various bodies to be constituted under the Bill.</li> </ol> <p>POWERS &amp; FUNCTIONS - STATE BOARDS Coordinate enforcement of the policies and guidelines for ART as per the recommendations, policies, and regulations of the National Board.</p>	
<p>RIGHTS OF A CHILD BORN THROUGH ART: Deemed to be a biological child of the commissioning couple, entitled with the rights and privileges available to a natural child of the commissioning couple. A donor will not have any parental rights over the child.</p>	<p>The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2020 safeguards the rights of the child born through ART at par with biological child.</p>
<p>OFFENCES AND PENALTIES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Abandoning, or exploiting children born through ART</li> <li>2. Selling, purchasing, trading, or importing human embryos or gametes</li> <li>3. Using intermediates to obtain donors</li> <li>4. Exploiting commissioning couple, woman, or the gamete donor in any form</li> </ol> <p>Transferring the human embryo into a male or an animals</p>	<p>Prescribes a fine between five and ten lakh rupees for the first contravention and imprisonment for a term between eight and 12 years, and a fine between 10 and 20 lakh rupees for subsequent contraventions.</p>
<p>No court will take cognisance of offences under the Bill, except on a complaint made by the National or State Board or any officer authorised by the Boards.</p>	
<p>Seeks to streamline the cryo-preservation processes for sperm, oocytes and embryos.</p>	
<p>Make genetic testing of the embryo mandatory before implantation for the benefit of the child born through art.</p>	

SURROGACY	ANTI-RETROVIRAL THERAPY
The Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill relates to surrogacy, an infertility treatment, where a third person, a woman, is the surrogate mother.	In ART, treatments can be availed by the commissioning couple themselves and it is not always necessary that a third person is involved.
Surrogacy is allowed for only Indian married couples.	ART procedures are open to married couples, live-in partners, single women, and also foreigners.
A 2015 notification prohibits commissioning of surrogacy in India by foreigners or OCI or PIO cardholders, but NRIs holding Indian citizenship can avail surrogacy.	Foreigners can visit India under medical tourism to avail ART services.

## CRYPTOCURRENCY AND REGULATION OF OFFICIAL DIGITAL CURRENCY BILL, 2021

### SALIENT FEATURES OF CRYPTOCURRENCIES

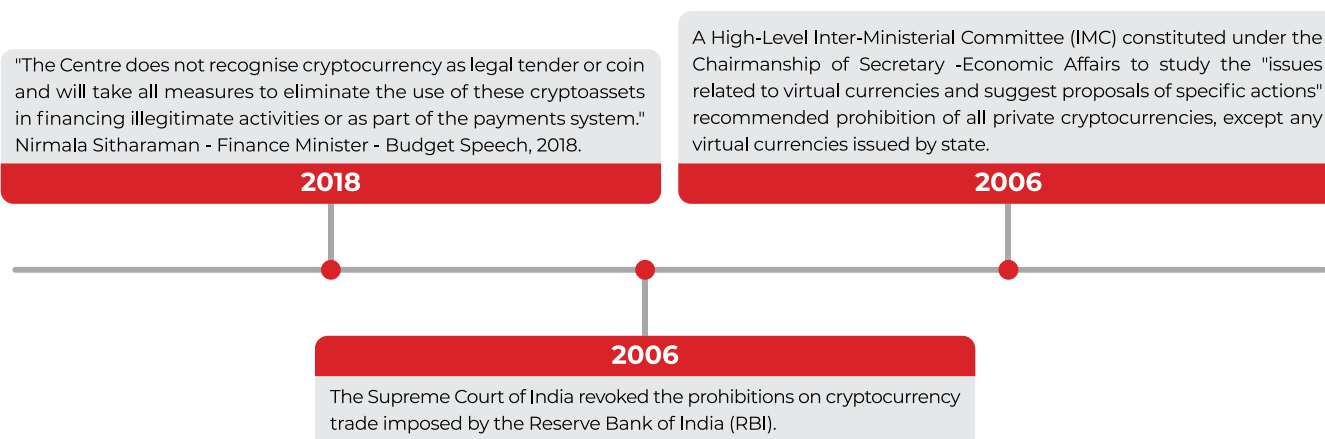
- 🚫 SECURE AND ANONYMOUS TRANSACTIONS
- 🚫 DECENTRALISED ASSETS WITH NO CENTRAL BANK CONTROLLING THEM

### RISKS POSED BY CRYPTOCURRENCIES

- 🚫 HAWALA TRANSACTIONS
- 🚫 MONEY LAUNDERING
- 🚫 TERRORIST FINANCING
- 🚫 PURCHASE OF CONTRABAND GOODS

At one extreme we have China has almost banned cryptocurrencies and introduced its own centrally regulated digital currency called Digital Renminbi. On the other hand, El Salvador which is the first country to use Bitcoin as legal tender. Indeed, El Salvador is planning to build the world's first 'Bitcoin City', funded initially by Bitcoinbacked bonds.

### STORY SO FAR / TIMELINE



# ABOUT CRYPTOCURRENCY AND REGULATION OF OFFICIAL DIGITAL CURRENCY BILL, 2021

STATUS: DRAFT

## SALIENT FEATURES AND ANALYSIS OF THE BILL

SALIENT FEATURES	ANALYSIS
Legally define cryptocurrency as any information, code, or token which has a digital representation of value and has utility in a business activity, or acts as a store of value, or a unit of account.	Legal definition too broad to include various forms of digital tokens neither necessarily generated through cryptography nor pose the risks associated with cryptocurrencies.
Prohibit mining, holding, selling, trade, issuance, disposal or use of cryptocurrency in the country and make it punishable with a fine or imprisonment of up to 10 years, or both.	Penalties prescribed for certain offences under the Bill is disproportionately higher compared to other similar economic offences in the country.
A person must declare and dispose of any cryptocurrency in his possession, within 90 days from the commencement of the Act.	The capacity of enforcement agencies to ensure the compliance to such provisions is doubtful.
Permits the use of processes or technology underlying any cryptocurrency for experiment, research, or teaching.	Allow the RBI to explore potential benefits such as better record keeping and more efficient cross border payments.
The Centre in consultation with the RBI may issue digital rupee as legal tender. The RBI may also notify a digital currency recognised as legal tender in a foreign jurisdiction, as a foreign currency.	Such a digital currency issued and regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) can provide alternative opportunities for individuals to secure their investments and explore the opportunities in a legitimate manner.

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POLITY AND GOVERNANCE



# PROHIBITION OF CHILD MARRIAGE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021

*The Union Cabinet cleared a proposal to raise the legal age of marriage of women from 18 to 21 years to bring uniformity in the marriageable age of men and women.*

## TIME LINE



## ABOUT PROHIBITION OF CHILD MARRIAGE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021

Amend various personal laws - the Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1972; the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1936; the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937; the Special Marriage Act, 1954; the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955; and the Foreign Marriage Act, 1956 relating to marriage of various communities to ensure a uniform age of marriage.

## IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATIONS OF JAYA JAITLEY COMMITTEE:

- ✎ Raise the age of marriage from 18 to 21 years.
- ✎ Ensure increased access to schools and colleges for girls, including their transportation to these institutes from far-flung areas.
- ✎ Provide skill and business training, besides sex education in schools.

## DISABILITIES OF CHILD BRIDES

1. EDUCATION: Women have societal pressure to get married early and raise family. Domestic responsibilities of raising a family would serve as an obstacle to pursue education.
2. ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE: Early marriage depriving women of proper education and job prospects perpetuate economic dependence over husband. This lack of economic independence pushes them into a cycle of poverty and limits educational opportunities for their children as well.
3. HEALTH ISSUES: Child marriages are often associated with unwanted pregnancies and are a greater risk of having complications during her pregnancy such as premature babies, retarded growth, prolonged labour and also miscarriage. Child brides unable to ensure safer sex practices are also vulnerable to Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs).
4. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: Women who are less educated and married between 15 to 19 years of age are more likely to be victims of domestic violence compared to more educated women. A possible explanation for this could be that there exists an imbalance of power between couples consisting of younger women and older men.
5. MENTAL HEALTH: The institution of marriage and the accompanying responsibilities can have an overwhelming impact on the mental health of an underage woman. They are likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression.
6. POVERTY: Girls belonging to poor families are more likely to get married at an early age. However, women who get married at an early age are likely to spend their lives in poverty.

They lack economic independence and their prospects of gaining reduce drastically after their marriage. On the contrary, women who are educated and economically independent can provide for their family and add to the family income.

<p>Young women not yet financially independent, who are unable to exercise their rights and freedoms are married off at young ages often against their wishes suffer from various kinds of disabilities.</p>	<p>Raising the age of marriage is one of its recommendations. Besides, a strong campaign to reform patriarchal mindsets, and improved access to education is also necessary. As per the National Family Health Survey (2019-2021), 23.3 % of women married before 18, which shows that the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 has not been wholly successful in preventing child marriages, especially among the poor.</p>
<p>The change in the age limit would provide freedom for the women to empower herself with education and choose a partner of choice.</p>	<p>Women's rights activists point out that parents often use this Act to punish their daughters who marry against their wishes or elope to evade forced marriages, domestic abuse, and lack of education facilities. The legislation within a patriarchal setting is more likely to increase parents' authority over young adults.</p>
<p>The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill amends various personal laws and prescribes uniform code for all Indian citizens regarding the marriage.</p>	<p>Such an act of forcible homogenisation is an attack on the diversity of India.</p>

## WAY FORWARD

- ✎ States can leverage their network of residential schools, girls' hostels, and public transport, especially in underserved areas, to ensure that teenage girls do not get pushed out of education.
- ✎ Girls' clubs should be systematically formed in high school to provide informal social networks for group study, solidarity, and resilience.
- ✎ Teachers should hold regular gender equality conversations with high school girls and boys to shape progressive attitudes that will sustain into adulthood.
- ✎ Empowerment measures, too, are required to end child marriage, such as community engagement through programmes like Mahila Samakhya. Children's village assemblies in the 2.5 lakh gram panchayats across India can provide a platform for children to voice their concerns.
- ✎ Decentralizing birth and marriage registration to gram panchayats will protect women and girls with essential age and marriage documents, thus better enabling them to claim their rights.

## CONCLUSION

Marriage is based on cultural norms and practice. As India is making progress, there is a need for parity in the legal age of marriage of men and women which can further be a step towards equality. The decision of the Central government is commendable, however, there must be stricter enforcement of the law. Good intent does not guarantee favourable outcomes. Coercive laws without wide societal support often fail to deliver even when their statement of objects and reasons aims for the larger public good.

## PRIORITY FOR BILL ON VOTER ID-AADHAAR LINK

*The Election Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021 has been listed for introduction in the Lok Sabha. The Bill seeks to link electoral rolls to Aadhaar and allows electoral registration officers to ask for the Aadhaar of applicants for registration as voters to establish their identity.*

**OBJECTIVE:** Seeks to amend the Representation of the People Act to bring in key reforms including voluntary linkage of voter ID with Aadhaar.

### SALIENT FEATURES

- Empower the officers to ask for the number from persons already included in the electoral roll for the purposes of authentication of entries in electoral roll, and to identify registration of name of the same person in the electoral roll of more than one constituency or more than once in the same constituency.
- No application for inclusion of name in the electoral roll shall be denied and no entries in the electoral roll shall be deleted for inability of an individual to furnish or intimate Aadhaar number due to such sufficient cause as may be prescribed.
- People who cannot furnish their Aadhaar numbers will be allowed to present other documents to establish identity.
- According to the Bill circulated to the Lok Sabha members ahead of its introduction, various Sections of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 and 1951 will be amended.
- The Statement of Objects and Reasons says Section 23 of the RP Act, 1950 will be amended to allow linking of the roll data with the Aadhaar ecosystem to curb the menace of multiple enrolment of the same person in different places.

### PROVISIONS AND ANALYSIS

Section 23 of the RoP Act, 1950 Link the electoral roll data with the Aadhaar ecosystem with the stated objective to curb the menace of multiple enrolment of the same person in different places. Individuals registering as voters needs to furnish Aadhaar number or alternate documents, as prescribed by the Centre before electoral registration officer. Besides, registered voters may also need to furnish their Aadhaar numbers to authenticate their entries in the electoral roll.	The amendment shift the burden of proof towards individuals who may be unable/unwilling to link their Aadhaar to justify their retention on the rolls. Thus, voters will be deleted from the electoral rolls without any procedural safeguards as law provide no opportunities for a right to a hearing before such deletion. This provision goes against the spirit of universal adult franchise, where the Government proactively ensure registration on the electoral rolls.
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<p><b>VOTER REGISTRATION</b> Amend Section 14 of the RoPA, 1950 - Allow four “qualifying” dates (January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1 in a calendar year) for eligible people to register as voters.</p>	<p><b>VOTER REGISTRATION</b> At present, January 1 of every year is the sole qualifying date for eligible people to register as voters. People who turn 18 on or before January 01 can register as voters.</p>
<p>Amend Section 20 of the RoPA, 1950 and Section 60 of the RP Act, 1951 Replace the word “wife” with the word “spouse” making the election statutes “gender neutral”, especially for service voters.</p>	<p>At present, male spouses of female armed services employees are not eligible to cast votes under service voter.</p>
<p><b>POLITICAL PROFILING</b> It is much easier for the Government to track welfare subsidies and benefits received by the voter with linking electoral IDs with Aadhaar.</p>	<p>This can be used by political parties to selectively target their messages to specific voters, using information not available in public domain.</p>

Opposition parties and activists object to the Bill broadly on the following grounds:

- a. That it violates individual privacy by mandating the linking of Aadhaar details with voter identity cards;
- b. That it goes against the Supreme Court judgment that limits the use of Aadhaar to the financial and welfare benefits given by the government, and bars the unnecessary expansion of the scope of Aadhaar to other areas of life;
- c. It may lead to large-scale deletion of names either inadvertently or deliberate targeting;
- d. That it is not really voluntary, as only a set of reasons to be prescribed later can be given for those who cannot or do not wish to give their Aadhaar number; and
- e. That it may help political parties to profile voters as favourable or unfavourable.

**SPACE FOR ROUGH NOTES**

## RTI PLEA SEEKING SBI REPORTS ON POLL BONDS DISMISSED

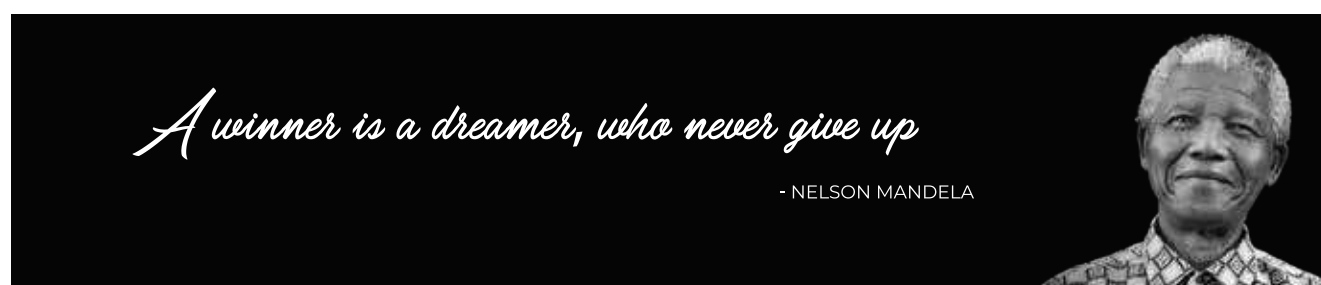
The Central Information Commission (CIC) has dismissed an appeal seeking disclosure of reports submitted by the State Bank of India to the Centre and the Reserve Bank of India regarding sale and encashment of electoral bonds in 2018 which are withheld by the SBI on grounds of personal information held in fiduciary capacity.

### Salient features of the Electoral Bonds:

- ✿ TYPE: Donors interested in making donations can purchase Electoral Bonds in denomination of Rs 1000; Rs 10,000; Rs 100,000 and Rs 100,0000 through cheque or digital mode only.
- ✿ TENOR: Redeemed in the designated account of a registered political party within a prescribed time limit of 15 days from the date of issuance of bond.
- ✿ ELIGIBILITY OF POLITICAL PARTY: Interest free financial instruments to donate money to registered political parties who secured 1% of votes in the recently held General Elections or State Assembly Elections.

The Finance Bill, 2017 amended Section 13A of the Income-Tax Act, 1961 to cap donations to political parties by a single anonymous donor to Rs. 2000 (one tenth of the current limit of Rs 20,000) and provide political party exemption if the donation not exceeding Rs. 2,000 is received through instruments such as cheque, draft, electronic clearing system or electoral bond.

Political parties need not disclose the identity of donors for donations below Rs 20,000.	All donations above Rs 2000 to political parties can be made through Electoral Bonds only. Prevent political funding through unaccounted money. Nearly 70 %-80 % of funds received by political parties are from anonymous sources in the form of cash donations below Rs 20000.
Information on corporate political funding is available to the public.	Identity of donors making donations through Electoral Bonds is not disclosed.
Regulated corporate funding through a cap of 7.5 % of the profit.	Repealed the 7.5 % cap on corporate donations through electoral bonds.
Companies, at least 3 years in existence, are eligible for funding political parties.	Repealed the clause that mandated Companies to have at least 3 years in existence.



## ANTI-DEFECTION LAW

The Congress Party has written to the Speaker, Meghalaya Legislative Assembly seeking disqualification of 10 of the 12 MLAs that recently deserted the Party to join the All India Trinamool Congress (AITMC).

### CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

- Article 102 (1): Prescribes conditions for disqualifications for membership from Parliament and
- Article 191 (1) (a): Prescribes conditions for disqualifications for membership from the State Legislatures.

### GROUND FOR DISQUALIFICATION OF MPs [ARTICLE 102]

- Any individual holding any "office of profit" under Union, State or Local Governments and Union or State Authorities declared so by Parliament by law.
- The Supreme Court in Pradyut Bordoloi vs Swapan Roy (2001) identified "Office of Profit" as any office under the Union, State or any Local Governments under which the appointments and service conditions, including remuneration are determined by the Government.
- The Supreme Court in Jaya Bacchan vs. Union of India identified "Office of Profit" as any office under the Union, State or any Local Governments which makes the holder capable of yielding a profit or pecuniary gain.
- Any alien individual who has voluntarily acquired the citizenship of a foreign State, or is under any acknowledgment of allegiance or adherence to a foreign State.
- Any individual declared of unsound mind by a competent court.
- Any individual declared as undischarged insolvent by a competent authority.
- An individual disqualified under any law made by the Parliament.

### SALIENT FEATURES OF CONSTITUTION (FIFTY – SECOND AMENDMENT (52ND)) ACT, 1985:

- Added the Tenth Schedule to the Constitution containing provisions regarding disqualification of MPs and MLAs / MLCs on grounds of political defection.
- Voluntarily relinquishing membership of the political party.
- Exercise voting contrary to whip issued by political party.
- Independent member joining political party after elections.
- Nominated House members joining any political party after the expiry of 6 months from the date of assuming office.
- CONSTITUTION (NINETY – FIRST AMENDMENT (91ST)) ACT, 2004:
- Repealed paragraph 3 of the Xth Schedule: Provided immunity from disqualification following defection in case of a split in original party by not less than one-third of the members of such party.

### EXEMPTIONS FROM DISQUALIFICATION:

- Merger of a political party with another. [Paragraph 4]
- Voluntarily relinquishing the membership of a political party after being elected to post of Speaker / Deputy Speaker of the House of the People and State Legislative



Assemblies, Deputy Chairman of the Council of States and Chairman / Deputy Chairman of the State Legislative Councils or re-joining political party after ceasing to hold the office. [Paragraph 5]

#### **DECIDING AUTHORITY:**

- ✎ Presiding officer of the House makes final and binding decisions on any question regarding disqualification arising out of defection. [Paragraph 7] The Supreme Court in *Kihoto Hollohon v. Zachilhu and others* (1992) expanded the scope of 'judicial review' upon adjudicatory powers of the presiding officer regarding any matter associated with the disqualification of a member of a House under the Schedule X of House on the grounds of mala fides, perversity etc.

## **GENERAL CONSENT FOR CBI**

#### **STORY SO FAR:**

A Supreme Court bench has referred a case for consideration of the Chief Justice of India, in which the CBI had filed an affidavit on the withdrawal of 'general consent' to the agency by several States. Eight States — West Bengal, Maharashtra, Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Mizoram — have withdrawn consent to the CBI for launching investigations in their territory, leading the Bench to point out that the situation is "not a desirable position".

#### **ABOUT CENTRAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (CBI)**

Delhi Special Police Establishment Act of 1946

ROLE AND DUTIES

JURISDICTION

- ✎ The general consent given by the States enables the CBI to investigate corruption charges freely,
- ✎ as "police" is Entry 2 in the State List under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution. Entry 80 of the Union List which provides for the extension of powers of the police force belonging to one State to any area in another State but not without its permission.

Such widespread withdrawal of consent is rendering it redundant with regard to investigation of corruption charges against Central employees and undertakings working within the territorial jurisdiction of various States.

The withdrawal of general consent does not affect pending investigation (*Kazi Lendhup Dorji v. CBI*, 1994) or the cases registered in another State in relation to which investigation leads into the territory of the State which has withdrawn general consent; nor does the withdrawal circumscribe the power of the jurisdictional High Court to order a CBI investigation.

In the *Advance Insurance Co. Ltd* case, 1970, a Constitution Bench held that the definition of "State", as contained in The General Clauses Act, includes Union Territories as well and hence the CBI, being a force constituted for Union Territories as recognised under the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act of 1946, can conduct investigation into the territories of the States only with their consent.

As the Supreme Court is currently hearing many cases including the appeal against the decision of the Calcutta High Court in the *Vinay Mishra* case (2021) by which the High

Court refused to interfere with the ongoing CBI investigation, the Court in due course is not barred from reading down the requirement of States' consent qua investigation on officials of Central establishments, while retaining the need for consent with regard to other aspects of policing.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS

*PRIVATE MEMBER: Any MP who is not a Minister is referred to as a private member. purpose: draw the government's attention to what individual MPs see as issues and gaps in the existing legal framework, which require legislative intervention.*

### Admissibility of a private member's Bill:

- ✎ The admissibility is decided by the Chairman for Rajya Sabha and Speaker in the case of Lok Sabha.
- ✎ Its rejection by the House has no implication on the parliamentary confidence in the government or its resignation.

### The procedure is roughly the same for both Houses:

- ✎ The Member must give at least a month's notice before the Bill can be listed for introduction.
- ✎ The House secretariat examines it for compliance with constitutional provisions and rules on legislation before listing.

### Is there any exception?

While government Bills can be introduced and discussed on any day, private member's Bills can be introduced and discussed only on Fridays.

### Has a private member's bill ever become a law?

- ✎ To date, Parliament has passed 14 such Bills, six of them in 1956.
- ✎ No private member's Bill has been passed by Parliament since 1970.
- ✎ In the 14th Lok Sabha, of the over 300 private member's Bills introduced, roughly four per cent were discussed, the remaining 96 per cent lapsed without a single dialogue.

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POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

## GREATER TIPRALAND

*Several tribals are demanding for a separate state - Greater Tipraland comprising of certain regions in Tripura.*

### What is the issue?

- There are 19 notified Scheduled Tribes in Tripura.
- Among these, 5.92 lakh are Tripuris, 1.88 lakh are Reangs.
- These three tribal groups are the major tribals in the state.
- Some of the minor tribal groups have joined hands and formed TIPRA Motha (Tirpaha Indigenous Regional Alliance) and IPFT (Indigenous People's Front of Tripura) political parties. These parties are now arguing that they want a separate state for their "survival and existence".

### Constitutional Validity in the Issue

They claim that they are making the demand under Article 2 and Article 3 of the constitution. Article 2 of the constitution says that "The Parliament shall permit the establishment of new states and union territories and also permit the entry of new states and UTs into the Indian Union". Article 3 says that "Parliament shall increase or diminish the area of a state".

## SRESTHA SCHEME

*The Government of India launched SRESTHA Scheme for the Scheduled Caste students on Mahaparinirvan Divas. The death anniversary of Dr B R Ambedkar, the Father of Indian Constitution, is celebrated as Mahaparinirvan Divas in the country.*

### ABOUT SRESTHA SCHEME

- OBJECTIVE:** Provide quality residential education to meritorious students of Scheduled Caste.
- NODAL MINISTRY:** Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

### SIGNIFICANCE

- Arrest the drop out of students from courses 9 to 12.
- Help more than 24,800 students in next five years.

## NAI MANZIL SCHEME

*The Union Ministry of Minority Affairs launched Nai Manzil Scheme in 2015.*

### ABOUT NAI MANZIL SCHEME

- OBJECTIVE:** Provide skill training for notified minority youth (17-35) with certified employable skills.

### FOCUS GROUP:

- School drop outs and youths educated in community education institutions without proper school leaving certificate

- ☒ Reservation of 30 % seat for minority girls

SIGNIFICANCE: Helps the youths to seek better employment in organised sector.

#### OBJECTIVE OF THE SCHEME

- ☒ Provide skills to the youths in the country.
- ☒ Establish employment linkages for minority youth and school dropouts.
- ☒ Contribute to increase human resource potential in the country.
- ☒ Realise the National aspirations of Make in India and Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

#### Other Similar Scheme

- ☒ **Seekho Aur Kamao:** It means Learn and Earn. It is also called SAK scheme. It is a placement linked skill development scheme. It aims to provide skills to minority youths in the age group of 14 to 45 years. It includes modern and traditional skills based on the qualification, market potential and economic trends. It reserves 33% of the total allocation to the female beneficiaries.
- ☒ **USTTAD:** USTTAD is Upgrading the Skills and Training in Traditional Arts or Crafts for Development. It aims to promote and preserve rich heritage of traditional arts and crafts of minority communities.
- ☒ **Hamari Dharohar Scheme:** The scheme aims to preserve the culture, practices, beliefs, customs and traditions of minority communities in the country.
- ☒ **Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram:** Aims to provide better infrastructure facilities to the minority communities mainly in education and health.
- ☒ **Navya Savera Scheme:** Aims to empower minority community students preparing for competitive exams

SPACE FOR ROUGH NOTES



## SEDITION LAW

Union Law Minister Kiren Rijju categorically rejected any proposal to scrap Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code that deals with sedition is under consideration.

Section 124A says, "Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards, the Government established by law in [India], shall be punished with [imprisonment for life], to which fine may be added, or with imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which fine may be added, or with fine."

Section 124 A of the IPC, 1860 prohibits publication of seditious materials in some permanent form that incite hatred, contempt or draw disaffection towards the Home Government as a cognizable offense punishable by law.

Section 124-A is perhaps the prince among the political sections of the Indian Penal Code designed to suppress the liberties of a citizen. – Gandhi Prosecution 1922.

### NOTABLE VERDICTS OF COURTS

- ✎ Ram Nandan vs. State (1958): The Allahabad High Court struck down Section 124-A.
- ✎ Kedarnath v. State of Bihar (1962): The Supreme Court upheld the constitutional validity of Section 124-A for its utility to deal with the public order or security of the State.
- ✎ Maneka Gandhi vs. Union of India (1978): The Court upheld the right of individual to criticize or draw general opinions against policies and actions of the Government within reasonable limits under the Freedom of speech and expression.
- ✎ Balwant Singh v. State of Punjab (1995): The Supreme Court upheld the primacy of 'incitement' over 'advocacy' as the merit for the application of sedition charges under Section 124A.

### ABOUT ALL INDIA JUDICIAL SERVICE

The proposal for an All India Judicial Service was first suggested in the Chief Justices' Conference in 1961 as a way to remove any scope for judicial or executive intervention in the appointments to the judiciary in the High Courts and the Supreme Court in India. The Constitution was amended in 1976 to provide for an AIJS under Article 312.

## BETI BACHAO, BETI PADHAO' (BBBP) SCHEME

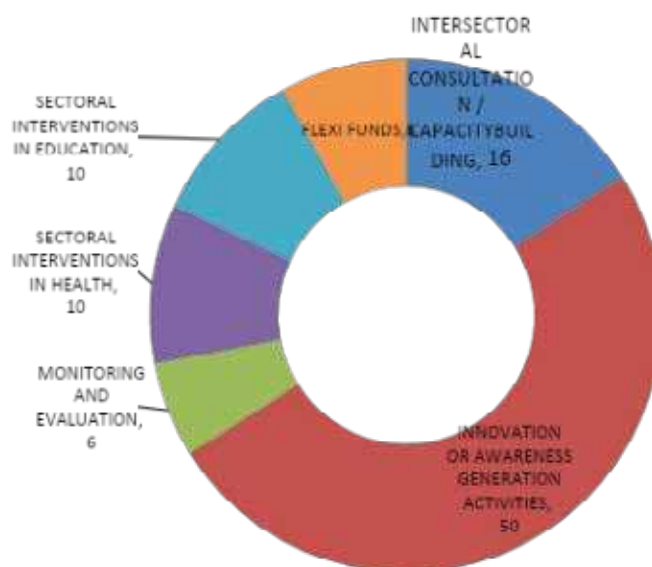
The Government spent 80% of the funds under the 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' (BBBP) scheme on media campaigns.

### ABOUT BETI BACHAO, BETI PADHAO

- ✎ DATE OF LAUNCH: January 2015
- ✎ OBJECTIVE: Address sex-selective abortion and the declining child sex ratio

Advocacy and media campaigns include

- 🌀 television publicity,
- 🌀 outdoor and print media,
- 🌀 SMS campaigns,
- 🌀 radio spots and
- 🌀 community engagement through exhibition vans.



## NATIONAL EXPORT INSURANCE ACCOUNT (NEIA) SCHEME

*The Government approves continuation of the National Export Insurance Account (NEIA) scheme and infusion of Rs. 1,650 crore Grant-in-aid over 5 years.*

### SIGNIFICANCE OF CAPITAL INFUSION

- 🌀 Help the Indian Project Exporters (IPE) to tap the huge potential of project exports in focus market.
- 🌀 Enhance domestic manufacturing supporting project exports with locally sourced content.
- 🌀 Enable NEIA to support project exports worth ₹33,000 Crore at full capacity utilization.
- 🌀 In turn this support will translate into an estimated output of domestically manufactured goods to the tune of ₹25,000 Crore approximately.
- 🌀 Enhance the underwriting capacity of the Trust.

### ABOUT NEIA- Performance highlights:

ESTABLISHED: 2006

Promote Medium and Long-Term (MLT) / project exports by enabling credit and political insurance.

Supports commercially viable and are strategically important projects.

Corpus commitment of GoI: ₹4000 crore

Maximum Liability Permissible: ₹80000 crore

The contribution received from the Government of India over the years, as of March 31, 2021 was Rs.3,091 crore.

NEIA has extended 213 covers, with a consolidated project value of Rs. 53,000 crores, to 52 countries as of 31st August 2021.

Its impact in enabling project exports has been most significant in Africa and South Asia.

### INTENSIFIED MISSION INDRADHANUSH (IMI) 2.0

The Union Ministry of Health Affairs launched 'Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0' on October 31, 2019 to ensure universal vaccination among the children. It had a special focus

on improving coverage in areas with “low” immunisation.

#### **ABOUT INTENSIFIED MISSION INDRADHANUSH (IMI) 2.0**

Reach each and every child below the age of two years and all pregnant women still uncovered/partially covered in 271 districts of the country.

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## **NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021**

*The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Amendment) Bill, 2021 was recently introduced in Lok Sabha to replace an ordinance promulgated on September 30, 2021.*

#### **ABOUT THE NDPS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021**

- ✎ **SIGNIFICANCE:** Rectify an error in the NDPS (Amendment) Act, 2014. Anomaly crept with the amendment of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act in 2014.

#### **TIME LINE**

- ✎ Prior to 2014 amendment: Section 2 [viii (i) - (v)] - Defined term ‘illicit traffic’.
- 2014 amendment : Section 2 [viii (i) - (v)] was erroneously re-lettered as clause (viii b), with consequential change not carried out in section 27A of the NDPS Act. It make provisions in Section 27 of the NDPS (Amendment) Act, 2014 providing for punishment of those financing illicit trafficking inoperable.

#### **OBJECTIVE OF THE BILL**

- ✎ Umbrella legislation dealing with the control and regulation of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.
- ✎ Ease access of narcotic drugs for medical necessities, but the penal provision was not amended accordingly.

#### **CRITICISMS SURROUNDING THE BILL:**

Few experts have observed that the Bill violated the fundamental rights of a citizen as it provides retrospective effect to offences starting 2014.

It also violates the fundamental rights in Article 21 because you can be punished for an offence for which there is a law in existence at the time of commission of the offence.

Prohibits a person from producing, possessing, selling, purchasing, transporting, storing, and/or consuming any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance.

Extends to the whole of India and it applies also to all Indian citizens outside India and to all persons on ships and aircraft registered in India.

The Act has since been amended thrice – in 1988, 2001 and 2014.

### **INITIATIVES FROM THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT**

- 🚫 Flagged off *Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan / Drugs-Free India Campaign* on August 15, 2020 across 272 districts of the country found to be most vulnerable based on the data available from various sources.
- 🚫 The Union Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment implemented a National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR) for 2018-2025.
- 🚫 The Government constituted *Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD)* in November, 2016.
- 🚫 The Government has constituted a fund called “National Fund for Control of Drug Abuse” to meet the expenditure incurred in connection with combating illicit traffic in Narcotic Drugs; rehabilitating addicts, and educating public against drug abuse, etc.

The NDPS Act provides a limited avenue to courts of law to exempt an ‘addict’ from facing imprisonment in case they volunteer for treatment at a deaddiction centre. No such exemptions are provided to first-time or recreational users.

According to a report published by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment titled ‘Magnitude of Substance Use in India’, as of 2019, there were about 6 crore drug users in India (from an earlier estimated 1.1 crore users in 2004). Of them, about 1.7 crore persons required professional help to reduce their dependence on drugs. In the same report, the Ministry notes that criminalisation of drug usage by the NDPS Act has only enhanced societal stigma, isolation, and hindered access to treatment. Despite the fact that tackling the supply side of drugs to curb access will likely have a greater impact in controlling the drug menace, prosecution agencies have in the past continued to target persons possessing drugs for personal use or consumption. According to statistics released by the National Crime Records Bureau, over 60% of the total cases registered under the NDPS Act between 2018 and 2020 were for possession of drugs for personal use or consumption. These numbers highlight the ineffectiveness of a criminal deterrence policy, envisaged under the NDPS Act, to tackle drug use.

### **DECRIMINALISATION OF NARCOTICS**

Decriminalising small drug offences will be a departure from the approach of regarding drug usage to be a criminal activity and focus on tackling it as a public health concern. Any person who consumes or possesses a narcotic drug or psychotropic substance can be sentenced to imprisonment and be slapped with monetary penalties. Promoting alternative strategies to reduce demand, such as deaddiction and rehabilitation over criminalisation.

#### **ADVANTAGES**

Promote better access to treatment facilities

Lessen the burden of the Indian criminal justice system

Allow the State to focus its resources on the prosecution of persons involved in large-scale trafficking and manufacture of drugs

Control clandestine profits associated with illegal drug trade.



## LAW COMMISSION OF INDIA

*The Government informed the Supreme Court of India regarding the status of appointment of the Chairperson and Members of the 22nd Law Commission of India.*

### ABOUT THE LAW COMMISSION

- ✎ **FIRST LAW COMMISSION OF INDIA:** Established in 1834 via Charter Act of 1833 under the Chairmanship of Lord Macaulay, the First Law Commission of India recommended codification of the Penal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code.
- ✎ **FIRST LAW COMMISSION OF INDEPENDENT INDIA:** Established in 1955 for a three year term under the Chairmanship Mr. M. C. Setalvad, the First Attorney General of India.

### SALIENT FEATURES

- ✎ **CATEGORY:** Ad hoc and advisory body constituted through an executive order.
- ✎ **TENURE:** Reconstituted every three years.
- ✎ **MANDATE:** Make non-binding recommendations to Ministry of Law and Justice (Department of Legal Affairs) for law reforms.

### COMPOSITION

- ✎ Headed by a full-time Chairperson, usually a retired Supreme Court judge or Chief Justice of a High Court.
- ✎ Four full-time Members (including a Member-Secretary).
- ✎ Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs as ex-officio Member.
- ✎ Secretary, Legislative Department as ex-officio Member.
- ✎ Not more than five part-time Members.

### POWERS

- ✎ Recommend for reviewing/ repealing obsolete laws to remove anomalies, ambiguities and inequities.
- ✎ Examine functioning of legal system and suggest reforms to make it responsive.
- ✎ Examine existing laws in the light of Directive Principles of State Policy and to suggest ways of improvement.
- ✎ Consider the requests for providing research to any foreign countries as may be referred to it by the Government through Ministry of Law and Justice (Department of Legal Affairs).



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# CITIZENSHIP (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2019

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is yet to notify the rules governing the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA) was notified on December 12, 2019 and came into force from January 10, 2020.

## ABOUT CITIZENSHIP (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2019

### OBJECTIVE

- ✘ Grant citizenship to non-Muslim minorities from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan who had come to India till December 31, 2014, facing religious persecution in their respective countries, will be granted Indian citizenship.
- ✘ Non-Muslim citizens from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan continuously residing in India for the past 1 year and whom have resided for the past 6 years in India during the past 14 years can seek citizenship by naturalisation.

### EXCLUDED AREAS

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 does not apply to:

- ✘ Sixth Schedule Tribal Areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram, Assam.
- ✘ Areas that fall under the Inner Limit notified via the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST CAA	ARGUMENTS FOR CAA
Violates the basic tenet of equality guaranteed in the Constitution distinguishing illegal immigrants on the basis of religion. Such a classification makes illegal migrants eligible for citizenship on the basis of religion. The CAA attempts to naturalise the citizenship of illegal immigrants on the basis of religion.	Fundamental Rights are not absolute and State can make reasonable restrictions. The classification of illegal immigrants on the basis of reason of migration stands the test of reasonability. The CAA grants citizenship to persecuted minorities of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.
Feared to result in a demographic threat to indigenous communities.	

### MISCELLANEOUS FEATURES

- ✘ Subsumed Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) to the Person of Indian Origin (PIO) Scheme, providing life-long Indian visa facility to PIOs, beside exemptions from Police verifications during visits.
- ✘ Relaxed visa norms for minor children of OCI cardholders.
- ✘ Empowers the Centre to cancel the OCI card obtained by the ex-spouse of an Indian citizen in events of legal divorce or cases of polyandry.
- ✘ Relaxed eligibility provisions for citizenship by naturalisation for foreign spouses of Indians with an annual relief of 30 days to travel outside the country.
- ✘ Relaxed eligibility provisions for citizenship by naturalisation for foreign spouses of Indians with an annual relief of 30 days to travel outside the country.

## OPPOSITION TO THE LAW

- ✎ The constitutional and legal validity of the CAA has been challenged in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India'.
- ✎ The Governments of Rajasthan and Kerala filed petitions under Article 131.
- ✎ The State Legislative Assemblies of Meghalaya, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Punjab adopted resolutions against the Act.

## CITIZENSHIP

The Citizenship Act, 1955 provides various ways in which citizenship may be acquired. Provides for citizenship by birth, descent, registration, naturalisation and by incorporation of the territory into India.

- ✎ CITIZENSHIP BY BIRTH
- ✎ CITIZENSHIP BY DESCENT
- ✎ CITIZENSHIP BY REGISTRATION
- ✎ CITIZENSHIP BY NATURALIZATION
- ✎ CITIZENSHIP BY INCORPORATION OF TERRITORY

## BARBADOS

*Barbados has become the World's youngest Republic, around 400 years after it became a British colony in 1625. Barbados gained its independence in 1966. The Caribbean Island nation of Barbados removed Queen Elizabeth II as the Head of the State. Dame Sandra Prunella Mason, the Governor-General of the Barbados since 2018 took over as the President of Barbados.*

## COLLEGIUM SYSTEM

*A draft memorandum of procedure for bringing transparency and accountability to the system was submitted by the Government to the Supreme Court. This is at an instance, where there are calls from within the judiciary and parliamentarians to change the collegium system for appointment of judges*

## APPOINTMENT OF JUDGES OF SUPREME COURT

- ✎ The President followed the practice of appointing the senior-most judge of the Supreme Court as the Chief Justice of India from 1950 to 1973
- ✎ The President appoints judges to the Supreme Court after due "consultations" with the SC Collegium chaired by the Chief Justice of India (CJI).

## ELIGIBILITY FOR APPOINTMENT

An individual of Indian citizenship not exceeding 65 years of age can be appointed as judge of the Supreme Court of India upon satisfying additional conditions.

- ✎ An Indian citizen holding office of the Judge of the State High Court (or High Courts in succession) for a period of 5 years.
- ✎ An Indian citizen who served as an Advocate of a State High Court (or High Courts in succession) for a period of 10 years.
- ✎ Distinguished "jurist" in the opinion of the President of India.

## COLLEGIUM SYSTEM

- ✎ A Collegium headed by the Chief Justice of India, 3 other judges of the Supreme Court and the Chief Justice of the State High Court recommended the name to the Union Law Ministry to initiate proceedings to appoint judges to the State High Court.
- ✎ The Union Law Ministry either accepts the recommendation or exercise “suspensive veto” returning the recommendation back to the Collegium for reconsideration. The Union Law Ministry is obliged to accept the recommendations upon returning the recommendations with or without considering the pleas of the Union Law Ministry.
- ✎ The President either approves the names or returns the names for reconsideration of the Supreme Court. The President is obliged to accept the recommendations upon returning the recommendations with or without considering the pleas of the President.

## CRITICISM AGAINST COLLEGIUM SYSTEM

- ✎ Opaqueness and a lack of transparency.
- ✎ Scope for nepotism.
- ✎ Embroilment in public controversies.
- ✎ Overlooks several talented junior judges and advocates.

## REFORMS NEEDED

A transparent and participatory procedure, preferably by an independent broad-based constitutional body guaranteeing judicial primacy but not judicial exclusivity. It should ensure independence, reflect diversity, demonstrate professional competence and integrity. Instead of selecting the number of judges required against a certain number of vacancies, the collegium must provide a panel of possible names to the President to appoint in order of preference and other valid criteria.

## PRIVILEGE MOTION

*Two Trinamool Congress MPs and three of the Congress have moved a privilege motion against former Chief Justice of India and Rajya Sabha member Ranjan Gogoi over his remarks that he attended the House when he felt like doing so.*

## ABOUT PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES

Privileges refer to rights, immunities and exemptions - collective or of individual nature enjoyed by House Members, including Attorney General of India and Union Ministers, Parliamentary Committees and both Houses of Parliament as a whole. Privileges are drawn from various provisions in the Constitution of India, Statutes, Rules of Procedure & Conduct of Business, Parliamentary Conventions and judicial interpretations. The Presiding officers of the House act in their capacities as patrons to protect and safeguard privileges of their respective Houses, House Committee and the House as a whole.

## OBJECTIVES

- ✎ Provide immunities and exemptions from prosecution for House Members for any act of conduct during the proceedings of a House of Parliament or any of its committees.



- Help maintain their authority, dignity and honour nor can protect their members from any obstruction in the discharge of their parliamentary responsibilities.

#### SALIENT CLASSIFICATION OF PRIVILEGES

<b>Collective privileges</b>	<b>Individual privileges enjoyed by the members</b>
Enjoyed by both Houses and its Committees.	Enjoyed by both House Members individually.
Right to publish* reports, debates and proceedings.	Right to freedom of speech* in Parliament. 1. Rules of Procedure and Conduct of House. 2. Conduct of Judges of Supreme Court or State High Courts*.
Exclude Courts from inquiring into proceedings of the House or its Committees; suspension or expulsion of House Members; censure, rebuke or imprisonment of strangers for "Breach of Privileges" or "Contempt of House".	Exclude Courts to inquiring into exercising voting in Parliament or its Committees against House Members.
Frame Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of the House independently.	
Prior approval of the presiding officer of the House to serve civil and criminal legal proceedings / arrest any House Member. Right to be informed and permission of the presiding officer within the premises of the House. Right to be informed on arrest, detention, conviction, imprisonment and release of a House Member.	Enjoys immunity from arrest or detention on charges of civil offences 40 days before the commencement of the session, during the session and 40 days after the prorogation a session. House Members can be arrested on charge of criminal offences or kept under preventive detention.
Exclude strangers from House proceedings. Hold secret sittings to discuss some important matters. Institute inquiries and order the attendance of witnesses and relevant papers and records.	Exempted from jury service. They can refuse to give evidence and appear as a witness in a case pending in a court when Parliament is in session.

No person shall be liable to any civil or criminal proceedings in any court in respect of the publication in a newspaper (or by radio or television) of a substantially true report of any proceedings of either House of Parliament or either House of the Legislature of a State (Article 361-A).

## MOTION AGAINST BREACHES:

When any of these rights and immunities are disregarded, the offence is called a breach of privilege and is punishable under law of Parliament. A notice is moved in the form of a motion by any member of either House against those being held guilty of breach of privilege.

## ROLE OF THE SPEAKER/RAJYA SABHA (RS) CHAIRPERSON:

- ✎ The Speaker/RS chairperson is the first level of scrutiny of a privilege motion.
  - ✎ The Speaker/Chair can decide on the privilege motion himself or herself or refer it to the privileges committee of Parliament.
- If the Speaker/Chair gives consent under relevant rules, the member concerned is given an opportunity to make a short statement.

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

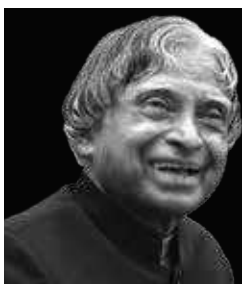
*The centennial celebrations of Parliament's Public Accounts Committee was recently held.*

### ABOUT PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

- ✎ CONSTITUTING STATUTE: Government of India Act, 1919
- ✎ FOUNDED: 1921.
- ✎ MEMBERSHIP: 15 Lok Sabha members and 7 Rajya Sabha members subject to a maximum of 22 members.
- ✎ MODE OF ELECTION: All members to the Public Accounts Committee are elected from amongst themselves via the electoral principle of proportional representation by means of the single transferable voting through a secret ballot. The Chairman is appointed by the Speaker of Lok Sabha.
- ✎ TENURE: All members to the Public Accounts Committee are elected for a fixed term of 1 year.
- ✎ MANDATE: Examine the audit report of Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) after it is laid in the Parliament.
- ✎ OBJECTIVE: Examine the propriety in appropriation and utilization of grants distributed to various Ministries.

### LIMITATIONS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

- ✎ Advisory nature of recommendations not binding upon the ministries.
- ✎ Not vested with the power to disallow departmental expenditures.
- ✎ The Parliament is vested with powers to take a final decision based on findings of the PAC.
- ✎ Conducts a post-mortem examination of finance, appropriation and other accounts without addressing broader policy issues.



*To succeed in your mission,  
you must have single-minded devotion to your goal.*

- A. P. J. ABDUL KALAM

## KARNATAKA DRAFT ANTI-CONVERSION BILL

*The State Legislature of Karnataka passed an anti-conversion Bill that aims at penalising people who convert or try to convert others by 'fraudulent means' or by marriage.*

### SALIENT FEATURES

Prohibit religious conversion by misrepresentation, force, fraud, allurement of marriage, coercion and undue influence and makes it a cognisable and non-bailable offence

- ☒ Attract a jail term of three to five years and a fine of ₹25,000 for violations
- ☒ Attract a jail term of three to 10 years, and a fine of ₹50,000 for people converting minors, women and persons from the SC and ST communities.
- ☒ Attract a jail term of three to 10 years, and a fine of ₹100,000 for people accused of 'mass conversion'.

An appropriate court will order the accused person to pay compensation to the "victim of conversion and this amount can go up to Rs 5 lakh, and must be paid by the accused over and above the fine under the law.

Prescribes a procedure for the people to convert to another religion voluntarily, applying to inter-faith marriages. Failure to intimate authorities will carry a prison term of six months to three years for persons who are converted and one year to five years for the persons carrying out the conversions.

- ☒ A notice has to be served at least thirty days in advance to the District Magistrate (DM) by any person intending to convert to another religion.
- ☒ A notice has to be served at least thirty days in advance to the District Magistrate (DM) by any person executing the conversion. An inquiry will be conducted by the District Magistrate through the Police to establish the real intent of conversion.
- ☒ The person post-religious conversion needs to inform the District Magistrate (DM) within 30 days after conversion and appear before the District Magistrate (DM) to confirm his/her identity. The lapse in informing the District Magistrate (DM) will lead to the conversion being declared null and void.
- ☒ The District Magistrate (DM) has to inform revenue authorities, the social welfare, minority, backward classes and other departments of the conversion, who will, in turn, take steps with respect to the entitlements of the person in terms of reservations and other benefits.

The provisions go against an individual's right to choice and liberty, granted under the Constitution of India. The Apex Court of India in its several judgments has held that the state and the courts have no jurisdiction over an adult's absolute right to choose a life partner.

- ☒ Article 21 of the constitution which guarantees individuals the right to marry a person of one's choice.
- ☒ Article 25, freedom of conscience, the practice and conversion of religion of one's choice including not following any religion, are also guaranteed.

The Supreme Court of India, in both the Lily Thomas and Sarla Mudgal cases, has confirmed that religious conversions carried out without a bona fide belief and for the sole purpose of deriving some legal benefit do not hold water.

Salamat Ansari-Priyanka Kharwar case of Allahabad High Court 2020: The right to choose a partner or live with a person of choice was part of a citizen's fundamental right to life and liberty (Article 21).

### ANTI-CONVERSION BILLS

- Indian Conversion (Regulation and Registration) Bill, 1954 : Enforce licensing of missionaries and the registration of conversion with government officials.
- Backward Communities (Religious Protection) Bill, 1960: Aimed at checking conversion of Hindus to 'non-Indian religions' which, as per the definition in the Bill, included Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism.
- Freedom of Religion Bill in 1979 : Aimed to officially curb inter-religious conversion.

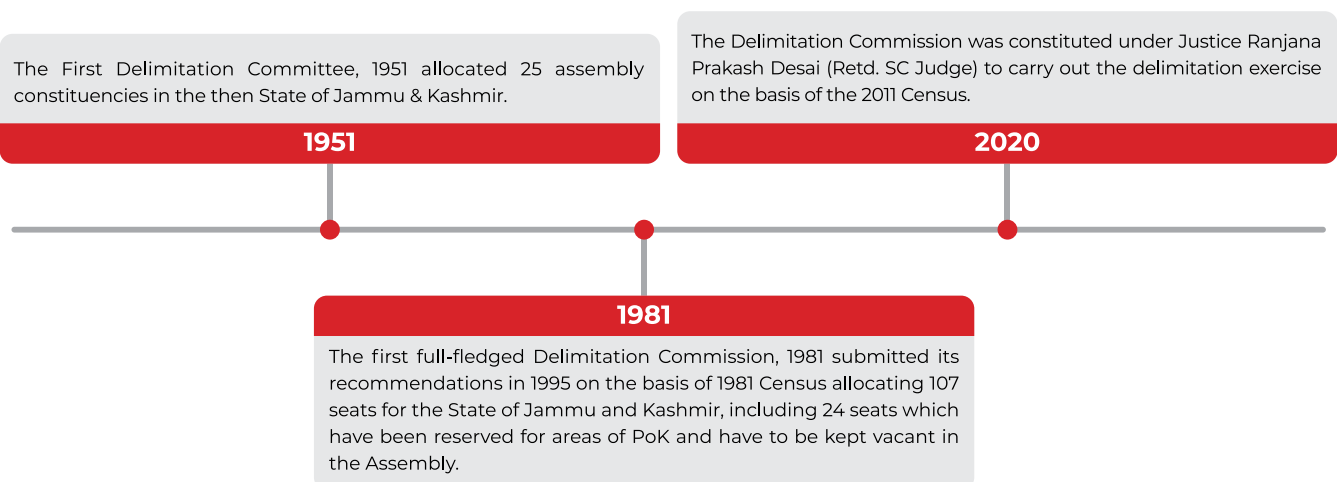
### NEED OF THE HOUR:

Article 18 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights mentions everyone has the right to freedom of religion including changing their faith. Being a State subject, the Centre can frame a model law like Model law on contract farming etc. States while enacting anti-conversion laws should not put any vague or ambiguous provisions for the person who wanted to convert of his own will. The anti-conversion laws also need to include a provision to mention the valid steps for conversion by minority community institutions. People also need to be educated about the provisions and ways of Forceful conversions, Inducement or allurement, etc.

## DELIMITATION OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

The Delimitation Commission allotted six new seats to the Jammu region and one new seat to Kashmir. Besides the allocation of six seats for the Jammu division and one for the Kashmir division, the commission has also reserved 16 seats, out of 90, for the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes.

### DELIMITATION EXERCISE IN J&K- A TIMELINE:



### DELIMITATION COMMISSION

- Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai (Retd. SC Judge) headed the Jammu and Kashmir Delimitation Commission.



- ✎ Increase six seats for the Jammu division and one for the Kashmir division.  
Reserve 16 seats for the Scheduled Caste (SC) and Schedule Tribe (ST) communities.

The Jammu and Kashmir Delimitation Commission has said that it will base its final report on the

- ✎ 2011 Census
- ✎ Topography,
- ✎ Difficult terrain,
- ✎ Means of communication
- ✎ Public convenience

with a mandate to add seven more seats to the Union Territory' and grant reservations to SC and ST communities.

Now, the total number of seats in Jammu and Kashmir will be raised to 90 from the previous 83. This is apart from 24 seats which have been reserved for areas of PoK and have to be kept vacant in the Assembly.

### IMPLICATIONS:

J&K will have a 90-member Legislative Assembly now, up from 87 prior to the Centre's decision to end J&K's special constitutional position.

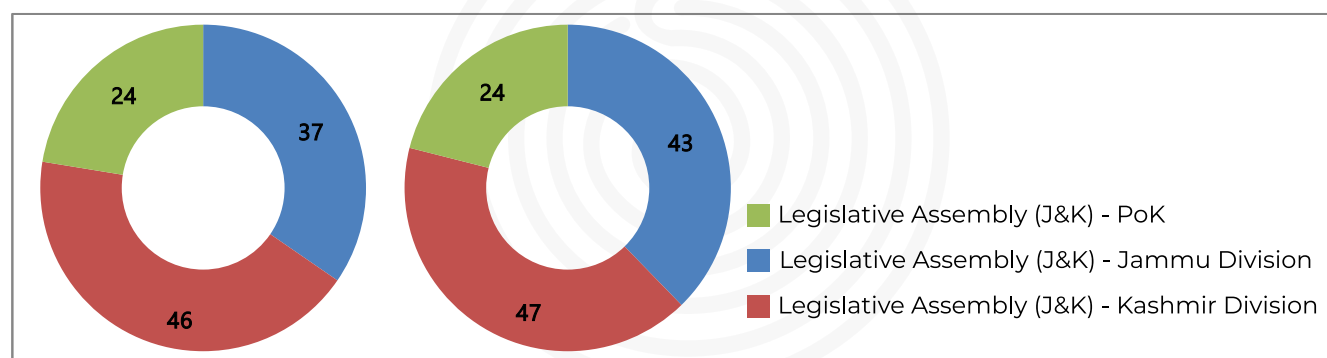


FIG. (L) Pie chart representation of composition of the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir before delimitation.

FIG. (R) Pie chart representation of composition of the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir after delimitation.

What is delimitation and why is it needed?

- ✎ Delimitation literally means the process of fixing limits or boundaries of territorial constituencies in a state that has a legislative body.
- ✎ Delimitation is undertaken by a highly powerful commission. They are formally known as **Delimitation Commission** or **Boundary Commission**.
- ✎ These bodies are so powerful that **its orders have the force of law and they cannot be challenged before any court.**

Composition of the Commission:

According to the Delimitation Commission Act, 2002, the Delimitation Commission will have three members: a serving or retired judge of the Supreme Court as the chairperson, and the Chief Election Commissioner or Election Commissioner nominated by the CEC and the State Election Commissioner as ex-officio members.

The Delimitation Commission Act, 2002 constituted Delimitation commission. The Delimitation commission prescribe boundaries of the various assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies

based on a recent census. The present delimitation of parliamentary constituencies has been done on the basis of 2001 census figures. The Constitution (Ninety – sixth Amendment (96th)) Act, 2004 prohibited delimitation of constituencies till 2031 ie, first census after 2026.

The representation from each state is not changed during this exercise. However, the number of SC and ST seats in a state is changed in accordance with the census.

The Commission is a powerful body whose orders cannot be challenged in a court of law. The orders are laid before the Lok Sabha and the respective State Legislative Assemblies. However, modifications are not permitted.

### Constitutional Provisions:

Under **Article 82**, the Parliament enacts a Delimitation Act after every Census.

Under **Article 170**, States also get divided into territorial constituencies as per Delimitation Act after every Census.

### ABOUT DELIMITATION COMMISSION

- ✎ PARAMETERS FOR DELIMITATION
- ✎ Population
- ✎ Physical features
- ✎ Boundaries of administrative units
- ✎ Communication facilities and
- ✎ Public convenience

<p>Additional constituencies are being proposed, based also on factors of “inadequate communication” and “lack of public conveniences due to their excessive remoteness or inhospitable conditions on the international border”. Uttarakhand had all hill districts with 20% less population than the districts in the plains in the 2008 delimitation.</p>	<p>Section 9 (1) (a) of the Delimitation Act, 2002, read with Section 60 (2) (b) of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, specified that all “constituencies shall, as far as practicable, be geographically compact areas, and regard shall be had to physical features, existing boundaries of administrative units, facilities of communication and public convenience”.</p>
<p>If population is the sole criterion, then the seat share for the Valley, with a population of 68.8 lakh (2011 Census) would stand at 51 and the Jammu region with 53.5 lakh population at 39.</p>	<p>The delimitation exercise in India is not carried exclusively on the basis of the population. Beyond population, physical features, boundaries of administrative units, communication facilities and public convenience also needs to be considered for the delimitation exercise.</p>
<p>The commission has also suggested reserving seven seats for Scheduled Castes (Hindus) that mainly populate the Samba-Kathua-Jammu-Udhampur belt and, for the first time ever, earmarking nine</p>	<p>The provision to provide reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is expected to make the electoral process more inclusive and empower the Socially and Educationally Backward Communities.</p>

seats for Scheduled Tribes, which is likely to benefit the Rajouri-Poonch belt with the highest concentration of STs, mainly non-Kashmiri speaking Muslims. The commission is yet to reveal the names of the districts where these seats have been carved out, and the ST/SC reservations earmarked and methodology.

**SPACE FOR ROUGH NOTES**



# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS







**INDIA JOINS G-20 TROIKA WITH INDONESIA AND ITALY**

**JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION AGREEMENT**

**INDIA LASHES OUT AT UN RIGHTS AGENCY**

**INDIA – UAE CEPA**

**UN CONFERS OBSERVER STATUS ON SOLAR ALLIANCE**

**NEW CALEDONIA VOTES TO REMAIN PART OF FRANCE**

**TIGRAY REBELS RETAKE LALIBELA IN ETHIOPIA**

**UN DRAFT RESOLUTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

**ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION**

**CHINA SLAPS SANCTIONS ON U.S. GOVT. OFFICIALS**

**OVER XINJIANG**

# INDO-PACIFIC

*U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken that the United States will expand its military and economic relationships with partners in Asia to push back against China's increasing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific.*

*Also known as the Indo-West Pacific or Indo-Pacific Asia, the biogeographic region of Earth's seas, comprising the tropical waters of the Indian Ocean, the western and central Pacific Ocean, and the seas connecting the two in the general area of Indonesia. It does not include the temperate and polar regions of the Indian and Pacific oceans, nor the Tropical Eastern Pacific, along the Pacific coast of the Americas, which is also a distinct marine realm.*

## **ROLE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA IN THE INDO – PACIFIC REGION:**

*The Indo-Pacific, as described in the National security strategy, represents the most populous and economically dynamic part of the world and stretches from the west coast of India to the western shores of the United States.*

*India has always been a country with great national ambitions and is one of the most important advocates of the concept of "Indo-Pacific Strategy".*

*With opening of economy, India has been connecting with its Indian Ocean neighbours and major maritime powers of the world.*

**SIGNIFICANCE:** *Interconnectedness of the Indian and Pacific Oceans, the importance of the oceans to security and commerce.*

## **IMPORTANCE OF INDO-PACIFIC REGION:**

*Maintaining regional stability.*

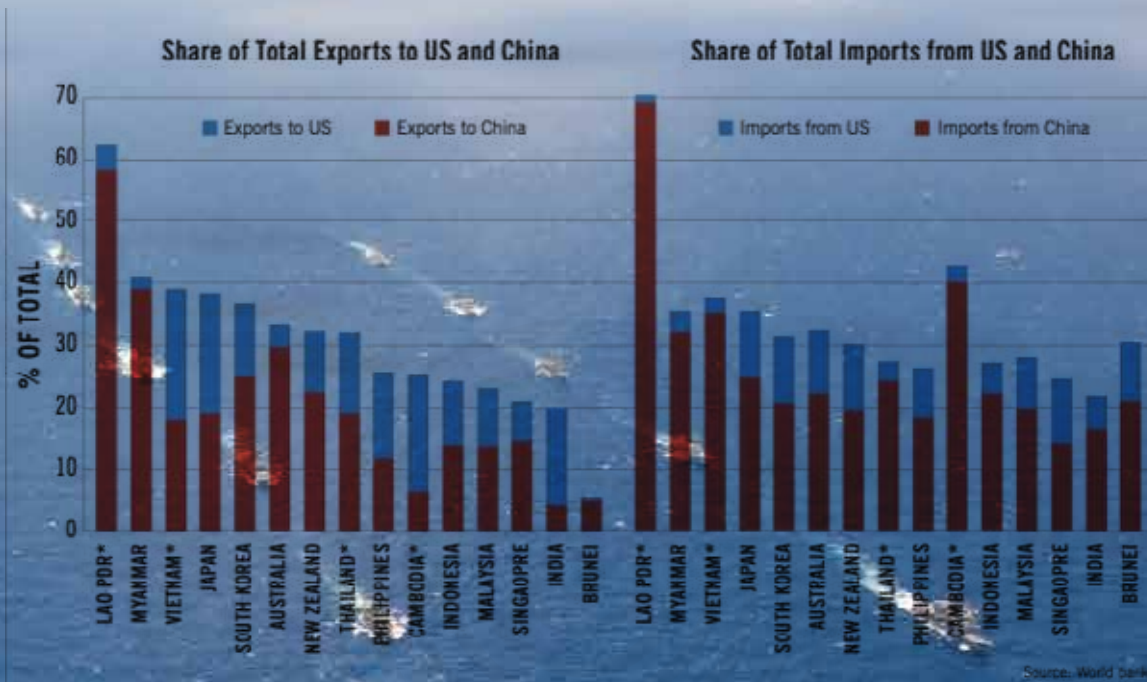
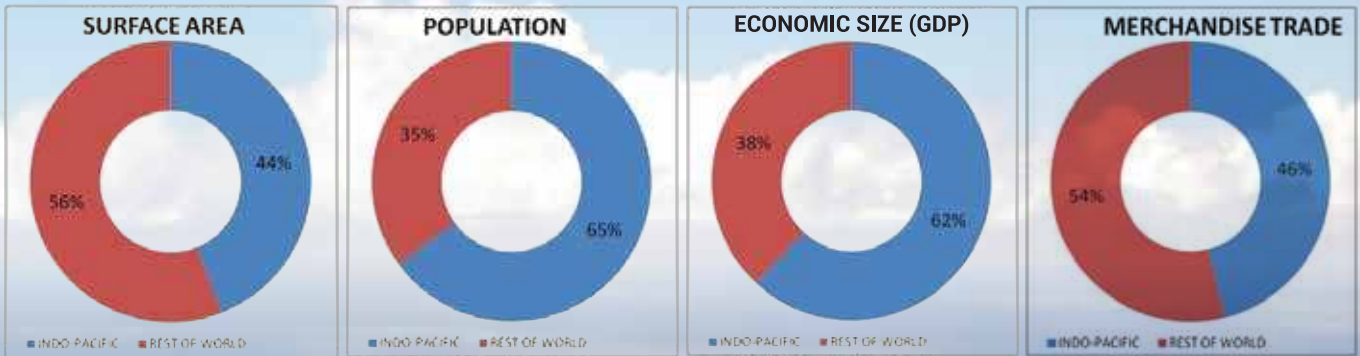
*Strong ties with the US vital tool for enhancing India's strategic posture.*

*Counter China's increasingly active presence in the Indian Ocean region as well as its efforts to expand geopolitical reach in Asia and beyond by the use of trade and military.*

*For adhering to freedom of navigation, adherence to rules-based order and stable trade environment.*

*Ensuring free sea and air lanes, connectivity and upholding international rules and norms.*





Source: World Bank

China's trade with every country across the IndoPacific region almost uniformly surpasses U.S. trade with the same. Reports have noted that in Southeast Asia, two way trade with China touched \$685 billion in 2020, "more than double that of the region's trade with the U.S."

*STRATEGY: Peaceful realignment with Asia-Pacific nations to protect its global hegemony challenged with rising economic profile of China in the region.*

**FIVE PILLARS OF REBALANCING STRATEGY / PIVOT TO ASIA OF UNITED STATES IN ASIA**

*Strengthen traditional alliances*

*Develop closer bilateral relationship with emerging Asian Nations like India and Indonesia*

*Build stable, productive, and constructive relationship with China*

*Trans-Pacific Partnership*

*Empower regional multilateral institutions to help build a regional economic architecture sustain shared prosperity*

# INDIA JOINS G-20 TROIKA WITH INDONESIA AND ITALY

India joined the G20 'Troika' - the top grouping within the G20 that consists of the current, previous and the incoming presidencies. The present G 2- 'Troika' comprise of Indonesia, Italy and India. India will assume the G20 presidency on December 1, 2022 from Indonesia, and will convene the G20 Leaders' Summit for the first time in India in 2023. Italy hosted the G20 summit during October 30-31 at Rome in 2021. Indonesia, who took over the G20 presidency will hold rounds of discussion at various levels among the members of the G20 before convening the G20 Leaders' Summit scheduled for October 30-31, 2022 at Bali. As a Troika member, India will work closely with Indonesia and Italy to ensure consistency and continuity of the G20's agenda.

## G 20 TROIKA

2020: Japan, Italy and Indonesia

2021: Italy, Indonesia and India

2022: Indonesia, India and Brazil

## ABOUT G 20

FOUNDED: London Summit, 2009

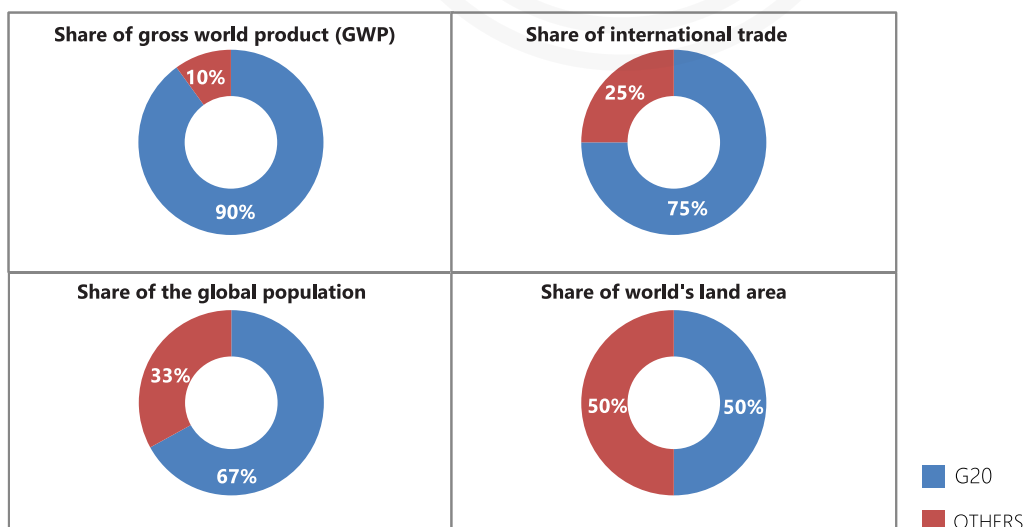
TYPE: Non-Treaty based Informal Inter-Governmental Organisation (IGO)

SECRETARIAT: No permanent secretariat

FOCUS AREAS:

- 🌀 Global economy
- 🌀 International financial stability
- 🌀 Climate change mitigation
- 🌀 Sustainable development

SIGNIFICANCE OF MEMBERSHIP: Grouping of world's largest economies, including both industrialized and developing nations



MEMBER COUNTRIES: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union.

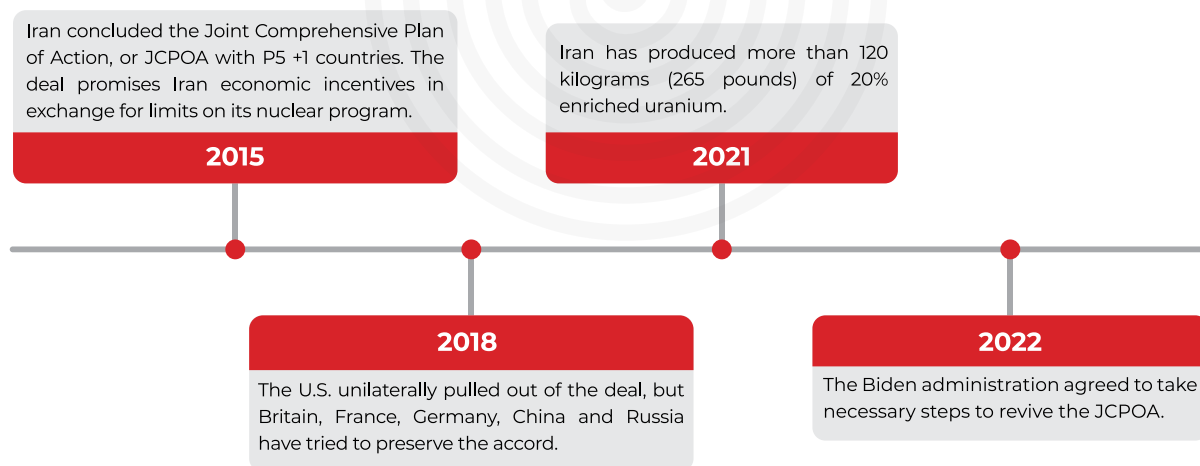




Figure : G20 countries

## JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION AGREEMENT

### TIMELINE



**OBJECTIVE:** Dissuade Iran off a possible path to a nuclear bomb in return for lifting of economic sanctions.

### GENEVA AGREEMENT:

#### COMMITMENTS OF IRAN UNDER THE GENEVA AGREEMENT

Halt weapons-grade Uranium Enrichment Programme.

Freeze its stockpile of 3.5 % enriched Uranium, limit enrichment of Uranium above 5 % and stop further enrichment beyond 20 %.

Cut its stockpile of enriched uranium from 8 tonnes to 300 kg.

Close down Fordow nuclear enrichment facility and Arak Heavy-water Reactor.

Retain the 'Right to Civilian Nuclear efforts' at Natanz facility

Cut down 19,000 installed centrifuges by 75 % to 5,000.

Permit IAEA to inspect activities.

COMMITMENTS OF US and West UNDER THE GENEVA AGREEMENT

Relax existing secondary unilateral US sanctions on Iranian oil exports.

Blanket US waivers for commerce in Iranian oil.

Withhold “primary sanctions” prohibiting US citizens and companies to engage with Iranian entities.

De-freeze overseas Iranian assets worth \$6 billion.

Ease international restrictions on flow of capital, technology transfer and commerce in conventional arms.

## ABOUT BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENTS

🌀 FOUNDED: 1930

🌀 TYPE: Inter-Governmental Financial Organisation (IGO)

🌀 HEADQUARTERS: Basel, Switzerland.

🌀 MEMBERSHIP: 62 Central Banks.

🌀 FOUNDING MEMBERS: Germany, Belgium, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Japan, the United States, and Switzerland.

OBJECTIVE:

🌀 Fosters international monetary and financial cooperation and serves as a bank for central banks.

🌀 Carries out its work through its meetings, programmes and through the Basel Process – hosting international groups pursuing global financial stability and facilitating their interaction.

## INDIA LASHES OUT AT UN RIGHTS AGENCY

*The Government strongly criticized the Geneva-based Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) for referring banned terror organisations in Jammu and Kashmir as “armed groups”. The Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) criticised the Government and security forces in Jammu and Kashmir and over the rise in civilian killings including religious minorities by security forces in the course of counterterrorism operations.*

ABOUT OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER OF HUMAN RIGHTS (OHCHR)

FOUNDED: 1993

TYPE: Organ of the UN Secretariat.

MANDATE: Protect and promote all human rights for everyone all over the world.

ROLE: Offer technical expertise and capacity-development to aid the implementation of global human rights standards on the field.

HEADQUARTERS: Geneva

HEAD: High Commissioner for Human Rights.

OHCHR Funding: Almost 2/3rd of the funding for the Office comes from voluntary contributions from donors and member states. The rest is covered by the general budget of the UN.

## INDIA – UAE CEPA

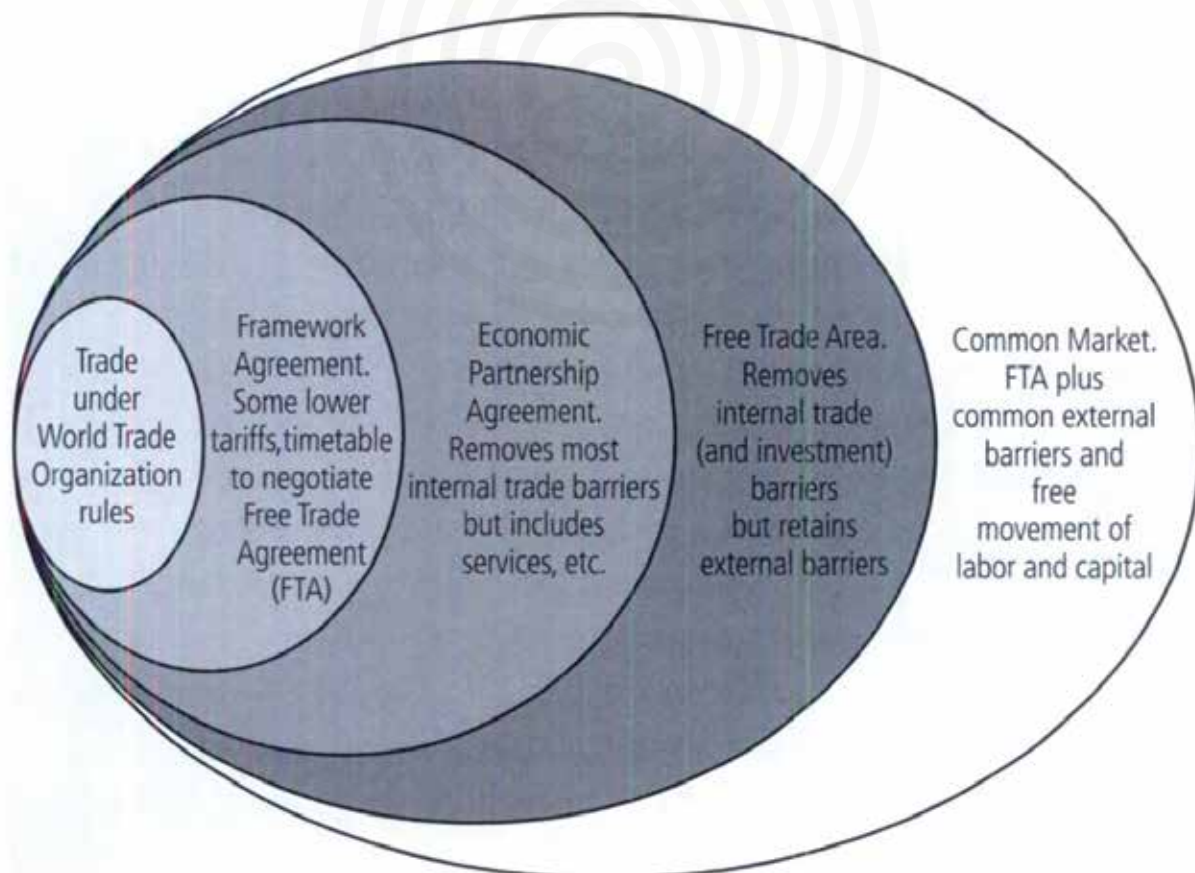
India and UAE launched the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement in September 2021. The countries are to hold the third round of negotiations.

### ABOUT INDIA-UAE CEPA

- ❌ CEPA is an economic deal.
- ❌ Free trade pact signed between India and UAE in 2017.
- ❌ It covers negotiation on trade and services, investment and other economic partnerships.
- ❌ It also includes competition, cooperation and Intellectual Property Rights.
- ❌ It also looks in to the regulatory aspects of trade between the countries.

### SIGNIFICANCE OF CEPA

- ❌ UAE is the third largest investor in India.
- ❌ The Indian companies have invested 85 billion USD in UAE.
- ❌ The major imports to India from UAE are petroleum products, stones, jewellery, gems.
- ❌ The major exports are minerals, precious metals, gems. With CEPA, the bilateral trade is to increase to 100 billion USD within 5 years.



## UN CONFERS OBSERVER STATUS ON SOLAR ALLIANCE

*The UN General Assembly conferred Observer Status on the International Solar Alliance (ISA).*

The International Solar Alliance (ISA) was conceived as a joint effort by India and France. The International Solar Alliance (ISA) was presented by the leaders of the two countries at the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Paris in 2015.

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Help provide for a well defined cooperation between the alliance and the UN that would benefit global energy growth and development.

### ABOUT INTERNATIONAL SOLAR ALLIANCE

- 🌀 **FOUNDED:** 2015 Paris Climate Change Summit.
- 🌀 **TYPE:** Treaty-based Inter-Governmental Organisation (IGO)
- 🌀 **SECRETARIAT:** Gurugram
- 🌀 **MANDATE:** Promote the deployment of solar energy solutions to improve the standards of living with increased access to energy and livelihood opportunities- especially in rural and remote areas.
- 🌀 **OBJECTIVE:** Mobilise investments worth over US \$1 trillion to deploy 1000 GW of solar energy by 2030.

#### STRATEGY:

- 🌀 **Common Risk Mitigating Mechanism (CRMM):** Mitigate investment risks in solar projects in ISA member countries through diversifying and pooling risks on mutual public resources.  
Economy of scale (EoS): Boost demand to ensure solar energy at affordable costs.
- 🌀 **Standardisation:** Develop uniform standards in solar technologies to promote mass manufacturing.
- 🌀 **Innovation:** Foster research and development to improve the efficiency in operations.
- 🌀 **MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY:** All countries that are members of the United Nations

## NEW CALEDONIA VOTES TO REMAIN PART OF FRANCE

Voters in the French island territory of New Caledonia chose overwhelmingly on Sunday to remain part of France, in a referendum boycotted by proindependence forces and closely watched around the South Pacific. French President Emmanuel Macron hailed the result as a resounding confirmation of France's role in the IndoPacific, and announced negotiations on the territory's future status. Separatist activists expressed disappointment. They had urged a delay in the vote because of the pandemic, and were angry over what they said were French government efforts to sway the campaign. So they called on their supporters to stay away from voting stations. And they did. Official results showed 96% of



those who took part chose to stay in France. Overall turnout was just 42% — less than half the numbers who showed up in a previous independence referendum last year, where support for breaking away was 46.7%. “Tonight France is more beautiful because New Caledonia decided to stay,” Mr. Macron said.

## TIGRAY REBELS RETAKE LALIBELA IN ETHIOPIA

Tigray rebels on Sunday recaptured the north Ethiopian town of Lalibela, home to a UNESCO world heritage site, local residents said, 11 days after Ethiopian forces said they had taken it back. Tigrayan fighters “are in the town centre, there’s no fighting,” said a resident. The Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) said in a statement that they had launched “widespread counteroffensives” in numerous locations, including along the road linking Gashena and Lalibela.



Communications have been cut in the conflict zone and access for journalists is restricted, making it difficult to verify the claims.

## UN DRAFT RESOLUTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

*India voted against a draft resolution at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) linking climate to security.*

ABOUT DRAFT RESOLUTION:

SPONSORS: Ireland and Niger

OBJECTIVE: Examine interlinkages of terrorism and security risks to climate change

ARGUMENTS FOR THE DRAFT RESOLUTION	ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE DRAFT RESOLUTION
<p>The primary responsibility of UNSC is “maintenance of international peace and security”. The climate-change related issues are creating security risks globally, which will exacerbate in the future with water shortage, migration and a destruction of livelihoods.</p>	<p>This resolution attempt to shift climate talks from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to the Security Council. It is wrong to look at climate change through the prism of security. Each nation faces different challenges in transitioning into a greener economy.</p>

There is an urgency to take action for tackling climate change. The consensus building and legally non-binding commitments under the present United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) would be grossly inadequate. There is valid criticism that decision making at UNFCCC conferences is slow and there has to be faster collective action to tackle climate change and associated challenges

Though the urgency to take action to tackle climate change is appreciated, the attempt to securitise the climate agenda could give more powers to the world's industrialised countries, which hold a veto power, to decide on future action on climate-related issues. Such a framework without consensus or the involvement of most developing countries. If the Security Council indeed takes over the responsibility on this issue, a few states predominantly Developed Economies would have a free hand in deciding on all climaterelated issues. This is clearly neither desirable nor acceptable.

### SECURITISE OR NOT

The least developed and developing countries should be encouraged to keep the promises they made with financial assistance. This needs to be a collective process. The UNFCCC should not only make sure that the promises made by member countries, especially the powerful ones, in previous conferences are kept but also expand the scope of discussions to include climate related security issues. The attempt to securitise the climate change agenda could have unintended consequences.

The advertisement features a man in a blue suit and glasses standing with his arms crossed. Behind him is a stylized world map. The text 'VEDHIK IAS ACADEMY' is prominently displayed in the center, with 'The New Learning Mantra' underneath. A red speech bubble in the top right corner says 'LATEST EPISODE OUT NOW'. A white box in the bottom right corner contains the text 'WORLD LAST WEEK' in large, bold, red letters. The background is a light grey with a subtle circular pattern.

## ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION

*The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) convened a summit attended by representative of the China, the U.S. and Russia, beyond the OIC members in Islamabad to explore ways to help Afghanistan avert an imminent economic collapse.*

- 🌀 REASON: Growing call for the U.S. and other countries to release upward of \$10 billion in frozen Afghan assets.
- 🌀 OUTCOME: Promise to set up a fund to provide humanitarian aid through the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), which would provide a cover for countries to donate without dealing directly with the country's Taliban rulers.

### ABOUT ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION (OIC)

- 🌀 CATEGORY: Inter-Governmental Organisation (IGO)
- 🌀 FOUNDED: 1969
- 🌀 STRENGTH: 57 member states (second largest IGO after the UN)
- 🌀 MANDATE: “the collective voice of the Muslim world” and works to “safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony “.
- 🌀 SECRETARIAT: Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
- 🌀 SIGNIFICANCE OF OIC FOR INDIA:  
Growing economic and energy interdependence with India and OIC.



## CHINA SLAPS SANCTIONS ON U.S. GOVT. OFFICIALS OVER XINJIANG

*China announced sanctions on Tuesday on four members of the U.S. government's Commission on International Religious Freedom in retaliation for penalties imposed on Chinese officials over complaints of abuses in the country's northwestern Xinjiang region. The titfortat sanctions add to spiralling tension over Xinjiang.*

UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea)

India remained committed to promoting a free, open and rules-based order rooted in international law and undaunted by coercion, the Centre recently informed Parliament while reiterating support for the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).



### Efforts by India to safeguard maritime interests and strengthen security in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR):

India supported freedom of navigation and overflight, and unimpeded commerce based on the principles of international law, reflected notably in the UNCLOS 1982.

As a State party to the UNCLOS, India promoted utmost respect for the UNCLOS, which established the international legal order of the seas and oceans.

India developed its maritime cooperation with regional partners in consonance with the Government's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR).

The steps taken include 'Mission based Deployments' of naval ships and aircraft to enhance Maritime Domain Awareness, promote maritime security and address contingencies that may arise.

#### About UNCLOS:

Adopted and signed in 1982. It became effective in the year 1994. It replaced the four Geneva Conventions of April, 1958, which respectively concerned the territorial sea and the contiguous zone, the continental shelf, the high seas, fishing and conservation of living resources on the high seas. The Convention has become the legal framework for marine and maritime activities.

Also known as Law of the Sea, it divides marine areas into five main zones namely- Internal Waters, Territorial Sea, Contiguous Zone, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the High Seas.

UNCLOS is the only international convention which stipulates a framework for state jurisdiction in maritime spaces. It provides a different legal status to different maritime zones.

The Convention has created three new institutions on the international scene:

- ☞ The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.
- ☞ The International Seabed Authority.
- ☞ The Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.





# INDIA RUSSIA RELATIONS

*Russia and India share a Special Relationship, often referred to as a "Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership".*



## *Way Forward*

*§ Russia To Provide Timely Maintenance Support: Timely supply of spares and support to the large inventory of Russian hardware in service with the Indian military has been a major issue from India.*

*§ Acknowledging Importance of Each Other: Russia will remain a key defense partner for India for decades to come.*

*§ Joint Military Production: The two countries have been discussing how they can cooperate in using India as a production base for exporting to third countries Russian-origin equipment and services.*



## POLITICS



Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission (IRIGC) conducts affairs at the governmental level between both countries. Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Co-operation co-chaired by the Russian Deputy Prime Minister and the Indian External Affairs Minister. Military Technical Co-operation co-chaired by the two countries' respective Defence Ministers.

## DEFENCE



India is the second largest market for the Russian defence industry. In 2017, approximately 68% of the Indian Military's hardware import came from Russia, making Russia the chief supplier of defence equipment.

## CIVIL NUCLEAR ENERGY



India is the second largest market for the Russian defence industry. In 2017, approximately 68% of the Indian Military's hardware import came from Russia, making Russia the chief supplier of defence equipment.

## ANTI-TERRORISM CO-OPERATION



Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission (IRIGC) conducts affairs at the governmental level between both countries. Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Co-operation co-chaired by the Russian Deputy Prime Minister and the Indian External Affairs Minister. Military Technical Co-operation co-chaired by the two countries' respective Defence Ministers.

## SPACE

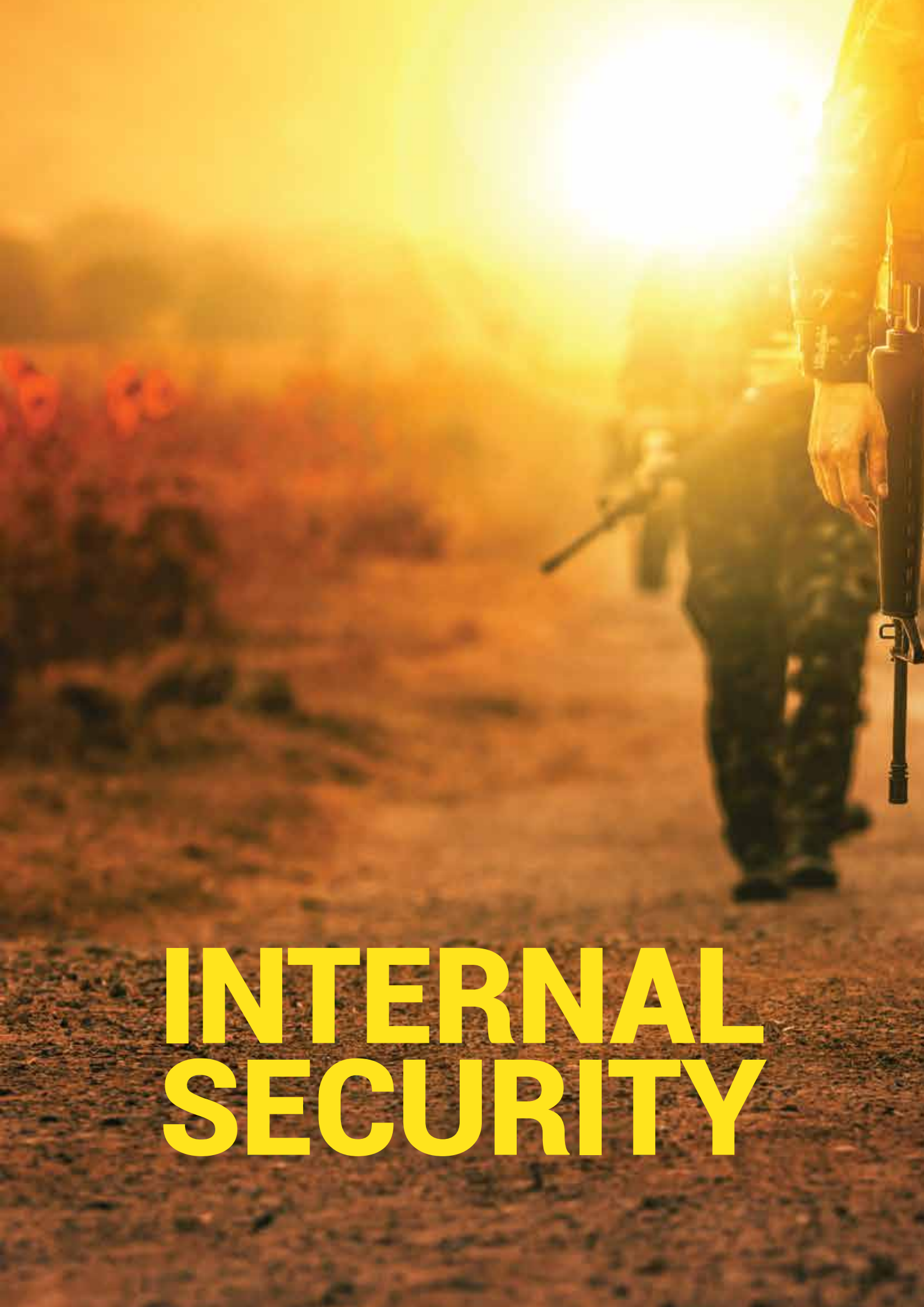


India and Russia has been collaborating with each other in GLONASS navigation system and Human Space Flight Programme.

## TRADE



India and Russia set a target of reaching US\$30 billion in bilateral trade by 2025, from about US\$9.4 billion in the year 2017. In order to meet this goal, both countries are looking to develop a free trade agreement.



# INTERNAL SECURITY





**CYBERATTACKS HIT 26,000 INDIAN SITES**

**IN 10 MONTHS**

**ARMED FORCES SPECIAL POWERS ACT, 1958**

**EXERCISE EKUVERIN**

**INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND**

**ANALYSIS CENTRE (IMAC)**

**GREATER TIPRALAND**

**CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF**

**PEGASUS SNOOPING CASE**

**LOKUR COMMISSION**

# CYBERATTACKS HIT 26,000 INDIAN SITES IN 10 MONTHS

Almost 26,000 Indian websites have been hacked into in the 10-month period ended October.

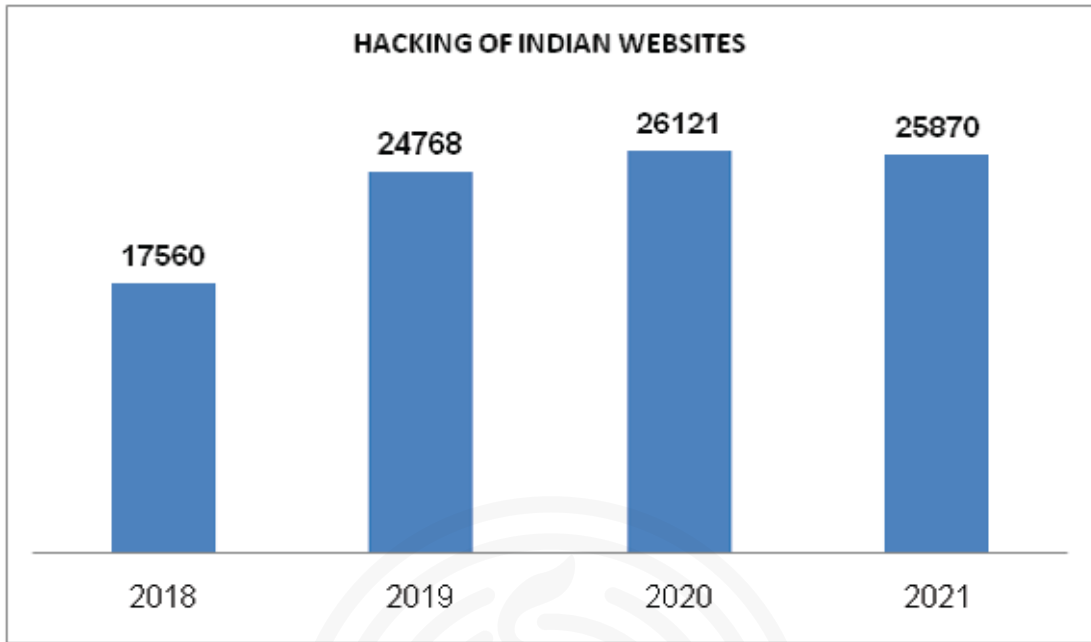


FIGURE: Bar chart representation of Indian websites - Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar said in a written reply to Lok Sabha.

## ABOUT COMPUTER EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM - INDIA (CERT-In)

TYPE: Statutory

STATUTE: Section 70 A of Information Technology Act, 2000

MANDATE: Track and monitor cybersecurity incidents in India.

### ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 🔍 Scan the domestic cyberspace at metadata level for cyber security threats generating situational awareness.
- 📄 Issue guidelines and advisories relating to information security practices, procedures, prevention, response and reporting of cyber incidents.
- 🤝 Coordinate with all stakeholders, including intelligence agencies as well as ISPs to launch quick response specifically during network intrusions and cyber-attacks.



*An investment in knowledge pays the best interest*

- BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

# ARMED FORCES SPECIAL POWERS ACT, 1958

The Naga tribes originally inhabited regions spread across the present day States of Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, besides Myanmar.

- China demarcated a U-shaped 'Eleven-dash line' claiming almost whole of South China Sea.

**1918**
- Naga Club submitted a 'Memorandum' to the Simon Commission, requesting the British Government to exclude the Naga-inhabited areas from the Indian Federation in the upcoming Government of India Act, 1935.

**1929**
- Categorised Naga Areas as Special Backward Area and later the Excluded Area status under the Government of India Act, 1935.

**1935**
- Naga Club, renamed as Naga Nationalist Council (NNC) asserted inalienable right for a separate and independent State for Nagas.

**1946**
- Nine-point Hydri Agreement, concluded between Sir Akbar Hydri, Governor of Assam and Naga Nationalist Council (NNC) that recognized the indisputable rights of Nagas to protect and promote their cultural and social practices as per customary law.

**1947**
- Gol passed a resolution rejecting the unilateral declaration of independence by Naga Nationalist Council (NNC).

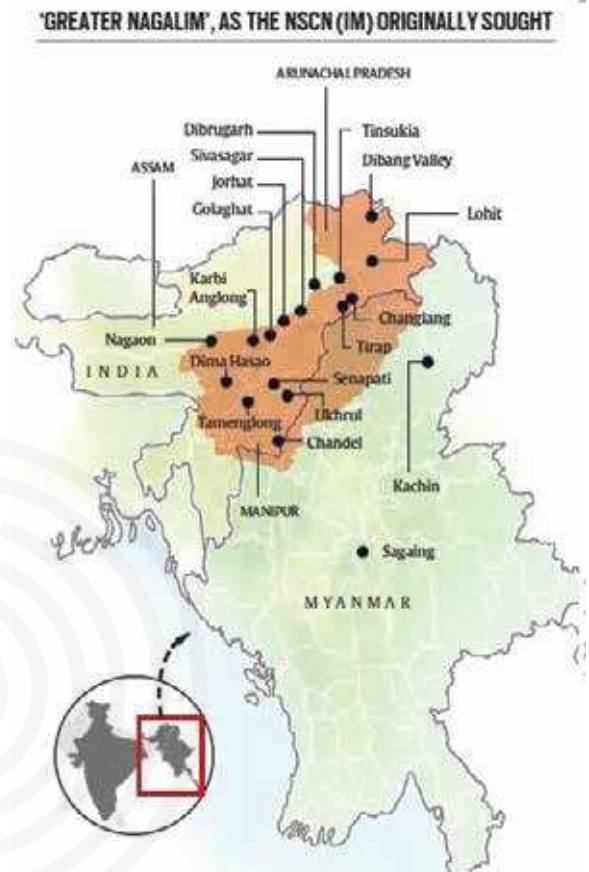
**1948**
- Adoption of the Yehzabo (Constitution) by Naga National Council establishing Sovereign Republic of Nagaland.

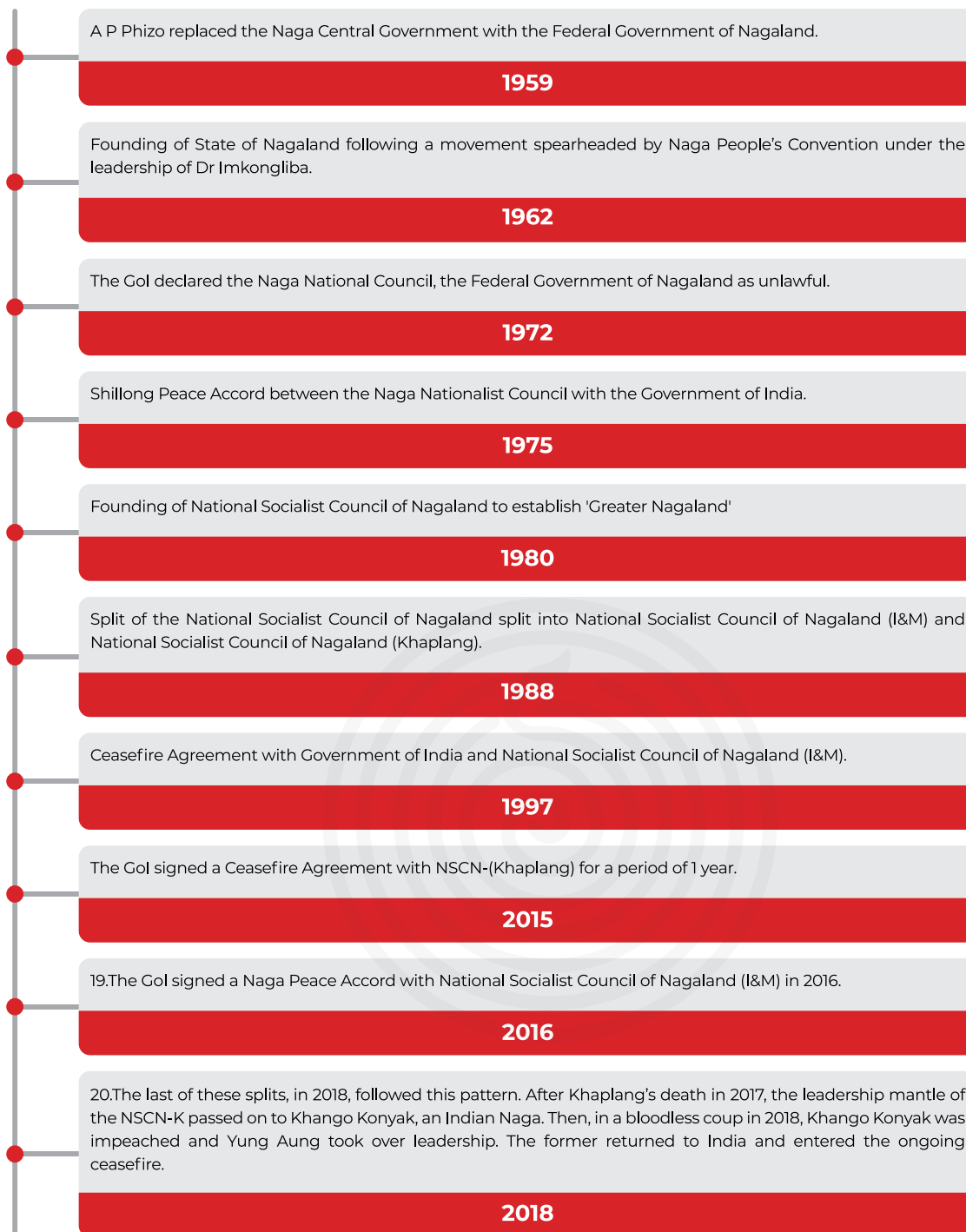
**1954**
- A P Phizo set up Naga Central Government.

**1956**
- Intensification of the secessionist movement for independence of Nagaland under the leadership of AP Phizo.

**1958**
- The Government of India imposed the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 in Assam.

**1958**





The Parliament enacted the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 in Assam, later extended to the whole of Disturbed Areas in Northeast India and later introduced to J & K in 1990. In simple terms, AFSPA gives armed forces the power to maintain public order in “disturbed areas”.

**CONCURRENT POWERS FOR DECLARATION OF 'DISTURBED AREA'** Section 3 of AFSPA, 1958

- Both the Centre and the State Governments (Governor of the State / UT) enjoy concurrent powers to issue notification in 'The Gazette of India' to declare a site of frequent occurrence of Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) among racial, religious, linguistic,



castes or communities over minor differences or disputes as 'DISTURBED AREA'.

- ✘ The Centre and the State Governments (Governor of the State or administrator of the Union Territory) can declare the whole or part of the State or Union Territory as a disturbed area.
- ✘ The Governor of the State or the Centre can overrule the suggestion of the State Government regarding the geographical limits of enforcement of Armed Forces Special Powers (Amendment) Act, 1990 to issue an official notification under the Section (3) of the AFSPA, 1990 for assistance of Army / CAPF to aid civilian administration to restore and maintain peace and order.)

## POWERS OF THE ARMED FORCES

- ✘ Prohibit a gathering of five or more persons in an area,
- ✘ Allowed to use force or even open fire after giving due warning if they feel a person is in contravention of the law.
- ✘ Arrest a person without a warrant upon existence of If reasonable suspicion exists, the army can also;
- ✘ Enter or search premises without a warrant; and ban the possession of firearms.
- ✘ Any person arrested or taken into custody may be handed over to the officer in charge of the nearest police station along with a report detailing the circumstances that led to the arrest.
- ✘ Empowers the armed forces to maintain public order in “disturbed areas”. It gives the armed forces the authority to use force or even open fire after warning a person found to be in contravention of the law.
- ✘ The AFSPA also lets the armed forces arrest a person and enter or search premises without a warrant and ban the possession of firearms if “reasonable suspicion exists”.
- ✘ Provides immunity for security personnel from prosecutions for acts done under official capacity, including shootings to kill; arrest, search and seizure without warrants to deal a committed crime or to prevent potential cognizable offence even on “reasonable suspicion”.

The 1997 Supreme Court judgment advocated “caution and use of minimum force against our own people” in AFSPA regions was followed or not. The November 1997 judgment of a Constitution Bench in Naga People’s Movement for Human Rights vs Union of India held that the power under Section 4(a) of the AFSPA to use deadly force should be employed only under “certain circumstances”. The court noted that the “power to cause death is relatable to maintenance of public order in a disturbed area and is to be exercised under definite circumstances”. These preconditions include a declaration by a highlevel authority that an area is “disturbed”. The officer concerned decides to use deadly force on the opinion that it is “necessary” to maintain public order. But he has to give “due warning” first. The persons against whom the action was taken by the armed forces should have been “acting in contravention of any law or order for the time being in force in the disturbed area”.

### “DISTURBED AREA”

A disturbed area is one which is declared by notification under **Section 3 of the AFSPA**. An area can be disturbed due to differences or disputes between members of different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUSTICE B P JEEVAN REDDY COMMITTEE

- ✂ Repeal draconian provisions of AFSPA and insert appropriate provisions in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967;
- ✂ Clearly specify the powers of the armed forces and paramilitary forces of the Unlawful Activities Act;  
Set up Grievance cells in districts, where the armed forces are deployed.

### Controversy on the application of AFSPA Act:

AFSPA Act provides the security personnel with absolute powers without being accounted for. This leads to various atrocities and human rights violation by the security agencies. AFSPA violates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the Convention against Torture (India is a signatory, but it has not ratified it).

### RECENT MIS-HAPPENINGS DUE TO AFSPA:

The truth is that long decades of violent insurrections and draconian counterinsurgency laws, in particular the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) 1958, have ensured a climate of impunity among those fighting insurgency. In neighboring Manipur, this became evident even in a pocket where AFSPA had been removed after public agitation following another atrocious rape and murder of a woman insurgent suspect in 2004.

Fake encounter killings soared in the area in the years that followed. The intuitive understanding of those tasked with counterinsurgency duty has come to be that action towards this cause will have little or no legal consequence. What happened at Mon is new evidence of this. It too reeked of the attitude that in these wild lawless territories, mistakes, even if they spell immense losses to civilian life, are part of the game.

### Promoting the Culture of 'surgical strikes':

It was in this sense, a continuance of the culture of 'surgical strikes' hyped up after the Pulwama incident in Jammu and Kashmir, and in the context of the North-east, the ambush by a combined group of militants led by the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K) in Chandel district of Manipur in 2015. The NSCN-K then was not as fragmented into factions as it is now.

### Conclusion: Recommendations at various instances to correct the AFSPA ACT:

BP Jeevan Reddy committee examining it in relation to the Northeast in 2005, and the Veerappa Moily report of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission of 2007, recommended that the Act be repealed.

The reports of the Justice Verma Committee (2013) and the Justice Hegde Commission (2013) supported need to address the abuses committed under the AFSPA and end the effective impunity enjoyed by security forces.

Supreme Court appointed Hegde Commission (2013) found that all seven deaths in the six cases it investigated were extrajudicial executions, and also said that the AFSPA was widely abused by security forces in Manipur.

The Army should put in public domain details of all court-martials held with respect to human rights violations.

It must sincerely carry out fresh investigations into all alleged cases of human rights violations in Nagaland, Manipur and elsewhere. Government should try to resolve the long running insurgency in North-eastern states through dialogue with insurgent groups.



# SECRET TO GET AHEAD START AHEAD

[www.vedhikiasacademy.org](http://www.vedhikiasacademy.org)

## EXERCISE EKUVERIN

*The Exercise Ekuverin is a joint military exercise held between India and Maldives. It is held between the armies of India and Maldives.*

### ABOUT EXERCISE EKUVERIN

- ❖ Ekuverin means “Friends” in Dhivehi language. It is an Indo – Aryan language. It is spoken in India, Lakshadweep and Maldives.
- ❖ The Exercise is being conducted between India and Maldives since 2008.
- ❖ In 2019, the exercise was held in Pune, Maharashtra and in 2018, it was held in Maldives.

### EXERCISE EKUVERIN 2021

- ❖ The 2021 Exercise Ekuverin was held in Maldives.
- ❖ The exercise focused on enhancing inter – operability between the armed forces of India and Maldives.
- ❖ It also included counter – insurgency and counter – terrorism operations.
- ❖ The joint exercise in 2021, also conducted sports and cultural activities to enhance the bilateral and defence relations.

### NEED FOR EXERCISE EKUVERIN

- ❖ India’s Policy of Indian Ocean is centred around providing security and political stability to Mauritius, Maldives, Seychelles and Sri Lanka. With this India aims to counter the expanding face of China in the region.
- ❖ India sees itself as a net provider of security in the Indian Ocean Region. India is always the first responder in Human Availability Disaster Recovery Operations.
- ❖ The piracy in the Indian Ocean Region has increased. The Exercise Ekuverin will aid in all the above issues. Therefore, it is essential to conduct Exercise Ekuverin.

## BENEFITS

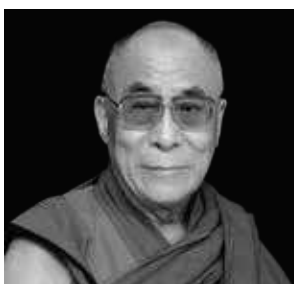
- 🌀 Helps the militaries to understand each other's drills and procedures.
- 🌀 Helps to overcome language barriers.
- 🌀 Aids in weapon familiarization which is essential in war or humanitarian aid such as disaster – relief. It is also essential in disaster relief operations.

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS CENTRE (IMAC)

*The National committee on Strengthening Maritime and Coastal Security (NCSMCS), an apex inter-ministerial and inter-agency body reviewing coastal security issues demarcated areas of responsibility for Indian Navy (IN), Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and State Marine Police a three-tiered cover coastal security mechanism.*

- 🌀 Nodal Agency For Maritime Data Fusion.
- 🌀 Was Set Up After The 26/11 Mumbai Terror Attacks.
- 🌀 Approved By The Defence Acquisition Council In 2012.
- 🌀 Became operational in 2014 and is located in Gurugram.
- 🌀 It is the nodal centre of the National Command Control Communication and Intelligence System (NC3I), which was established to link the operational centres and lower echelons of the Navy and the Coast Guard spread across the country's coast line, including the island territories.

The Indian Navy set up Information Fusion Centre (IFC) for the Indian Ocean Region at the Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) in Gurugram, Haryana to share information on “white shipping”, or commercial shipping with the countries in the region to improve maritime security and tackling piracy and terrorism in the Indian Ocean. The IFC will generate a seamless real-time picture of the nearly 7,500-km coastline of India by linking all the coastal radar chains. The entire Indian Ocean region will be benefited by mutual collaboration and exchange of information through the setting up of IFC-IOR. It will help in understanding the major concerns and threats prevalent in the Indian Ocean region. India has also signed the ascension agreement to the Trans Regional Maritime Network (T-RMN) to allow information exchange on the movement of commercial ships on the high seas. The information about the commercial ships is available primarily through the Automatic Identification System (AIS) fitted on merchant ships. It Automatic Identification System (AIS) chips have been made mandatory by the International Maritime Organisation for ships with more than 300 gross registered tonnage. These AIS chips contain information like name, MMSI number, position, course, speed, last port visited, destination and other vital data. The various AIS sensors read the information from these AIS chips and obtain the information.



*When educating the minds of our youth  
we must not forget to educate their hearts*

- DALAI LAMA



## GREATER TIPRALAND

Several tribal outfits in Tripura have joined hands to push their demand for a separate state for indigenous communities in the region following the recent killings.

**DEMAND:** Parties are demanding a separate state of 'Greater Tipraland' for the indigenous communities of the north-eastern state.

### ABOUT GREATER TIPRALAND

- ✘ Extension of the ruling tribal partner Indigenous Peoples Front of Tripura – IPFT's demand of Tipraland, which sought a separate state for tribals of Tripura.
- ✘ Seeks to include every tribal person living in indigenous area or village outside the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC).
- ✘ However, the idea doesn't restrict to simply the Tripura tribal council areas, but seeks to include 'Tiprasa' of Tripuris spread across different states of India like Assam, Mizoram etc. as well, even those living in Bandarban, Chittagong, Khagrachari and other bordering areas of neighbouring Bangladesh.

## CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF

Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, his wife Madhulika Rawat, an Army Brigadier, and 10 others were killed when an Indian Air Force helicopter carrying them crashed into a heavily wooded area of the Coonoor ghat in the Nilgiris in western Tamil Nadu recently. Investigation has begun into the cause of the crash of the Mi-17V5 helicopter, a "trusted" aircraft.

### ABOUT CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF (CDS)

- ✘ Four-star General
- ✘ Single-point military adviser to the Government of India.
- ✘ Acts as the permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee which will also have three service chiefs as members.
- ✘ Foster greater operational synergy between the three service branches of the Indian military and keep inter-service frictions to a minimum.

### KARGIL REVIEW COMMITTEE IN 1999.

#### SERVICE CONDITIONS

- ✘ Not eligible to hold any Government office after demitting the office of CDS.
- ✘ No private employment without prior approval for a period of five years after demitting the office of CDS.

#### ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

- ✘ Provide "single-point military advice" to the government, inject synergy in planning, procurements and logistics in the armed forces.
- ✘ Ensure integration of land-air-sea operations through the eventual setting up of theatre commands.
- ✘ Military advisor to the PM-led Nuclear Command Authority, as also have direct

command of tri-Service organizations to handle the new warfare domains of space and cyberspace.

- ✂ Principal Military Adviser to the Defence Minister and also as the Permanent Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC).
- ✂ Member of Defence Acquisition Council and Defence Planning Committee.

## PEGASUS SNOOPING CASE

*The Supreme Court has stayed further proceedings of a Commission of Inquiry appointed by the West Bengal Government to look into allegations of snooping using the Pegasus software. The continued use of spyware Pegasus, which an Israeli company sells to governments worldwide, has been confirmed with fresh reports. Like the phones it targets, Pegasus has been apparently updated and now comes with new surveillance capabilities.*

### WHAT IS PEGASUS?

It is a spyware tool developed by an Israeli firm, the NSO Group. Spyware spy on people through their phones.

- ✂ Pegasus works by sending an exploit link, and if the target user clicks on the link, the malware or the code that allows the surveillance is installed on the user's phone.
- ✂ Once Pegasus is installed, the attacker has complete access to the target user's phone.

### WHAT CAN PEGASUS DO?

- ✂ Pegasus can "send back the target's private data, including passwords, contact lists, calendar events, text messages, and live voice calls from popular mobile messaging apps".
- ✂ The target's phone camera and microphone can be turned on to capture all activity in the phone's vicinity, expanding the scope of the surveillance.

### WHAT IS A ZERO-CLICK ATTACK?

A zero-click attack helps spyware like Pegasus gain control over a device without human interaction or human error.

- ✂ So all awareness about how to avoid a phishing attack or which links not to click are pointless if the target is the system itself.
- ✂ Most of these attacks exploit software which receive data even before it can determine whether what is coming in is trustworthy or not, like an email client.

### DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MALWARE, TROJAN, VIRUS, AND WORM?

**Malware** is defined as a software designed to perform an unwanted illegal act via the computer network. It could be also defined as software with malicious intent.

Malware can be classified based on how they get executed, how they spread, and/or what they do. Some of them are discussed below.

- ☞ Virus: A program that can infect other programs by modifying them to include a possible evolved copy of itself.
- ☞ Worms: Disseminated through computer networks, unlike viruses, computer worms are malicious programs that copy themselves from system to system, rather than infiltrating legitimate files.
- ☞ Trojans: Trojan or trojan horse is a program that generally impairs the security of a system. Trojans are used to create back-doors (a program that allows outside access into a secure network) on computers belonging to a secure network so that a hacker can have access to the secure network.
- ☞ Hoax: An e-mail that warns the user of a certain system that is harming the computer. The message thereafter instructs the user to run a procedure (most often in the form of a download) to correct the harming system. When this program is run, it invades the system and deletes an important file.
- ☞ Spyware: Invades a computer and, as its name implies, monitors a user's activities without consent. Spywares are usually forwarded through unsuspecting e-mails with bonafide e-mail i.ds. Spyware continues to infect millions of computers globally.

## LOKUR COMMISSION:

*The Supreme Court on Friday stayed all proceedings before Justice Madan Lokur Commission, set up by the West Bengal government to inquire into the alleged interception of mobile phones using military grade spyware Pegasus, disapproving breach of undertaking by the state for halting the commission's work when the SC was seized of the pan-India issue.*

The West Bengal government had, in July 2021, set up a Commission of Inquiry (Lokur Commission), under the 1952 Act, to look into the alleged surveillance of phones using the Pegasus spyware developed by the Israeli cyber-intelligence company NSO Group.

- ☞ The Commission will look into the alleged breach of privacy of several individuals.

### WHO CAN SET UP SUCH COMMISSIONS?

While both central and state governments can set up such Commissions of Inquiry, states are restricted by subject matters that they are empowered to legislate upon.

- ☞ If the central government set up the commission first, then states cannot set up a parallel commission on the same subject matter without the approval of the Centre.
- ☞ But if a state has appointed a Commission, then the Centre can appoint another on the same subject if it is of the opinion that the scope of the inquiry should be extended to two or more states.

### WHAT ARE ITS POWERS?

Under The Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952, a Commission set up by the government shall have the powers of a civil court, while trying a suit under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.

- ✎ This means that the Commission has powers to summon and enforce the attendance of any person from any part of India and examine her on oath, and receive evidence.
- ✎ It can order requisition of any public record or copy from any court or office.

### WHAT KIND OF SUBJECTS CAN A COMMISSION PROBE?

Commissions set up by the central government can make an inquiry into any matter relating to any of the entries in List I (Union List) or List II (State List) or List III (Concurrent List) in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution, while Commissions set up by state governments can look into entries in List II or List III.

### PEGASUS INQUIRY COMMISSION MATTER IS RELATED TO:

- ✎ The West Bengal government has cited public order and police entries. While these subjects are in the State List, an argument could also be made that the subject matter of the inquiry essentially falls under the Central List.
- ✎ Also, Entry 31 of the Union List deals with posts and telegraphs, telephones, wireless, broadcasting and other like forms of communication.

### WHAT VALUE DOES SUCH A COMMISSION'S REPORT HAVE?

- ✎ The findings of such commissions are normally tabled in the Assembly or Parliament, depending on who constituted it.
- ✎ However, the government is not bound to make the report public. The findings are not binding on the executive wither, but can be relied upon by courts as evidence.

*The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others*

- MAHATMA GANDHI



SPACE FOR ROUGH NOTES



**SPACE FOR ROUGH NOTES**



# ECONOMICS





PERIODIC LABOUR FORCE SURVEY (PLFS)

OECD CUTS WORLD GROWTH OUTLOOK ON OMICRON FEARS

COST OF LIVING INDEX 2021

PAYMENTS BANKS AND SFBS TO CONDUCT

GOVERNMENT AGENCY BUSINESS

FACIAL RECOGNITION TECH IN INDIAN AIRPORTS

SEBI RECASTS DELISTING RULES TO MAKE M&A EASIER

RBI TO EXTEND UPI TO FEATURE PHONE USERS

GLOBAL AND INDIAN TRENDS IN INEQUALITY

IMF ASKS FOR REGULATION OF CRYPTOCURRENCIES

SEBI PROPOSES RULES FOR RETAIL ALGORITHMIC TRADING

HYDROGEN-ENRICHED COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS (HCNG)

INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES CENTRES(IFSC)

NEGATIVE YIELD BONDS

NATIONAL MONETISATION PIPELINE (NMP)

RBI INTRODUCES PROMPT CORRECTIVE ACTION

FRAMEWORK FOR NBFCs

REIMBURSEMENT SCHEME FOR RUPAY DEBIT CARD,

BHIM UPI TRANSACTIONS

PLI SCHEME FOR SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING

CCI FREEZES AMAZON-FUTURE DEAL

INDIA OFFERS 8 OIL, GAS BLOCKS FOR BIDDING IN LATEST ROUND

UDAN SCHEME

CO-LENDING MODEL- BANK-NBFC CO-LENDING

SPECIAL STATUS FOR BIHAR

## PERIODIC LABOUR FORCE SURVEY (PLFS)

The National Statistical Office recently released its findings of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS). This is a Quarterly bulletin and is tenth in the series. This is for January to March 2021.

### SALIENT FINDINGS OF 2021 SURVEY

The unemployment rate of people in the age of 15 years and above was 10.3%.

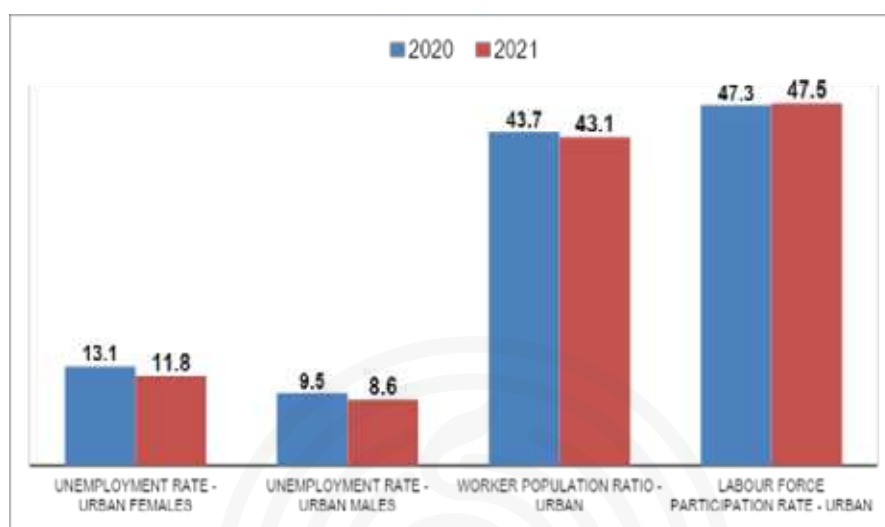


FIGURE: Bar chart representation of Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS).

### CURRENT WEEKLY STATUS AND USUAL STATUS

CURRENT WEEKLY STATUS	USUAL STATUS
Employment status of the individuals in the last 7 days preceding the date of survey.	Employment status of the individuals in the last 365 days preceding the date of survey.
Captures short-term unemployment in the country	Captures long term unemployment in the country

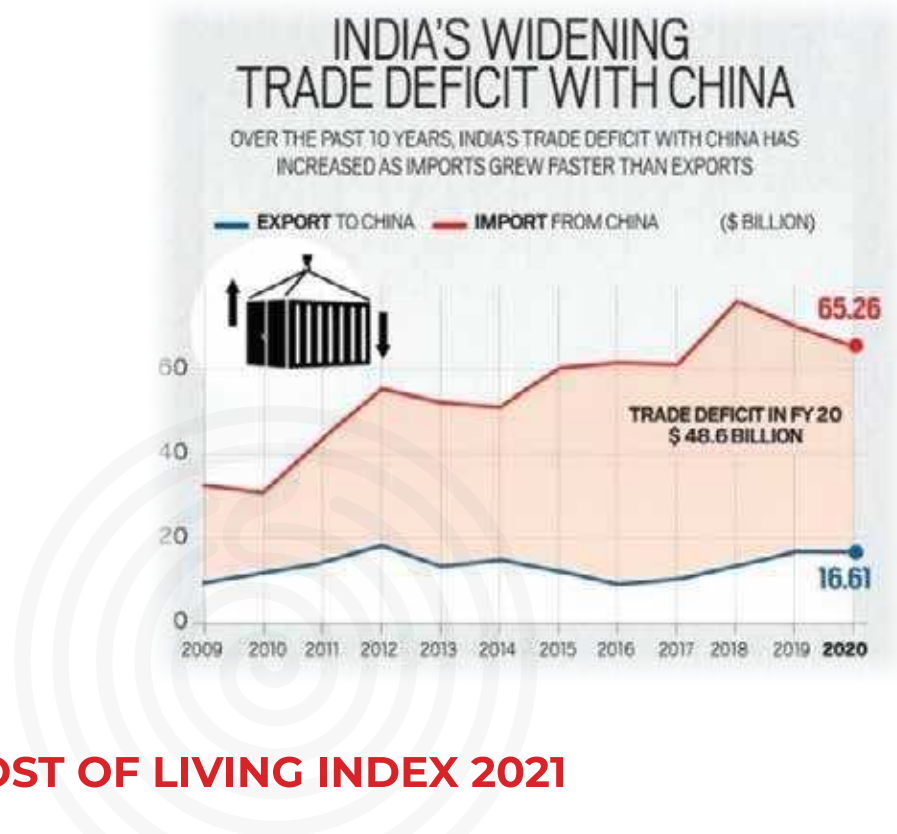
### ABOUT PERIODIC LABOUR FORCE SURVEY (PLFS)

- 🔗 PUBLISHED BY: National Statistical Office (NSO) since 2017
- 🔗 FREQUENCY OF ISSUE: Quarterly bulletin
- 🔗 METHODOLOGY: Survey-based approach
- 🔗 OBJECTIVES: Estimate employment and unemployment indicators.
- 🔗 LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE: Percentage of persons working or seeking or available for work
- 🔗 WORKER POPULATION RATIO: Percentage of employed persons in the population
- 🔗 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE: Percentage of persons unemployed among the persons in labour force
- 🔗 LABOUR FORCE: Part of the population that supplies labour for the production of goods and services



## OECD CUTS WORLD GROWTH OUTLOOK ON OMICRON FEARS

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) warned on Wednesday that the Omicron variant threatens the global economic recovery as it lowered the growth outlook for 2021 and appealed for a swifter roll-out of COVID vaccines.



## COST OF LIVING INDEX 2021

According to the Cost-of-Living Index report, Tel Aviv of Israel is the most expensive city in the world. In general, the developed Asian and European cities dominated the ranking. Cities in Africa, Middle East and less wealthier parts of Asia occupied the lowest rankings.

### REASONS FOR THE INCREASE IN PRICE RISE

Prohibit religious conversion by misrepresentation, force, fraud, allurements of marriage, coercion and undue influence and makes it a cognisable and non-bailable offence

- Disruptions in global supply chain due to the COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected the production and trade all over the world.
- And eventually led to the price rise. The oil price rise played a major role in the price rise. The unleaded petrol prices increased by 21%.
- Apart from oil, the prices of recreation, personal care products and tobacco products also increased.

### ABOUT COST-OF-LIVING INDEX

- PUBLICATION: Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU)
- MEHODOLOGY: Tracks the cost of living of 173 cities in the world bench marking the prices of more than 200 every day products and services against the prices in New York.

## PAYMENTS BANKS AND SFBs TO CONDUCT GOVERNMENT AGENCY BUSINESS

RBI allows Payments Banks, Small Finance Banks to conduct Government agency business. However, the concerned bank should not be under the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework or moratorium.

The power of accrediting an agency bank (including scheduled private sector agency bank) for any particular government agency business rests solely with the concerned Central Government Departments /State Governments.

### Implications

The Bank can now participate in government and other large corporations issued Request for Proposals (RFP), primary auctions, fixed-rate and variable rate repos, and reverse repos, along with participation in Marginal Standing Facility.

Also, the bank would now also be eligible to partner in government-run financial inclusion schemes.

### SALIENT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PAYMENTS BANKS AND SMALL FINANCE BANKS

PAYMENTS BANKS	SMALL FINANCE BANKS
<b>MANDATE</b>	
Promote payment services to under-served and unserved sections of society.	Promote micro, small and medium credit and other financial services to under-served and unserved sections of society.
<b>ENTITIES ELIGIBLE FOR LICENSE</b>	
1.Existing Non-Banking Pre-Paid Instrument Issuers (PPIs). 2.Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs). 3.Corporate Business Correspondents. 4.Mobile Telecoms. 5.Super-Market Chains. 6.Firms. 7.Real Sector Co-operatives. 8.Public Sector Enterprises.	1.Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs) 2.Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs)
<b>MODE OF SERVICE DELIVERY</b>	
Provide banking services, either independently or through Business Correspondents (BCs) or through networks provided by others.	Provide banking services through their own network.

ELIGIBLE DEMAND DEPOSIT SERVICES	
Eligible to accept Demand Deposits of up to Rs. 2 lakh per individual. Current Account Savings Account	Eligible to accept small deposits.
ELIGIBLE TIME DEPOSIT SERVICES	
Not eligible to accept Time Deposits ie, Fixed Deposits.	Eligible to accept Time Deposits ie, Fixed Deposits.
ELGIBLE LENDING SERVICES	
Not eligible for lending services (credit services)*	Eligible for lending services with lend at least 75 % of their ANBC to priority sectors. Credit cap for Single and group borrowers are eligible up to 10 % and 15 % of capital funds respectively. At least, 50 % of loans should be up to 25 lakhs.
Not eligible for lending services	Not eligible for corporate lending
Not eligible for lending services	Not eligible to set up subsidiaries to undertake NBFC services.
Not eligible for lending services	Not eligible to act as a Business Correspondent (BC) of any bank.
ELGIBLE REMITTANCE SERVICES	
Mobile and online banking Automatic bill payments Cashless purchases Cheque-less transactions Debit and ATM card services Forex Cards to travellers Forex services Card acceptance mechanisms to TPs	
MISCELLANEOUS FINANCIAL SERVICES	
Distribute non-risk sharing Third Party financial products, namely mutual funds, insurance products etc.	Distribute non-risk sharing Third Party financial products, namely mutual funds, insurance products etc.
Mandatory for PBs to maintain CRR with RBI on NDTL.	Small Finance Banks are subjected to RBI regulations to maintain Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) with the RBI on NDTL.

Mandatory for PBs to invest at least 75 % of its 'Demand Deposit Balances' in SLR eligible G-Secs / Treasury Bills.	Eligible to accept small deposits.
Mandatory for PBs to hold at least 25 % of their Demand liabilities [Current & Time Deposits] with other Scheduled Commercial Banks for operational purposes and liquidity management.	Not applicable
1. Minimum Authorised (paid-up equity) capital of Rs 100 Cr. with promoter holding at least 40% of the paid-up equity capital of Payments Bank for the first 5 years.	Minimum Authorised (paid-up equity) capital of Rs 100 Cr. with promoter should hold at least 40% of the paid-up equity capital of Small Finance Banks with phased reduction to 30 % in 10 years
Existing Scheduled Commercial Banks can invest up to 30% in Payments Banks.	Not eligible for corporate lending
Domestic entities should hold at least 51% of the equity of the Payments Bank. The FDI should be subject to Banking Regulation Act, 1949.	Domestic entities should hold at least 26% of the equity of the Small Finance Banks with a composite cap of 24% for FPIs. The FDI should be subject to Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
The outside liabilities of Payment Banks should not exceed one third of its net worth (paid-up capital and reserves).	

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## FACIAL RECOGNITION TECH IN INDIAN AIRPORTS

The Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation V.K. Singh, said four airports in the country will soon have facial recognition technology (FRT) based boarding system for passengers. The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has engaged NEC Corporation Pvt. Ltd. to implement FRT at the four airports.

### DIGI YATRA INITIATIVE

#### OBJECTIVE

- ✎ Make air travel paperless and hassle-free, implementing Facial Recognition Technology (FRT) at Varanasi, Pune, Kolkata and Vijayawada airports on a pilot-basis.
- ✎ Simplify passenger-related processes at various check points at the airport.
- ✎ Reduce queue waiting time and accelerate processing time.
- ✎ Removes redundancies and enhances resource utilization.

#### STRATEGY

- ✎ Build 'Common Digi Yatra ID', an identity management platform to enroll passengers, authenticate their data, and share consenting passengers' profiles with other airport partners.
- ✎ The app-based interface built as a shared national infrastructure will provide APIs to airports and allow integration of other apps to 'Common Digi Yatra ID' platform.

#### PROCEDURES

- ✎ STEP 01: BIOMETRIC PROFILING OF PASSENGER - A camera scans the passenger's face, and takes measurements of their facial features to build a biometric profile of them.
- ✎ STEP 02: VALIDATION OF BIOMETRIC PROFILE OF BOARDING PASSENGER - Another camera takes a picture of their face and runs an algorithm to check whether the two images match with the boarding pass.

SALIENT FEATURES	ANALYSIS
Collect biometric information from passengers compliant with data privacy and protection practices of the country.	India's recently adopted Personal Data Protection Bill (PDPB), 2019 lack specific clauses or guidelines that satisfy the benchmark set by the Supreme Court in its landmark privacy judgment in the 'Justice K.S. Puttaswamy Vs Union of India' case. This poses a huge threat to the fundamental rights to privacy and freedom of speech and expression.
Prohibits the use of data shared by passengers for the purposes and stakeholders	Many institutions have not conducted "privacy impact assessment" prior to deployment of the facial recognition system (FRS) . Function creep: A function creep happens when someone uses information for a purpose that is not the original specified purpose (Police got permission to use the FRS by an order of the Delhi High Court for tracking missing children.

	Now they are using it for wider security and surveillance and investigation purpose, which is a function creep).
Deletion of passengers' biometric information 24 hours after departure of flight.	Mass surveillance: If someone goes to a protest against the government, and the police are able to identify the person, then there might be repercussions.
The use of iris scans, fingerprints and facial recognition to identify travellers has been operational in some international airports in the past few years.	AI-based biometric scanning technologies is reported to have an inherent bias with Black, Brown and Asian individuals more likely to be misidentified 100 times than white male faces.

## BENEFITS

- 1.Improves outcomes in the area of Criminal identification and verification.
- 2.Easy identification amongst crowds.
- 3.Boosts the police department's crime investigation capabilities.
- 4.Helps civilian verification when needed. No one will be able to get away with a fake ID.

## NEED OF THE HOUR:

The Supreme Court in the Puttaswamy judgment ruled that privacy is a fundamental right even in public spaces. And if these rights needs to be infringed, then the government has to show that such action is sanctioned by law, proportionate to the need for such interference, necessary and in pursuit of a legitimate aim.



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## SEBI RECASTS DELISTING RULES TO MAKE M&A EASIER

*SEBI has amended rules pertaining to delisting of shares of a company following an open offer as part of efforts to make mergers and acquisitions for listed firms more convenient.*

### ABOUT SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA (SEBI)

- ESTABLISHED: 1992
- TYPE: reconstituted through the SEBI Act, 1992
- STATUTE:
- HEADQUARTERS: Mumbai
- MANDATE: Regulator of capital markets in India
- OBJECTIVE: Oversee and protect the interests of the issuers of securities, the investors and market intermediaries.
- STRUCTURE: The Board of Securities and Exchange Board of India is chaired by a nominated appointee, 2 officials nominated by the Union Finance Ministry, a Reserve Bank of India nominee and 5 nominees of the Union Government of India, out of them at least 3 shall be whole-time members.

### FUNCTIONS OF THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA:

- Quasi-executive: Conducts investigation and enforce transparency in operation of stakeholders.
- Quasi-legislative: Draft and approve by-laws, including its amendments in operation of stock exchanges over subjects delegated via SEBI Act, 1992.
- Quasi-judicial: Passes rulings and orders. A three member Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) chaired by a retired judge of the Supreme Court or a former Chief Justice of a High Court or a retired judge of a High Court with seven years of experience.
- A second appeal lies directly to the Supreme Court.

## RBI TO EXTEND UPI TO FEATURE PHONE USERS

*Unified Payments Interface (UPI) facility — the single largest retail payments system in the country in terms of volume of transactions for small value payments, currently available only for smartphone will soon be extended to feature phone users.*

### ADVANTAGES

- Deepen digital payments
- make them more inclusive
- Ease transactions for consumers
- Facilitate greater participation of retail customers in various segments of financial markets
- Enhance the capacity of service providers

It is proposed to launch UPI-based payment products for feature phone users, leveraging on innovative products from the RBI's regulatory sandbox on retail payments," the RBI said. The regulator has also proposed to make the process flow for small value transactions simpler

through an 'on-device' wallet in UPI applications. There have been some concerns on the reasonableness of various charges incurred by customers for digital payments through credit cards, debit cards, prepaid payment instruments [cards and wallets], UPI and the like".

### ABOUT UNIFIED PAYMENTS INTERFACE (UPI)

Instant real-time payment system

Allow users to transfer money on a real-time basis, across multiple bank accounts without revealing details of one's bank account to the other party.

**Top UPI apps:** PhonePe, Paytm, Google Pay, Amazon Pay and BHIM

UPI is currently the biggest among the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) operated systems including National Automated Clearing House (NACH), Immediate Payment Service (IMPS), Aadhaar enabled Payment System (AePS), Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS), RuPay etc.

### ABOUT BHARAT INTERFACE FOR MONEY (BHIM)

Domestic digital payment application (app) that works through UPI, a system that powers multiple bank accounts into a single mobile application.

Developed by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

Allows real time fund transfer.

The BHIM app has three levels of authentication

## GLOBAL AND INDIAN TRENDS IN INEQUALITY

*The story so far:* The report authored by a team of top economists led by Lucas Chancel, and coordinated by Nobelwinning economist Thomas Piketty, among others, synthesises data and analyses generated by more than 100 researchers over four years. It's main finding is that

Released by the **World Inequality Lab**, a research center at the Paris School of Economics.

### INCOME INEQUALITY

The gap between the rich and the poor in terms of share of national income is quite large, and growing rapidly

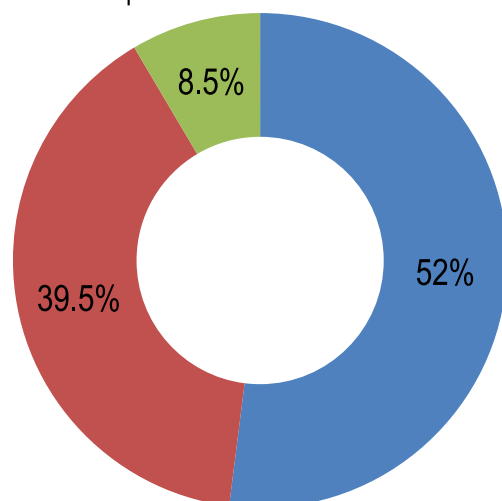
- 🚫 Richest 10% of the global population takes home 52 % of the global income.
- 🚫 Poorest 50% got only 8.5% of the global income.

While Europe was the region with the least amount of inequality (the income share of the top 10% was 36%), inequality was highest in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, where the share of the top 10% was 58%.

the gap between the average incomes of the richest 10% of countries and the average incomes of the poorest 50% of countries has dropped from 50x to less than

### GLOBAL INCOME

- Richest 10 per cent
- Middle 40 per cent
- Poorest 50 per cent





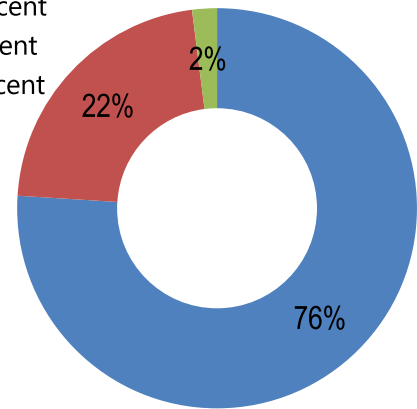
40x, the gap between the average incomes of the top 10% and the bottom 50% of individuals within countries has almost doubled, from 8.5x to 15x.

### Global wealth inequities are worse than income inequalities

- ✎ Richest 10% own 76% of all the global wealth.
- ✎ Poorest 50% own just 2% of the global wealth.
- ✎ One major trend highlighted by the report is that inequality between countries was narrowing while inequality within countries was increasing.

### GLOBAL WEALTH

- Richest 10 per cent
- Middle 40 per cent
- Poorest 50 per cent

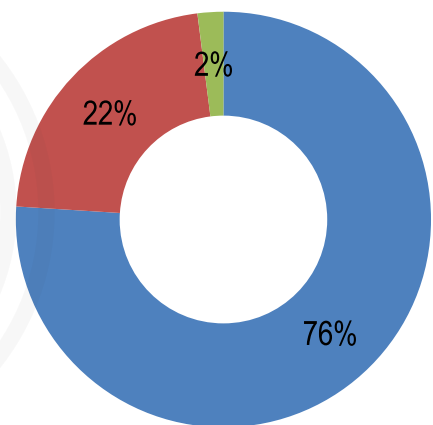


### INCOME INEQUALITY IN INDIA

- ✎ The report has found India to be one of the world's most unequal countries, with the
- ✎ Top 1% getting 21.7% of the national income.
- ✎ Top 10% of Indians capture 57% of the national income
- ✎ Bottom 50% is only 13%.

### INCOME INEQUALITY\_INDIA

- Richest 10 per cent
- Middle 40 per cent
- Poorest 50 per cent



## IMF ASKS FOR REGULATION OF CRYPTOCURRENCIES

*International Monetary Fund (IMF) Chief Economist has made a strong case for regulating cryptocurrencies.*

### ABOUT CRYPTOCURRENCY

- ✎ Digital asset typically, not existent in physical form not issued by a central authority that work as a medium of exchange
- ✎ Individual coin ownership records are stored in a ledger existing in a form of a computerized database.
- ✎ Use strong cryptography to secure transaction records, to control the creation of additional coins, and to verify the transfer of coin ownership.
- ✎ Cryptocurrencies typically use decentralized control as opposed to centralized digital currency and central banking systems

## CRYPTOCURRENCY-AN ANALYSIS

<p>The underlying blockchain technology, based on validation via peer-to-peer network can prevent frauds in transactions.</p>	<p>The public keys not directly linked to an individual generated in a cryptocurrency transaction provide greater anonymity than other payment methods making cryptocurrencies suitable for criminal activities - Money Laundering, Drug Trafficking, Terrorist Financing, Weapon Proliferation, Cyber Crime and Sanction evasion.</p>
<p>Transactions conducted entirely on the Internet save money and substantial time for the remitter and the receiver, as it is, runs on a mechanism that involves very less transaction fees and is almost instantaneous. Intermediaries such as banks, credit card and payment gateways draw almost 3% from the total global economic output of over \$100 trillion, as fees for their services.</p>	<p>Since validating transactions is energy-intensive, it may have adverse consequences for the country's energy security (the total electricity use of bitcoin mining, in 2018, was equivalent to that of mid-sized economies such as Switzerland).</p>
<p>Integrating blockchain into these sectors could result in hundreds of billions of dollars in savings.</p>	<p>Setting up blockchain network is capital intensive</p>
<p>Cryptocurrencies lacking neither any sovereign guarantee nor the status of legal tender pose risks to consumers. The absence of regulatory control of Central Banks over cryptocurrencies pose a risk to the financial stability of the country.</p>	<p>Cryptocurrencies lacking neither any sovereign guarantee nor the status of legal tender pose risks to consumers. The absence of regulatory control of Central Banks over cryptocurrencies pose a risk to the financial stability of the country.</p>
<p>Crypto currencies have historically recorded high returns – with Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 14.5%. Crypto currencies is also used as an alternative hedging instrument to gold and protection from debased currencies and the threat of rising inflation.</p>	<p>The speculative nature of cryptocurrencies also makes them highly volatile. For instance, the value of Bitcoin fell from USD 20,000 in December 2017 to USD 3,800 in November 2018.</p>
	<p>In some cases, these private keys are stored by technical service providers (cryptocurrency exchanges or wallets), which are prone to malware or hacking. A user loses access to their cryptocurrency if they lose their private key (unlike traditional digital banking accounts, this password cannot be reset).</p>

However the recent announcement of its government to introduce Central Bank Digital Currency has given a ray of hope to those looking to invest into cryptocurrencies. The sooner its usage is regulated the better for the country

## SEBI PROPOSES RULES FOR RETAIL ALGORITHMIC TRADING

Capital markets regulator SEBI on Thursday proposed a regulatory framework for algorithmic trading (algo trading) by retail investors to make such trading safe and prevent market manipulations.

### ABOUT ALGORITHMIC TRADING

- ❌ Order generated using automated execution logic.
- ❌ The algo trading system automatically monitors the live stock prices and initiates an order when the given criteria are met.

## HYDROGEN-ENRICHED COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS (HCNG)

There is an increased push for adopting “Hydrogen-enriched compressed natural gas (HCNG)” This comes in the backdrop of India’s National Hydrogen Energy Mission in the works, which may mandate fertilizer, steel and petrochemicals industries to shift to green hydrogen use.

### BACKGROUND:

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has also developed specifications (IS 17314:2019) of Hydrogen enriched Compressed Natural Gas (H-CNG) for automotive purposes, as a fuel.

### ABOUT HCNG

- ❌ Blending of hydrogen with CNG provides a blended gas termed as HCNG.
- ❌ Can be used in place of gasoline, diesel fuel and propane (C<sub>3</sub>H<sub>8</sub>)/LPG and its combustion produces fewer undesirable gases.

### ADVANTAGES OF HCNG

- ❌ Reduces CO emissions up to 70%.
- ❌ Enables up to 5 % savings in fuel.
- ❌ First step towards future Hydrogen economy.
- ❌ Engines can be calibrated to release lower amounts of NO.
- ❌ Engines need minimum modification to run on HCNG.
- ❌ Ideal fuel for high load applications and heavy-duty vehicles.
- ❌ Better performance due to higher Octane rating of H<sub>2</sub>.

### DISADVANTAGES OF HCNG

- ❌ Determining the most optimized H<sub>2</sub>/ NG (Natural Gas) ratio.
- ❌ It requires new infrastructures for preparing HCNG.
- ❌ Many steps need to be taken for commercializing it at a large scale.
- ❌ Current cost of H<sub>2</sub> is more than the cost of Natural Gas. So, HCNG’s cost is more than CNG.

## INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES CENTRES(IFSC)

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated InFinity Forum, a thought leadership Forum on FinTech, hosted by International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), under the aegis of Government of India in collaboration with GIFT City and Bloomberg. Indonesia, South Africa and the U.K. are partner countries in the first edition of the Forum.

### InFinity FORUM

- Bring together the leading minds of the world in policy, business, and technology to discuss and come up with actionable insight into how technology and innovation can be leveraged by the FinTech industry for inclusive growth and serving humanity at large.
- The agenda of the Forum will focus on the theme of 'Beyond'; With various sub themes including FinTech beyond boundaries, FinTech beyond Finance and FinTech Beyond Next.
- The forum will witness participation from over 70 countries.

### ABOUT INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES CENTRES AUTHORITY

- TYPE: Statutory organisation
- STATUTE: International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) Act, 2019
- HEADQUARTERS: GIFT City, Gandhinagar.
- MANDATE: Unified authority for the development and regulation of financial products, financial services and financial institutions in the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in India.

### ABOUT INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES CENTRE (IFSC)

#### OBJECTIVE

- Caters to customers outside the jurisdiction of the domestic economy.
- Such centres deal with flows of finance, financial products and services across borders.
- London, New York and Singapore can be counted as global financial centres.

#### SERVICES OFFERED BY IFSC

- Fund-raising services for individuals, corporations and governments.
- Asset management and global portfolio diversification undertaken by pension funds, insurance companies and mutual funds.
- Wealth management.
- Global tax management and cross-border tax liability optimization. which provides a business opportunity for financial intermediaries, accountants and law firms.
- Global and regional corporate treasury management operations that involve fund-raising, liquidity investment and management and asset-liability matching.
- Risk management operations such as insurance and reinsurance.
- Merger and acquisition activities among trans-national corporations.

#### Can an IFSC be set up in a special economic zone (SEZ)?

The SEZ Act 2005 allows setting up an IFSC in an SEZ or as an SEZ after approval from the central government.



## IFSCs in India:

The first IFSC in India has been set up at the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) in Gandhinagar.

# NEGATIVE YIELD BONDS

*The amount of bonds circulating with negative debt yields appears to be dissipating in Europe.*

## ABOUT NEGATIVE YIELD BONDS

- ☒ Debt instruments that offer to pay the investor a maturity amount lower than the purchase price of the bond. In effect, investors pay interest to the borrower to keep their money with them.
- ☒ Many investors temporarily park money in negative-yielding government debt for the purpose of diversifying their investment risks.  
ISSUER: Central Banks / Governments.

## WHY THEN INVEST IN NEGATIVE YIELD BONDS

- ☒ Serve as a stable financial instrument for investors to protect their capital from significant erosion during periods of financial stress, from currency fluctuations to deflation.

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BOND PRICE AND YIELD

- ☒ Bond yield refers to the Return on Investments (RoI) over a bond. Higher the price of a bond, the lower the yield and vice versa. Bond price moves inversely with its yield or interest rate.
- ☒ Investors might sell their bonds if it's expected that interest rates will rise in the coming months and opt for the higher-rate bonds later on. Conversely, bond investors might buy bonds, driving the prices higher, if they believe interest rates will fall in the future because existing fixed-rate bonds will have a higher rate or yield.

## KEY FACTOR DRIVING THIS DEMAND

- ☒ Rise in the prices of assets including equities, debt and commodities following the global financial recovery following the Monetary Easing (ME) programme initiated by the Central Banks after the Covid 19 pandemic.
- ☒ Higher Returns on Investments (RoI) from assets including equities, debt and commodities makes Negative-yield Bonds relatively unattractive.
- ☒ In case the fresh wave of the Covid-19 pandemic leads to further lockdowns of economies, then there could be further negative pressure on interest rates, pushing yields down further, and leading to profits even for investors who put in money at the current juncture.

## NATIONAL MONETISATION PIPELINE (NMP)

Recently, the government of India has launched the National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) in line with Prime Minister's strategic divestment policy. The Union Budget 2021-22 has identified monetisation of operating public infrastructure assets as a key means for sustainable infrastructure financing. The NMP estimates an aggregate monetisation potential of Rs 6 lakh Cr. through core assets of the Central Government, over a four-year period, from FY 2022 to FY 2025.

### ABOUT NATIONAL MONETISATION PIPELINE (NMP)

**MANDATE:** Unlock the value of investments in public sector assets by tapping private sector capital and managerial practices. Envisages an aggregate monetisation potential of ₹6 lakh crore through the leasing of core assets of the Central government.

### ASSETS MONETISED:

- 1.Assets of central government line ministries
- 2.Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) in infrastructure sectors

### STRATEGY

**ASSET MONETISATION** - The Government transfers revenue rights of an asset (idle capital from nonstrategic/ underperforming government owned assets) to private parties for a specified transaction period, in return for upfront money, a revenue share, and commitment of investments in the assets. Here, revenue rights and not ownership of brownfield projects (nonstrategic/ underperforming government owned assets) transferred to the private sector.

**REINVESTMENT** - Reinvest the funds raised from leasing idle capital from nonstrategic/ underperforming government owned assets into new infrastructure projects and augmentation of assets such as greenfield infrastructure creation.

**TRANSPORTATION:** Roads, Railways, Civil Aviation, Shipping Ports and Waterways

**ENERGY:** Coal, Power, oil and gas pipelines

**OTHERS:** Mining, Telecom, food and public distribution, housing and urban affairs, and stadiums and sports complexes etc.

### INSTRUMENTS FOR ASSET MONETISATION

Real Estate Investment Trusts (Reits)

Infrastructure Investment Trusts (Invits)

Listing on stock exchanges

Operate Maintain Transfer (OMT),

Toll Operate Transfer (TOT), and

Operations, Maintenance & Development (OMD).

### RATIONALE BEHIND ASSET MONETIZATION

There are 256 operationally run central public sector undertakings (CPSUs), employing about 1 million people, posting a net profit of ₹93,294 crore (FY 2019-20).

Top 10 most profitable companies make around 61.8% of the total profit made by the PSEs, with top 5 most profitable companies alone making around 43.3% of the total profit made by the PSEs. Indeed, 174

	<p>of the 184 profitable firms contributed around 38% of the profit in 2017-18. This means that many PSEs are barely making money to justify the capital invested in them and are really being run just for the sake of being run.</p>
<p><b>MOBILISING FUNDS FOR ASSET CREATION-</b> The monetization of existing de-risked brownfield infrastructure assets through leasing to private firms for a fixed tenure under a revenue-sharing model provide a steady stream of financial resources to finance new assets.</p>	<p>The leasing contract between the Government enjoying asset ownership and private enterprises responsible for operations needs to be balanced to protect mutual interests. The slow pace of privatization in government companies including Air India and BPCL, and less-than-encouraging bids in the recently launched PPP initiative in Railways, indicate difficulties in attracting private investors. The key to success lies in structuring the deal to make them attractive enough for enhanced private sector participation.</p>
<p><b>EASE FISCAL BURDEN-</b> The National Monetisation Plan can ease fiscal deficit of the Government providing the Government an alternate source of finance via monetisation of Central Public Sector Enterprises.</p>	<p><b>EASE FISCAL BURDEN-</b> The Extra-Budgetary resources. The brownfield assets, “de-risked” from execution risks is expected to attract investments from the private sector. Roads, railways and power sector assets will comprise over 66% of the total estimated value of the assets to be monetised, with the remaining upcoming sectors including telecom, mining, aviation, ports, natural gas and petroleum product pipelines, warehouses and stadiums.</p>
<p><b>REGULATION AND OVERSIGHT -</b> A strong regulatory mechanism needs to be implemented to prevent operators from over-profiteering. To maximize their profit over a limited time frame, investors would want to raise prices, limit competition or cut back on maintenance.</p>	<p>The NMP will run co-terminus with the Rs 100 lakh crore National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) announced in December 2019. The estimated amount to be raised through monetisation is around 14% of the proposed outlay for the Centre of Rs 43 lakh crore under NIP.</p>

	Other Initiatives for Infrastructure Development include Scheme of Financial Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure, Industrial corridors, etc.
NIP will enable a forward outlook on infrastructure projects which will create jobs, improve ease of living, and provide equitable access to infrastructure for all, thereby making growth more inclusive. NIP includes economic and social infrastructure projects.	The slow pace of privatisation in government companies including Air India and BPCL. Further, less-than-encouraging bids in the recently launched PPP initiative in trains indicate that attracting private investors' interest is not that easy.



**INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP GUIDANCE PROGRAMME (INSGP)**

*For More Details*

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## RBI INTRODUCES PROMPT CORRECTIVE ACTION FRAMEWORK FOR NBFCs

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) introduced the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework for Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) effective from October 01, 2022 on the basis of their financial position on or after March 31.

### ABOUT PCA FRAMEWORK

**OBJECTIVE:** Enable supervisory intervention at the appropriate time and require the supervised entity to initiate and implement remedial measures in a timely manner, to restore its financial health

### APPLICABILITY

- ☞ All deposit-taking Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs)
- ☞ Non-deposit taking NBFCs with an asset size of more than Rs 1,000 crore, including investment and credit companies
- ☞ Core Investment Companies
- ☞ Infrastructure Debt Funds
- ☞ Infrastructure Finance Companies
- ☞ Microfinance Institutions

### NON-APPLICABILITY

1. Government owned NBFCs
2. Primary Dealers
3. Housing Finance Companies

### Indicators based on which PCA will be invoked for NBFC:

core investment companies (CICs), the RBI will track Adjusted net worth/aggregate risk-weighted assets, Leverage ratio and NNPA's, including NPIs.

TRIGGER THRESHOLDS FOR PCA				
For NBFCs excluding core investment companies				
Indicator	RBI regulatory minimum	RISK		
		Threshold 1	Threshold 2	Threshold 3
CRAR	15%	12% to below 15%	Between 9% and 12%	Below 9%
Tier 1 capital ratio	10%	8% to 10%	Between 6% and 8%	Below 6%
Net NPA ratio	NA	6-9%	9-12%	Above 12%

Note: Based on current regulatory minimum  
PCA: Prompt corrective action; CRAR: Capital-to-risk weighted assets ratio

PCA actions	Specifications/ Mandatory action
<b>Risk threshold 1</b>	Restriction on dividend distribution/ remittance of profits; promoters/ shareholders to infuse equity and reduce leverage
<b>Risk threshold 2</b>	In addition to mandatory actions of threshold 1, restriction on branch expansion
<b>Risk threshold 3</b>	Besides mandatory actions of thresholds 1 & 2, appropriate restrictions on capital expenditure, other than for technological upgrade within board-approved limits; restrictions/reduction in variable operating costs

Note: There can be any number of other discretionary actions that the RBI can take Source: RBI

## REIMBURSEMENT SCHEME FOR RUPAY DEBIT CARD, BHIM UPI TRANSACTIONS

The Union Cabinet announced that it has approved a scheme to provide incentives of small amounts for transactions done through the RuPay Debit Card and BHIM UPI. This will incur an expense of around ₹1,300 crores.

Details: The Government will reimburse transaction charges levied on digital payments made by persons to the merchant as part of the **merchant discount rate (MDR)**

### ABOUT MERCHANT DISCOUNT RATE (MDR)

Fees that a merchant is charged by their issuing bank for accepting payments from their customers via credit and debit cards

In Budget 2020-21, the government prescribed **zero Merchant Discount Rate (MDR)**, the rate merchants pay to scheme providers, for RuPay and UPI, both NPCI products, to popularise digital payments benefiting both customers and merchants.

### DIGITAL PAYMENT

- ☒ Digital payments have found strong ground, especially in India, increasingly relegating all other modes of payments to the background.
- ☒ It is through a faster system of simultaneous debits and credits that the money value is transferred from one account to the other across banks.
- ☒ It embraces all kinds of operators (including direct benefit transfer by the government) across the country and even internationally, subject to regulatory forbearance.
- ☒ According to a report, Indian digital payment industry is expected to reach \$1 trillion by 2023.

### Evolution of digital payments in India: steered by the RBI:

- ☒ There is a long and interesting history behind the evolution of digital payments in India, piloted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and succinctly captured in the Payment Systems in India, published in 1998.
- ☒ A major thrust toward large value payments was affected through the Real Time Gross Settlement System, or RTGS, launched by the RBI in March 2004.
- ☒ Introduction of National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) and bulk debits and credits to support retail payments around the same time.
- ☒ Now, NEFT is available round the clock and RTGS will follow from December 2020 only a few countries have achieved this.

Today, the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)**, the market regulator, is contemplating a **T+1 settlement** (T is for transaction date) because the underlying consideration of the sale proceeds of the shares get exchanged very fast under the payments system.

## PLI SCHEME FOR SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING

*The Union Cabinet approved a ₹76,000 crore towards India Semiconductor Mission to boost semiconductor and display manufacturing in the country.*

*SIGNIFICANCE: Strategic importance of trusted sources of semiconductors and displays were “key to the security of critical information infrastructure”.*

### OBJECTIVE:

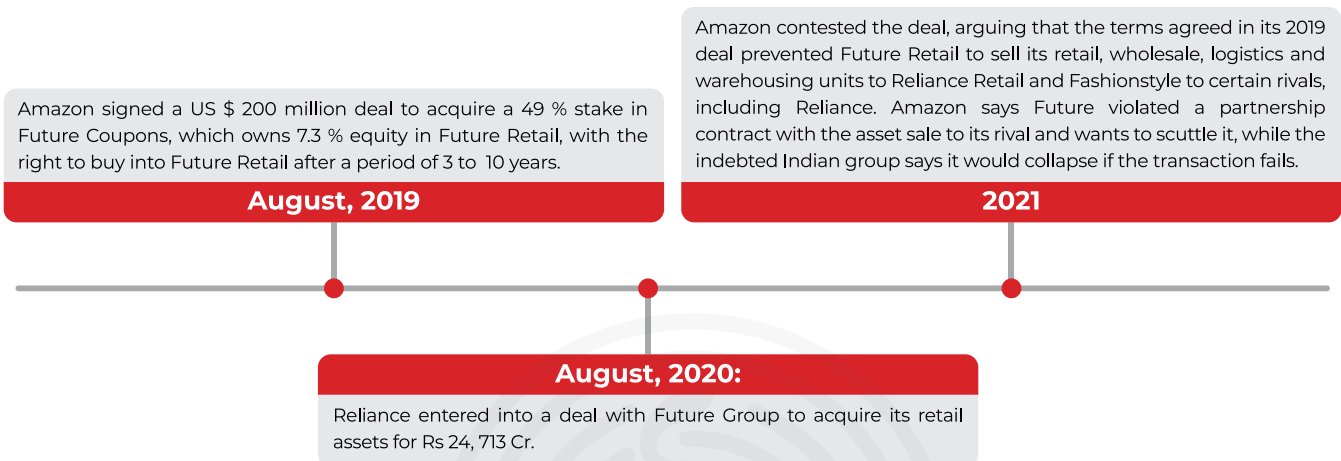
Make India a global hub of electronic system design and manufacturing.

STRATEGY	ANALYSIS
<p>Provide globally competitive incentive packages in form of fiscal support of up to 50% of the project cost for setting up semiconductor and display fabrication units.</p>	<p>The current fiscal support of approximately \$10 billion under the Production Linked Incentive scheme is inadequate for setting up of a semiconductor fabrication facility lagging by a generation or two behind the latest in technology, even on a relatively small scale. Besides, it is likely to be left to support other elements including display fabs, packaging and testing facilities, and chip design centres.</p>
<p>A Project Management Agency (PMA) - India Semiconductor Mission led by global experts in semiconductor and display industry would be responsible for providing secretarial, managerial and implementation support and carrying out other responsibilities as assigned by MeitY periodically.</p>	<p>The Centre would work with the States to set up high-tech clusters with the necessary infrastructure such as land and semiconductor- grade water.</p>
<p>The scheme was expected to attract investment of ₹1.67 lakh crore and lead to production worth ₹9.5 lakh crore</p>	<p>The programme is expected to generate 85,000 well trained engineers, including 35,000 high quality direct jobs and indirect employment for 1 lakh persons.</p>
<p>The electronics manufacturing in the country had increased to \$75 billion over the past seven years and was expected to reach \$300 billion in the next six years. The approved programme will propel innovation and build domestic capacities to ensure the digital sovereignty of India. It will also create highly skilled employment opportunities to harness the demographic dividend of the country. Semiconductor designers would be given the opportunity to begin startups. The government would bear 50% of the expense under the design linked incentive scheme.</p>	<p>Incentive of 4% to 6% on incremental sales of goods manufactured in India and covered under target segments, to eligible companies, for a period of five (5) years with financial year (FY) 2019-20 considered as the base year for calculation of incentives.</p>

## CCI FREEZES AMAZON-FUTURE DEAL

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) froze its in-principal approval for Amazon.com NV Investment Holdings' proposal to acquire 49% in Future Coupons Private Ltd. on the grounds of Amazon suppressing the scope and full details of its investment while seeking regulatory approval. The CCI also imposed a penalty of ₹200 crore on Amazon for failing to notify the details of its 'combination', as required in law.

### TIMELINE : AMAZON- FUTURE DEAL



### ABOUT SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRE (SIAC)

- Not-for-Profit international arbitration organisation based in Singapore.
- Administers arbitrations under its own rules of arbitration and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Arbitration Rules.

**JURISDICTION:** The parties in a deal usually sign a contractual agreement which specifies about the arbitral institution administering the arbitration. The applicable rules. The seat of arbitration. In this case Amazon and Future Group have under their agreement agreed to refer their disputes to **SIAC**, with **Singapore presumably being the contractual choice for the seat/place of arbitration.**

### APPOINTMENT OF ARBITRAL TRIBUNAL

**Composition:** Typically, **in case of a three member tribunal**, both the parties appoint one member each to the tribunal, while the third member is jointly appointed by the two nominees or, if they fail to agree, by SIAC.

### APPOINTMENT OF AN EMERGENCY ARBITRATOR

- Appointment of the arbitral tribunal usually takes time.
- Therefore, under the rules of SIAC, **parties can move SIAC to appoint an emergency**
- Arbitrator** to get urgent interim relief, even as the process of appointment of the main arbitral tribunal is underway.

### NONCOMPLIANCE TO THE ORDER

Currently under Indian law, **there is no express mechanism for enforcement of the orders of the Emergency Arbitrator.**



But, **the parties voluntarily comply with the Emergency Award**. However, **if the parties don't comply with the order voluntarily**, then the party which has won the emergency award, in this case Amazon, **can move the High Court in India under Section 9 of the Arbitration & Conciliation Act, 1996**, to get similar reliefs as granted by the Emergency Arbitrator.

#### **ABOUT COMPETITION COMMISSION OF INDIA**

- ESTABLISHED: MARCH 2009
- STATUTE: Competition Commission Act, 2002.
- ROLE: Ensure a healthy competition in market.
- MEANS OF APPOINTMENT: The Commission comprises a Chairperson and not less than 2 and not more than 6 other members appointed by the Central Government.

#### **MANDATE OF THE COMMISSION**

- Make the markets work for the benefit and welfare of consumers.
- Ensure fair and healthy competition in economic activities in the country for faster and inclusive growth and development of the economy.
- Implement competition policies with an aim to effectuate the most efficient utilization of economic resources.
- Develop and nurture effective relations and interactions with sectoral regulators to ensure smooth alignment of sectoral regulatory laws in tandem with competition law.
- Effectively carry out competition advocacy and spread the information on benefits of competition among all stakeholders to establish and nurture competition culture in Indian economy.

## **INDIA OFFERS 8 OIL, GAS BLOCKS FOR BIDDING IN LATEST ROUND**

*India has offered 8 oil and gas blocks, mostly in Assam, for bidding in the latest bid round with a view to bringing more area under exploration, so as to increase domestic production and reduce imports. Eight blocks have been offered in the seventh bid round of Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP), with bids due on February 15, the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) said.*

#### **ABOUT Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP)**

- Bring more area under exploration, leading to increase in domestic production and reduction of imports.
- Companies are allowed to carve out potential hydrocarbon sites for exploration of oil and gas.
- Companies can sought Expression of Interest (EoI) for exploration of any potential hydrocarbon sites throughout the year, but accumulated thrice in a year.
- Potential hydrocarbon sites sought by multiple companies are then offered for bidding.
- Provides uniform licences for exploration and production of all forms of hydrocarbons, enabling contractors to explore conventional as well as unconventional oil and gas resources.

- ✘ Fields are offered under a revenue-sharing model and throw up marketing and pricing freedom for crude oil and natural gas produced.

Provides operational flexibility to investors.

The blocks are spread all across the Indian sedimentary areas, namely, Assam-Arakan (19), Mumbai Offshore (2), Cambay (11), Rajasthan (9), KG (5), Cauvery (3), Kutch (2), Saurashtra (2), Himalayan Foreland (1) and Ganga (1) basins.

HELP policy paradigm on which OALP is based has following reform components:

- ✘ Based on Revenue Sharing Contract
- ✘ Provides Unified Licensing for Conventional and Unconventional Hydrocarbons
- ✘ Blocks have been carved out by investors based on data from National Data Repository (NDR)
- ✘ Market Pricing and free access to the market for the product
- ✘ Low regulatory burden

*We want deeper sincerity of motive,  
a greater courage in speech and earnestness in action*

- SAROJINI NAIDU



## UDAN SCHEME

The Centre launched the Regional Air Connectivity Scheme UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam naagrik). The number of air passengers is expected to increase from 16 Cr to 52 Cr by 2037. The Union Ministry listed out 394 'Unserved' and 16 'Underserved' Airports / Airstrips.

- ✘ Scheduled Commercial Airlines operating from underserved / unserved Airports of Tier II and Tier III cities under RCS Scheme allocate at least 40 % of total seats as UDAN seats, subject to a minimum of 9 and maximum 40 seats.
- ✘ Cap the fare for 1 hour journey of appx. 500 km on a fixed wing aircraft or for a 30 minute journey on a helicopter at Rs. 2,500, with proportionate pricing for routes of different stage lengths / flight duration.
- ✘ UDAN will be applicable on flights which cover between 200 km and 800 km with no lower limits set for hilly, remote, island and security sensitive regions.
- ✘ The Centre would provide Grant-in-aid from Regional Connectivity Scheme Fund set up by levying a 2 % cess on all domestic and overseas tickets to revive airports. The states would provide Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for a fixed period over the operational costs.
- ✘ Scheduled Commercial Airlines enjoys landings free of cost; tax benefits over ATF for a period of 10 years; electricity, water and necessary facilities at concessional rates; roads, rail and waterway connectivity etc.
- ✘ Unserved Airports have no scheduled commercial flight. Underserved Airports have 7 or less scheduled commercial flights per week.

## WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THE SCHEME?

A total of nine rounds of bidding have taken place since January 2017. The Ministry of Civil Aviation has set a target of operationalising as many as 100 unserved and underserved airports and starting at least 1,000 RCS routes by 2024. So far, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has awarded 948 routes under UDAN, of which 403 routes have taken off that connect 65 airports, which include eight heliports. Out of the total 28 seaplane routes connecting 14 water aerodromes, only two have commenced.

## REASONS FOR DISCONTINUATION

- ❌ Failure to set up airports or heliports due to lack of availability of land -
- ❌ Airlines unable to start flights on routes awarded to them - Poor financial health of many smaller regional carriers make them unable to undertake maintenance of aircraft, pay rentals to lessors, give salaries to its staff, etc.
- ❌ Finding the routes difficult to sustain - The shortage of pilots force domestic carriers to hire costly foreign pilots which makes the business unviable. The Government
- ❌ offers subsidy for a route for a period of three years and expects the airline to develop the route during this time so that it becomes self-sufficient.
- ❌ Adverse impact of the COVID19 pandemic -



## CO-LENDING MODEL- BANK-NBFC CO-LENDING

In September 2018, the RBI permitted the banks to co-lend with all registered NBFCs (including HFCs) to increase lending to the priority sector based on a prior agreement. Following this, several banks have entered into co-lending 'master agreements' with NBFCs, and more are in the pipeline.

### ABOUT CO-LENDING MODEL

- ☞ Allows for a joint contribution of credit at the facility level by both the lenders, as also sharing of risks and rewards.
- ☞ Improve the flow of credit to the unserved and underserved sector of the economy.

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MODEL

- ☞ Lower cost of funds from banks and greater reach of the NBFCs will make available funds to the beneficiary at an affordable cost.
- ☞ Help banks to expand customer base and enables them to provide last mile banking services.

<p>At the all-India level, institutional and non-institutional sources of credit have almost identical shares. Large farmers take 83 % of the aggregate loans from institutional agencies, while marginal farmers take 60 % of loans from institutional agencies. Farmers in general, and small and marginal farmers in particular, depend quite substantially on moneylenders.</p>	<p>The CLM seeks to amalgamate the strength of banks - lower cost of funds and NBFCs - greater reach beyond Tier-II cities to improve the flow of credit to the unserved and underserved segment of the economy at an affordable cost.</p>
<p>The RBI guidelines allow the NBFCs act as the single point of interface for the customers and a tripartite agreement is done between the customers, banks and NBFCs.</p>	<p>The roles and responsibilities under this framework effectively makes the bank to fund the major chunk of the loan and the NBFC deciding the borrower.</p>
<p>As per RBI norms, the NBFCs share 20 % of their credit risk, while Banks share of 80 % of the credit risk till maturity. Upon maturity, the repayment or recovery of interest is shared by the bank and NBFC in proportion to their share of credit and interest.</p>	<p>This joint origination allows banks to claim priority sector status in respect of their share of credit, but makes the bank vulnerable in event of default of payments. The terms of the master agreement may provide for the banks to either mandatorily take their share of the individual loans originated by the NBFCs on their books, or to retain the discretion to reject certain loans after due diligence prior to taking them on their books.</p>
<p>As per RBI norms, the NBFCs share 20% of their credit risk, while Banks share of 80% of the credit risk till maturity. Upon maturity,</p>	<p>This joint origination allows banks to claim priority sector status in respect of their share of credit, but makes the bank vulnerable in</p>



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<p>The CLM allow the entry of big corporate houses into the banking space, NBFCs — mostly floated by corporate houses — were already accepting public deposits. The co-lending arrangements provide more opportunities for corporates on the lending side.</p>	<p>Four big finance firms — IL&amp;FS, DHFL, SREI and Reliance Capital — which collected public funds through fixed deposits and non-convertible debentures, have collapsed in the last three years despite tight monitoring by the RBI. Collectively, they owe around Rs 1 lakh crore to investors.</p>

### COLENDING MODEL - A MAGIC BULLET

In the past, the strategic partnership between Banks and Non Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) failed to materialise into meaningful ventures. The challenge lies in execution at ground level - integration of IT systems, underwriting processes and parameters. Most of these arrangements in the past are with NBFCs that have sizable distribution but are low on capital. Most of the mid-sized well-rated NBFCs still opt for term loans over entering into co-lending models, given the complexities around integration and processes

## SPECIAL STATUS FOR BIHAR

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar has raised his nearly 15-year-old demand for the status of Special Category State (SCS) for Bihar.

### NITI AYOJ REPORT, 2021:

- ❌ Bihar ranks among the bottom states in terms of growth rate and human development indices.
- ❌ The annual per capita income of Bihar is Rs 50,735 compared to national per-capita income of Rs 1,34,432.
- ❌ Approximately, 51.91 per cent of the state's population, the highest in the country lives below the poverty line.
- ❌ Bihar ranks worst in terms of school dropouts, child malnourishment, maternal health, and infant mortality.

### ABOUT SPECIAL CATEGORY STATUS

There is no provision of SCS in the Constitution. The Fifth Finance Commission in 1969 recommended classification of States that are at a comparative disadvantage against others. The classification was based on the Gadgil formula. The parameters for SCS were:

- ☒ Hilly Terrain;
- ☒ Low Population Density And/Or Sizeable Share of Tribal Population;
- ☒ Strategic Location along Borders With Neighbouring Countries;
- ☒ Economic and Infrastructure Backwardness; and
- ☒ Nonviable Nature of State finances.

Salient differences between Special status and Special Category Status:

**Special Category Status**

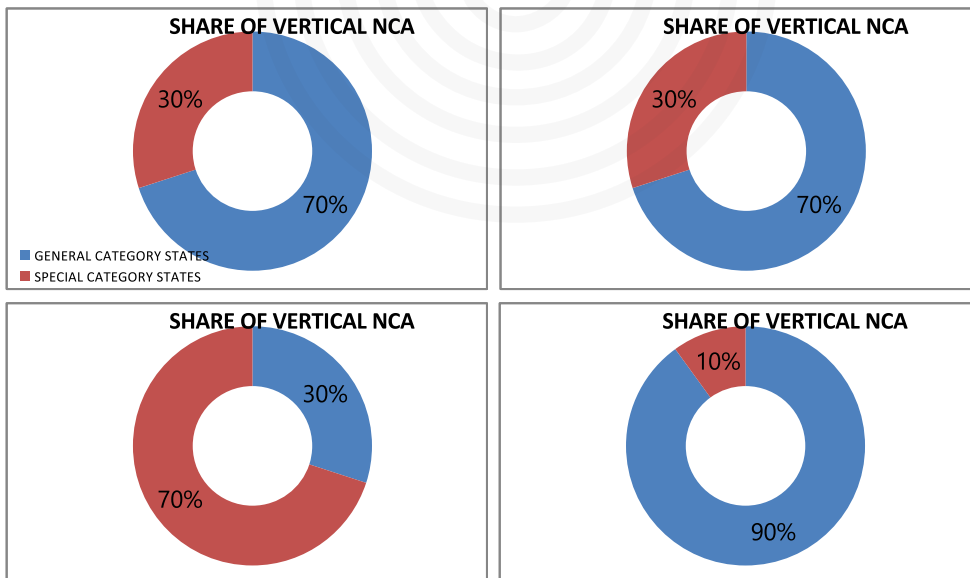
The National Development Council (NDC) accords Special Category Status for certain States. It provides special safeguards with respect to legislation, administration and finance.

Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram

- ☒ Non-viable nature of state finances.
- ☒ Low population density
- ☒ Sizeable share of tribal population.
- ☒ Low resource base, hilly & difficult terrain.
- ☒ Backward States / Border States sharing IB

Low resource base, hilly & difficult terrain.  
Backward States / Border States sharing IB.

**Salient differences between Special status and Special Category Status:**



General category States	Special category States
Vertical NCA transfers	
Eligible for 70 % of total NCA from the Centre to States.	Eligible for 30 % of total NCA from the Centre to States.

Normal Central Assistance	
Receive 30 % of NCA as Grants-in aid for CSS and projects, including for externally aided projects.	Receive 90 % of NCA as Grants-in aid for CSS and projects, including for externally aided projects.
Special Central Assistance	
Not applicable	Eligible for SCA with grant-loan ratio of 90:10 for CSS and projects, including for externally aided projects and untied special assistances.
Fiscal incentives	
Not applicable	Eligible for fiscal concessions. Excise and customs duties, Income tax, Corporate tax etc.
Developmental incentives	
Not applicable	Eligible for specific assistance Hill Areas Development Assistance, Tribal sub-plans and Border Areas Development.
Funding pattern for Centrally Sponsored Schemes	
General category States	Special Category States
Core of the core scheme and projects, including externally aided projects	
Wholly financed by the Centre.	Wholly financed by the Centre.
“Core” CSS and projects, including externally aided projects.	
Centre share 60 % of total cost of CSS.	Centre share 90 % of total cost of CSS.
“Optional” CSS and projects, including externally aided projects	
Centre share 50 % of total cost of CSS.	Centre share 80 % of total cost of CSS.

### **Demand for “Special Development packages” in place of “Special Category Status”:**

States such as Bihar, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh have asked for Special packages, for a limited period, and for specific purposes, such as major infrastructure projects, promotion of industries, etc. The Centre has restructured the Normal Central Assistance wholly as grants to all States since 2005-06. The proliferation of CSS reduced Normal Central Assistance transfers to 15 % of Central Plan Assistance. Andhra Pradesh face a revenue deficit of Rs 14,682 in 2017-18.

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# ECOLOGY





**AIR POLLUTION IN DELHI**

**ATMOSPHERE & CLIMATE RESEARCH-MODELLING**

**OBSERVING SYSTEMS & SERVICES**

**(ACROSS)" SCHEME**

**CHOCOLATE- BORDERED FLITTER**

**KYHYTYSUKA SACHICARUM**

**COMPENSATORY AFFORESTATION FUND**

**INVASIVE SNAIL SPOTTED IN KERALA**

**CLEAN COOKING FUEL**

**PROJECT RE – HAB**

**BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2020**

**OLIVE RIDELY TURTLES**

**FLEX FUEL VEHICLES**



## AIR POLLUTION IN DELHI

The contribution of stubble burning in neighbouring States to the daily levels of PM<sub>2.5</sub> – a chief pollutant – in Delhi was as high as 48% on November 7 and averaged 33.5% during the week after Deepavali (November 5-11).

### TWO SPELLS

Delhi usually experiences two spells of high air pollution during winter. The contribution of farm fires to Delhi’s PM<sub>2.5</sub> count was about 35% to 40% in October and November.

- 🌀 October-November : The effective fire counts in October-November (the stubble burning season) according to SAFAR data is around 77,000, the highest in four years.
- 🌀 December-January : The main reason for air pollution is the transport of pollutants from the rest of the Indo- Gangetic Plain to Delhi combined with extreme cold and foggy conditions.

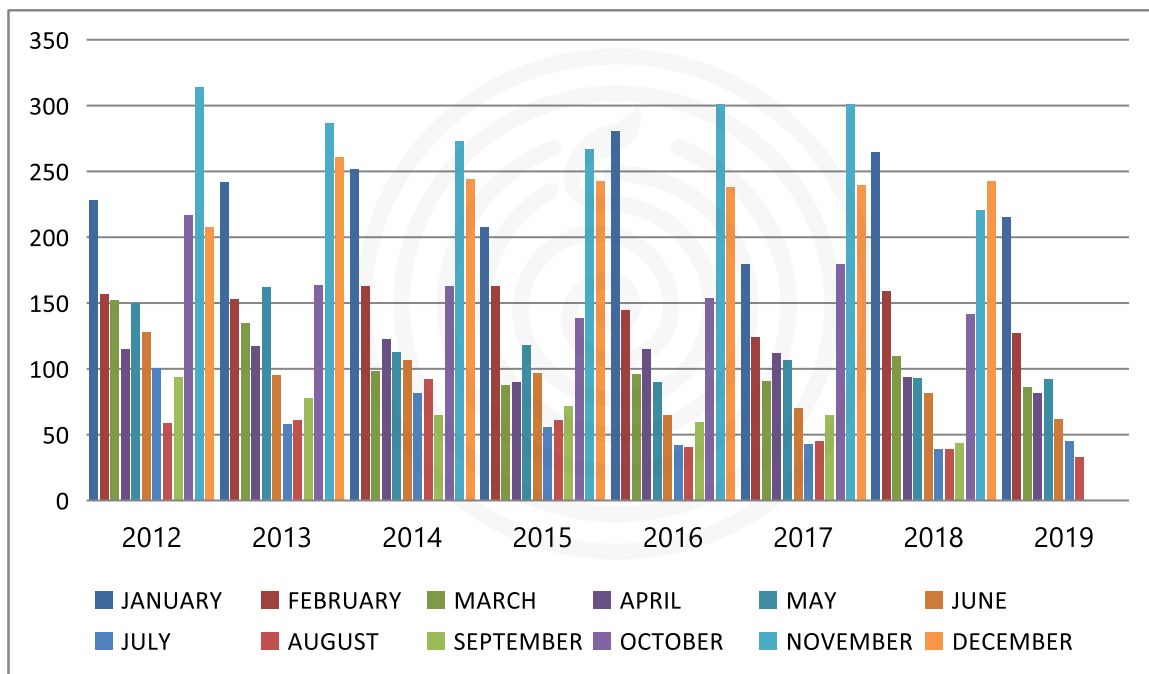


FIGURE: Bar chart representation of monthly city average of PM 2.5 concentration. (micro-gram/m<sup>3</sup>) in New Delhi.

### PROJECT-SYSTEM OF AIR QUALITY AND WEATHER FORECASTING RESEARCH (SAFAR)

🌀 OBJECTIVE: Provide real time information on persistent air quality and related adverse health consequences.

🌀 PARTNERS:

- a. Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune;
- b. National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF) and
- c. India Meteorological Department (IMD)

🌀 EXPECTED CONSEQUENCE: Trigger Behavioural change among general public to voluntarily initiate pollutant mitigation measures.



## GRADED RESPONSE ACTION PLAN (GRAP)



## WAY FORWARD

### COLLABORATIVE AND PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

The Government at Centre, State and Local levels needs to act in unison in accordance with their capacities to address the issue of air pollution.

### GRADED APPROACH ON POLLUTANTS

The agents of air pollution needs to be demarcated and mitigation efforts needs to be spearheaded at appropriate levels.

End of pipe Air Pollution

Primary Pollutants (SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and CO)

Secondary Pollutants (PM 2.5)

### SYSTEMATIC PLANNING

1. Provide early warning to effectively reduce the level of pollution under adverse weather conditions with proper network operation and quality control (QC).

2. Minimise travel focusing on public transportation and mixed land use spatial planning.

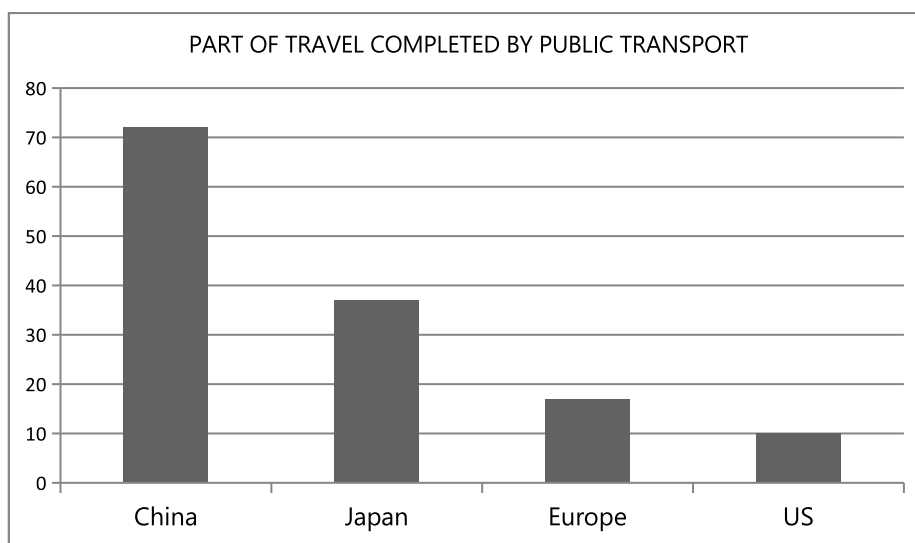


FIGURE: Bar chart representation of share of public transportation in mobility. In China,

72% of travel is completed by public transport compared with 37% in Japan, 17% in Europe and 10% in the U.S.

#### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN BEIJING

1,000 km of metro rail

30,000 low floor buses

48 lakh charging points by 2022 to push the use of electric vehicles

#### STRONG MONITORING CAPACITY

- 🌀 High resolution satellite remote sensing and laser radar
- 🌀 Integrated network combining 'airland' data
- 🌀 More than 1,000 PM2.5 sensors to accurately identify high emission areas and periods.

#### LOCAL STANDARDS

- 🌀 Targeted controlling both the concentration and total emission amount leading to transforming and upgrading the industrial structure production processes and equipment.
- 🌀 Economic incentives were tailored to the specific problem, with attractive levels of subsidies to high polluting enterprises to close their production and differentiated fees charged according to the concentration of waste gas emissions for those who chose to remain in production

#### SPECIFIC ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS

- 🌀 Coordinated enforcement at the municipal and State levels, with each level having different responsibilities and a mechanism for cooperation.
- 🌀 Municipal environmental enforcement teams do specific inspections and hotspot grid supervision based on a detailed emission inventory for each source, passing on serious cases to the State level.
- 🌀 Independent evaluations review the air quality management system, conduct quantitative assessments of the pollution reduction effects in selected areas, analyse new challenges, and provide recommendations for enabling further improvement in air quality and building public support.

#### PUBLIC AWARENESS

Issue warnings at least 24 hours in advance through the media in case of forecasted heavy pollution, besides daily air quality reports and forecasts.



*The only limit to the height of your achievements  
is the reach of your dreams and your  
willingness to work hard for them.*

- MICHELLE OBAMA

## CHOCOLATE- BORDERED FLITTER

Recently, a new species of butterfly was discovered from Sikkim. Its closest relatives are in south-eastern China, close to Hong Kong.

### ABOUT CHOCOLATE- BORDERED FLITTER

- 🌀 SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Zographetus dzonguensis*.
- 🌀 NATURAL HABITAT: Dzongu in North Sikkim



## “ATMOSPHERE & CLIMATE RESEARCH-MODELLING OBSERVING SYSTEMS & SERVICES (ACROSS)” SCHEME

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the continuation of the scheme called Atmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS) for next five years.

### ABOUT ACROSS SCHEME

- 🌀 CATEGORY: Atmospheric science program
- 🌀 NODAL MINISTRY: Union Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).
- 🌀 OBJECTIVE: Addresses different aspects of weather and climate services, which includes warnings for cyclone, storm surges, heat waves, thunderstorms etc.

### UMBRELLA SCHEME WITH EIGHT SUB-SCHEMES

- 🌀 Commissioning of Polarimetric Doppler Weather Radars (DWRs).
- 🌀 Upgradation of Forecast System, Weather & Climate Services.
- 🌀 Atmospheric Observations Network.
- 🌀 Numerical Modelling of Weather and Climate.
- 🌀 Monsoon Mission III.
- 🌀 Monsoon Convection.
- 🌀 Clouds and Climate Change (MC4).
- 🌀 High Performance Computing System (HPCS).

### PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

- 🌀 India Meteorological Department (IMD);
- 🌀 Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM);
- 🌀 National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF) and
- 🌀 Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)

### SIGNIFICANCE

IMPROVED WEATHER FORECASTS: Help to better predict the timings, intensity, frequency of geo-physical events, currently progressively growing uncertain with increasing climate change

- ❖ SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL TALENTS: Develop a pool of trained human resources within India.

nine sub-schemes under the umbrella scheme “ACROSS” and is implemented in an integrated.

### BENEFITS OF THE SCHEME

- ❖ Provide improved weather, climate and ocean forecast and services;
- ❖ Provide a sizable number of scientific and technical staff along with requisite administrative support;
- ❖ Ensure last-mile connectivity of the weather based services to the end -user

## KYHYTYSUKA SACHICARUM

*Kyhytysuka sachicarum* is a new marine reptile species discovered by An international team of researchers discovered fossils of *Kyhytysuka sachicarum*, an extinct marine reptile species from central Columbia.

### ABOUT KYHYTYSUKA SACHICARUM

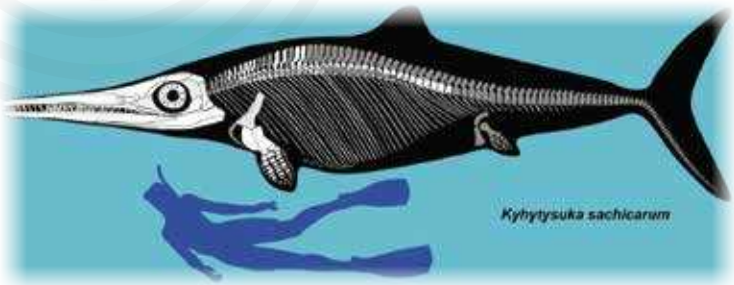
- ❖ *Kyhytysuka*, belonging to the indigenous language of central Columbia means “the one that cuts with something sharp”.
- ❖ *Kyhytysuka sachicarum* honours Muisca tribal culture (also called Chibcha) of central Columbia.

### FEATURES OF KYHYTYSUKA

- ❖ TYPE: Mid – sized ophthalmosaurian.
- ❖ ERA: Jurassic period.

### SALIENT FEATURES

- ❖ Macro-predatory vertebrate hunter
- ❖ Extremely large sized eyes
- ❖ Dolphin – shaped body
- ❖ Jaws with robust teeth
- ❖ 720 mm dentary - the longest bone of the species



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## INVASIVE SNAIL SPOTTED IN KERALA

Researchers of the Department of Marine Biology, Microbiology, and Biochemistry of the Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT) identified the acute bladder snail '*Physella acuta*', globally branded as highly invasive during a biodiversity impact assessment study.

### SIGNIFICANCE OF DISCOVERY

- ☒ Globally flagged as an invasive species.
- ☒ Plays host to worms that can cause food-borne diseases and skin itches in humans.
- ☒ Rapid growth rate, air-breathing capability, and tolerance to pollution makes it a potential competitor to native fauna.

### ABOUT *Physella acuta*

- ☒ SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY: J.P.R. Draparnaud (1805)
- ☒ NATIVE PLACE: North America
- ☒ FOOTPRINT: All continents except Antarctica.
- ☒ APPEARANCE: Tiny snail with a striking, pellucid, golden-yellow sinistral shell 16 mm in height and 9mm in width
- ☒ INVASION RIUTE TO KERALA: Aquarium trade.

### ABOUT INVASIVE SPECIES

Exotic beings that generally harm the native ecology out-competing native organisms for resources like food, especially if they lack natural predators in the new ecosystem after being introduced to a new environment. Invasive species can ultimately cause the decline or extinction of native species, decreasing biodiversity in an ecosystem. Some invasive species also carry diseases that kill native organisms and many will consume native plants and animals. Humans are responsible for the spread of a majority of earth's invasive species, often carrying them to different parts of the world on ships. Rapid reproduction and growth, high dispersal ability, ability to survive on various food types and in wide range of environmental condition and phenotypic plasticity (ability to adapt physiologically to new conditions) are common characteristics of invasive species that helps them to outcompete native organisms. Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) compiled a list of alien invasive animal species, totalling 157. The number excludes invasive microbe species.

## COMPENSATORY AFFORESTATION FUND

The Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) has so far disbursed ₹48,606 crore to 32 States. The Centre had collected ₹9,656 crore from the States from Jan 2019 to March 2020.

### ABOUT COMPENSATORY AFFORESTATION

Compensatory afforestation means that every time forest land is diverted for non-forest purposes such as mining or industry, the user agency pays for planting forests over an equal area of non-forest land, or when such land is not available, twice the area of degraded forest land.

**ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES**

- ☒ Treatment of catchment areas
- ☒ Assisted natural generation
- ☒ Forest management
- ☒ Wildlife protection and management
- ☒ Relocation of villages from protected areas
- ☒ Managing human-wildlife conflicts
- ☒ Training and awareness generation
- ☒ Supply of wood saving devices and allied activities

**COMPENSATORY AFFORESTATION FUND ACT, 2015**

SALIENT FEATURES	ANALYSIS
<p>Establishes the National Compensatory Afforestation Fund under the Public Account of India, and a State Compensatory Afforestation Fund under the Public Account of each state.</p>	<p>Compensatory Afforestation Fund receive payments for:                      (i) Compensatory afforestation                      (ii) Net Present Value of forest (NPV) and                      (iii) other project specific payments.                      The National Fund will receive 10% of these funds, and the State Funds will receive the remaining 90%.</p>
<p>Constituted National and State Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authorities to manage National and State Compensatory Afforestation Funds under their respective Public Accounts.</p>	<p>The effective utilisation of funds will depend on the capacity of state forest departments with the share of funds transferred to states increasing from 10% to 90%. A 2013 CAG report noted that state forest departments lack the planning and implementation capacity to carry out compensatory afforestation and forest conservation.</p>
<p>Promoters of projects need to compensate for the loss or diversion of forest cover based on the Net Present Value of forest (NPV) based on the assessment of a delegated expert panel.</p>	<p>The Bill delegates the determination of NPV (value of loss of forest ecosystem) to an expert committee constituted by the central government. As NPV constitutes about half of the total funds collected, its computation methodology would be important.</p>
<p>Funds will be primarily spent on afforestation to compensate for loss of forest cover, regeneration of forest ecosystem, wildlife protection and infrastructure development</p>	<p>Land procurement for compensatory afforestation is difficult as land is a limited resource, and is required for multiple purposes, such as agriculture, industry, etc. This is compounded by unclear land titles, and difficulties in complying with procedures for land use.</p>

## CLEAN COOKING FUEL

The price of LPG refills has risen by more than 50% to over ₹900 per cylinder in November, 2021 compared to around ₹600 over the past year. The Centre has discontinued household LPG refill subsidies since May 2020.

### SIGNIFICANCE

- ✘ Force households revert to using polluting solid fuels - - firewood and dung cakes for cooking.
- ✘ More than 600,000 air pollution and related premature deaths occur in India every
- ✘ year from the use of solid fuel use for cooking - Global Burden of Disease Study, 2019.

### POCKETS OF BIOMASS USAGE

- ✘ Rural areas in Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal.
- ✘ Urban slums throughout India.

### FACTS AND FIGURES

- ✘ Nearly 85% of domestic have an LPG connection and 71% use it as their primary cooking fuel, compared to only 30% in 2010 - India Residential Energy Survey (IRES), 2020
- ✘ Approximately, 24% stack LPG with biomass.
- ✘ Average Indian household monthly expenditures on LPG to meet all its cooking energy needs doubled on a Year on year basis, up from 5% a year ago to around 10%.
- ✘ Half the rural LPG users receive home delivery of LPG refills, while the rest have to travel about 5 kilometres one way to procure a cylinder with gaps in the doorstep delivery of LPG cylinders present in urban pockets, particularly in slum areas.

### MEASURES TAKEN

- ✘ Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) 1.0: Distributed more than 8 Cr. subsidised LPG connections to poorer households
- ✘ Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) 2.0: Distribute 10 million additional free LPG connections to poorer households.
- ✘ Strengthened the LPG distributorship, particularly in rural areas and urban slums.

### MEASURES TO BE TAKEN

- ✘ Reinstate the subsidies on LPG refill possible at ₹450 for Low Income Households (LIHs) to make household expenditure on cooking comparable the pre-pandemic levels. per LPG refill.
  - Limiting the subsidy provision to seven to eight LPG refills annually
  - Prioritised identification of eligible beneficiaries using robust indicators.
- ✘ Strengthen the LPG supply chain and enforce timely service delivery, particularly in States with a large number of Ujjwala connections and slum population
  - Higher incentives for rural distributors.
  - Looping in Self Help Groups could also help aggregate demand and create jobs in distant areas.
- ✘ Create a new markets for locally available biomass.

- Promote use of locally available biomass in decentralised processing units to manufacture briquettes and pellets for industrial and commercial establishments.
- Incentivise entrepreneurs and households to supply locally available biomass (including crop stubble or dung cakes) to Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) production plants respectively.

## PROJECT RE – HAB

*A pilot project RE-HAB (Reducing Elephant-Human Attacks using Bees) has been launched in Karnataka that involves installing bee boxes along the periphery of the forest and the villages to mitigate human-elephant conflict. Bee boxes are located on the periphery of Nagarhole National Park and Tiger Reserve, a notable conflict zone.*

### PROJECT RE – HAB

- 🌀 Sub mission to National Honey Mission of Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)
- 🌀 BEE FENCES: Fencing using bee boxes to ward off elephant attacks in human habitations.
- 🌀 NODAL AGENCY: Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC).



### ADAVANTAGES

- 🌀 Dissuade the elephants without harming them.
- 🌀 Highly cost – effective as compared to erecting fences or digging trenches.
- 🌀 Increases farmer income from additional honey production.
- 🌀 Address climate change issues by regenerating forest cover.

### BEE FENCING

Bee boxes are placed in the premises of human habitation as fences. Around 15 to 20 bee boxes are placed around the habitation to be protected. The buzz of the bees irritate the elephants the most. Fearing honey bees stings, they do not walk ahead of the boxes. The boxes are connected with a string. When the elephants try to pass through the string, a pull or tug causes the bees to swarm towards the elephant.

### ABOUT KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES COMMISSION (KVIC)

- 🌀 TYPE: Statutory body
- 🌀 STATUTE: Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) Act, 1956.
- 🌀 NODAL MINISTRY: Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
- 🌀 OBJECTIVE: Plan, promote, organize and implement programmes for the development of village industries in rural areas.



## BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021

*Environmentalists have expressed concern over amendments to the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 on the grounds that the proposed amendments focus upon Intellectual Property (IP) and commercial trade at the expense of conserving biological resources.*

### BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY ACT, 2002

#### SIGNIFICANCE

- ☒ Protect rich biodiversity of India and associated knowledge against their use by foreign individuals.
- ☒ Ensure fair, equitable sharing of the monetary benefits from the commercial use of biological resources and traditional knowledge.
- ☒ Check bio-piracy, protect biological diversity and local growers through a three-tier structure of central and state boards and local committees

#### INSTITUTIONALISATION

Constituted National Biodiversity Authority, State Biodiversity Boards (SBB) and Biodiversity Management Committees (BMC) at national, state and local village level respectively.

- ☒ NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY AUTHORITY - Advise the Centre and States to promote sustainable, fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of utilization of biological resources. The NBA will enjoy the power of a civil court.
- ☒ STATE BIODIVERSITY BOARDS (SBB) - Estimate the economic value of biodiversity goods agricultural, forest, and wetland ecosystems.
- ☒ BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES (BMC) - The Biodiversity Management Committees (BMC) would consult with locals to prepare, maintain and validate People's Biodiversity Register (PBR) on practices and biological resources and advice on any matter referred to it by the State Biodiversity Board or Authority for granting approval.

#### BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021 - ANALYSIS

**SIGNIFICANCE:** The Biological Diversity Act, 2002 imposed a heavy "compliance burden" on Indian medicine practitioners, seed sector, industry & researchers that made it hard to conduct collaborative research and investments.

SALIENT FEATURES	ANALYSIS
Exempted cultivated medicinal plants from the purview of the original Act to encourage the cultivation of medicinal plants to reduce the pressure on wild medicinal plants.	Practically impossible to classify cultivated medicinal plants from plants grown in the wild.
Exempt registered AYUSH medical practitioners and people accessing codified traditional knowledge, among others, from giving prior intimation to State Biodiversity	Pave the way for "bio piracy" allowing pharmaceutical companies to evade the requirement for prior approval or share the benefit with local communities under the

Boards for accessing biological resources for certain purposes.	access and benefit-sharing provisions of the original Act, 2002. Under the Biodiversity Act 2002, National and State Biodiversity Boards are required to consult the Biodiversity Management Committees (constituted by every local body) while taking any decision relating to the use of biological resources.
Attempts to encourage foreign investments in biological resources, research, patent and commercial utilisation, without compromising the national interest.	Facilitates fast-tracking of research, simplify the patent application process, decriminalise certain offences, but defeats the original mandate of the bill to ensure fair, equitable sharing of the monetary benefits from the commercial use of biological resources and traditional knowledge.

#### WAY FORWARD

**EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOREST RIGHTS ACT (FRA):** The FRA's flaws have already been identified and Government must make an effort to create confidence between its agencies in the area and the people who rely on these forests by treating them as equal citizens.

**INTEGRATION OF INTERNATIONAL TREATIES:** The Nagoya Protocol cannot be implemented in isolation. Hence, it must be coordinated with other international conventions. An inter-sectorial approach spanning across legislative, administrative, and policy actions has to be formulated to integrate the Nagoya Protocol with the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA).

**PEOPLE'S BIODIVERSITY REGISTER (PBR):** PBR should document folk knowledge regarding status, usage, history, ongoing changes and forces driving changes in biodiversity resources, as well as people's perceptions of how these resources should be maintained. PBRs can be important for preserving farmers' or communities' rights to traditional knowledge about a particular variety.

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## OLIVE RIDLEY TURTLES

Scientists have resumed tagging of Olive Ridley turtles at Rushikulya rookery along the Odisha coast.

- 🔗 OBJECTIVES - Help identify the migration path and places visited by the marine reptiles after congregation and nesting.

### ABOUT OLIVE RIDLEY TURTLES

- 🔗 SCIENTIFIC NAME - *Lepidochelys olivacea*.
- 🔗 NOTABLE FEATURE - Second-smallest species belonging to the family Olivaceae and most abundant of all sea turtles found in the world.
- 🔗 NATURAL HABITAT - Warm and tropical waters, primarily in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, but also in the warm waters of the Atlantic Ocean.
- 🔗 PROTECTION STATUS UNDER WILDLIFE (PROTECTION) ACT, 1972 - Schedule I.
- 🔗 PROTECTION STATUS UNDER CITES - APPENDIX I.
- 🔗 PROTECTION STATUS UNDER IUCN - Vulnerable.



FIGURE: Map representing the sites of mass nesting of Olive Ridley Turtles in India

*Anything that makes you weak physically, intellectually and spiritually, reject as poison*

- SWAMI VIVEKANANDA



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## FLEX FUEL VEHICLES

Recently, at an industry event, the Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari has issued an advisory to all carmakers to introduce flex-fuel engines in their vehicles.

### ADVISORY

- ☞ Carmakers are given six months' time to introduce flex-fuel engines.
- ☞ Manufacturers have to produce the Flex Fuel Strong Hybrid vehicles and both types of vehicles must comply with the BS-6 emission norms.

### ABOUT FLEXIBLE FUEL VEHICLES (FFVs)

- ☞ Flexible Fuel Vehicles (FFVs) could run both on gasoline and doped petrol with different levels of ethanol blends.
- ☞ Flexible Fuel Vehicles (FFVs) use all the blends and also run on unblended fuel.
- ☞ Flexible Fuel Vehicles (FFVs) have compatible engines to run on more than 84 per cent ethanol blended petrol.

### BENEFITS

- ☞ Mitigate Green-House Gas (GHG) emissions, reducing the use of polluting fossil fuels.
- ☞ Economical for consumers as alternative fuel ethanol is cheaper by Rs 30-35 per litre compared to petrol.
- ☞ Logical extension of the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme launched by the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in January 2003.
- ☞ Help farmers in realising higher incomes making it mandatory blending of ethanol programme.
- ☞ Higher usage of ethanol as an automobile fuel will help save import costs as the country meets more than 80 per cent of its crude oil requirements through imports.



### CHALLENGES OF USING FFVs:

Higher cost of ownership and maintenance compared to conventional fuel vehicles.

- ✘ Running cost (due to lower fuel efficiency) will be higher by more than 30 per cent when run with 100 per cent ethanol (E100).
- ✘ Flex Fuel Engines cost more as ethanol has very different chemical properties than petrol. Ethanol has very low (40 per cent) Calorific value as compared to Gasoline, very High Latent heat of vaporization causing cooling of charge/combustion etc.
- ✘ Ethanol also acts as a solvent and could wipe out the protective oil film inside the engine thereby could cause wear and tear.

## 6 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT ETHANOL AND FLEX FUEL

- 1 Flex fuel vehicles can run on both **petrol and ethanol**
- 2 India is aiming to achieve **E10 by 2022 and E20** (which would involve a 20% ethanol blend) **by 2025**
- 3 At present there are **no flex-fuel-powered engines or vehicles** with the exception of a limited-edition TVS Apache RTR motorcycle
- 4 Ethanol is hygroscopic, and has a tendency to absorb moisture making it **difficult to store in pure form**. Its affinity to attract moisture can also lead to impurities settling at the base of the fuel tank and contaminating the engine
- 5 At present **E10 isn't available** across the country, and will be made so by 2022
- 6 According to the government, all **vehicles manufactured since 2008 are E10 compatible** (but not optimised). E100 ethanol will be sold at a lower price from ethanol pumps

moneycontrol     



# SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY





**NEW VARIANT OF COVID 19 -OMICRON DETECTED**



**ZyCoV-D TO BE LAUNCHED IN SEVEN STATES**



**DHAWAN-1 ENGINE**



**AK203 ASSAULT RIFLES**



**GJ 367b: ULTRA SHORT PLANET**



**AK203 ASSAULT RIFLES**



**NATIONAL BLOCKCHAIN STRATEGY**



**IMAGING X – RAY POLARIMETRY EXPLORER IXPE MISSION**



**ZERO BUDGET NATURAL FARMING (ZBNF)**



**CENTRAL BANK DIGITAL CURRENCY (CBDC)**



**PARKER SOLAR PROBE**



**GREEN HYDROGENCARD**



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## NEW VARIANT OF COVID 19 - OMICRON DETECTED

26 November 2021: WHO designated the variant B.1.1.529 a 'Variant of Concern', named Omicron, on the advice of WHO's Technical Advisory Group on Virus Evolution (TAG-VE).

### ABOUT OMICRON

- 🚫 TRANSMISSION PATH - Human to Human (H2H).
- 🚫 SYMPTOMS
  - Scratchy throat
  - Extreme tiredness
  - Severe drop in oxygen saturation levels
- 🚫 DETECTION - Reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR)
- 🚫 MEDICATION - Corticosteroids and IL6 Receptor Blockers will still be effective for managing patients with severe COVID-19.
- 🚫 VACCINATION - Under development

## ZyCoV-D TO BE LAUNCHED IN SEVEN STATES

ZyCov – D vaccine would be launched in seven states - Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Punjab, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.

### ABOUT ZyCov – D VACCINE

- 🚫 SIGNIFICANCE: Second indigenous developed vaccine
- 🚫 MANUFACTURER: Cadila Healthcare
- 🚫 AGE GROUP: 12 - 19 years
- 🚫 FREQUENCY: 3 dose vaccine, taken at 28th day and 56th day of the first dose
- 🚫 EFFICACY: 66.6%
- 🚫 MODE OF ADMINISTRATION: Needle – free
- 🚫 MODE OF DEVELOPMENT: From a plasmid DNA (DNA of the weakened/ killed virus)

### ADVANTAGES OF NEEDLE – LESS VACCINES

- 🚫 Use narrow high-pressure stream of liquid with jet injectors
- 🚫 Penetrate the outer most layer of the skin.
- 🚫 Medication reaches the underlying tissues of the epidermis.
- 🚫 Vaccines travel across cell plasma membrane and nuclear membrane.
- 🚫 Needle – less vaccination methods give high immunogenicity.

*If you can't fly, then run,  
If you can't run, then walk.  
If you can't walk, the crawl,  
but by all means, keep moving*

- MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.





## DHAWAN-1 ENGINE

Skyroot Aerospace test-fired India's first privately built cryogenic rocket engine called Dhawan-1. The cryogenic rocket engine has been named after Satish Dhawan, the third Chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

### SALIENT FEATURES

- ✂ Skyroot Aerospace demonstrated the upper stage of Vikram-II launch vehicle.
- ✂ The cryogenic rocket engine is 100 per cent 3D printed and 100 percent made in India.

### ABOUT VIKRAM ROCKET II

#### PAYLOAD

- ✂ 410 kg to 500 km Sun Synchronomus Polar Orbit (SSPO)
- ✂ 520 kg to 45° inclination 500 km Low Earth Orbit (LEO)

#### PROPULSION

- ✂ STAGE 1: Solid fuel propulsion
- ✂ SATEGE 2: Solid fuel propulsion
- ✂ STAGE 3: Cryogenic Upper Stage (CUS).

#### ADVANTAGES

**FLEXIBLE:** Upper stage cryo-engine with re-start capability enables multi-orbit insertions.

**ECONOMIC:** Lowest cost in the payload segment

**RESPONSIVE:** Requires Minimal range infrastructure with assembly to launch within 72 hours from any launch site.

### ABOUT DHAWAN-1 ENGINE

**TYPE:** Cryogenic Upper Stage (CUS) of Vikram-II Launch vehicle

**MANUFACTURING:** 3 D printed.

**VACUUM THRUST:** 1.5kN

**FUEL:** Methalox. (LNG and LOX)

#### ADVANTAGES

High performance at low cost

Environmentally friendly

### PIXXEL 1 SATELLITE

Pixxel 1 satellite will be launched in 2022.

will be the first private satellite in an Earth Observation constellation in low Earth orbit.

#### MILESTONES IN INDIA'S SPACE SECTOR

1962: Founding of the Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR).

1969: Founding of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

1972: Founding of Space Commission

1992: Founding of Antrix Corporation

2020: Founding of New Space India Limited (NSIL)



## AK203 ASSAULT RIFLES

Russia is ready to ensure full-scale production of the AK203 assault rifles in India within two to three years.

### ABOUT AK203 ASSAULT RIFLES

- ❖ MANUFACTURER: Indo-Russian Rifles Private Ltd (IRRPL), at Korwa in Amethi
- ❖ TOTAL UNITS: 6,00,000 Assault Rifles
- ❖ JOINT VENTURE: Advanced Weapons and Equipment India Limited (AWEIL) and Munitions India Limited (MIL) of India, and RoE and the Kalashnikov concern of Russia



## GJ 367b: ULTRA SHORT PLANET

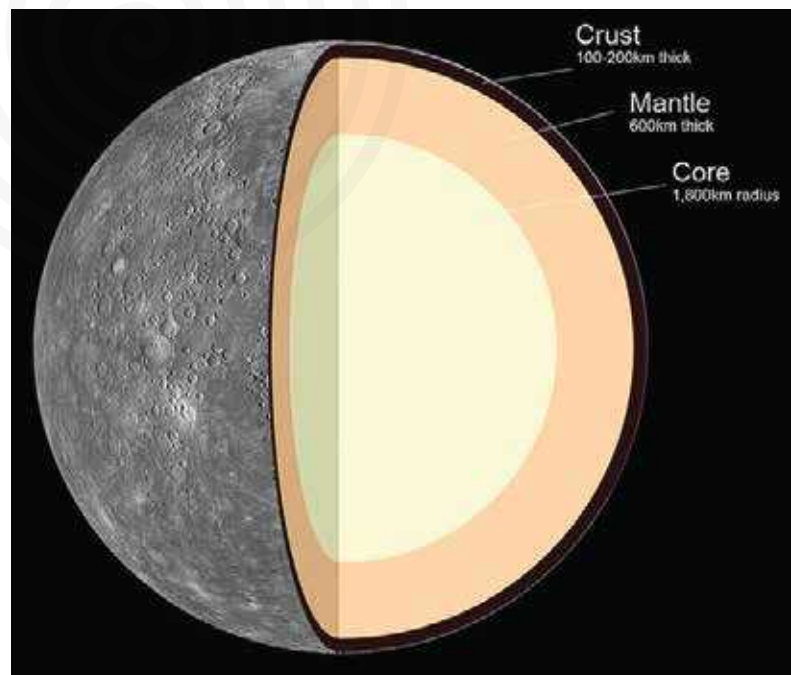
The astronomers recently found GJ 367b, a small planet that is circling a dim red dwarf star. The star is 31 light years away from the sun.

### ABOUT GJ 367b

- ❖ TYPE: Rocky planet.
- ❖ ORBITAL PERIOD: 7.7 hours

### TESS AND HARPS HELPED IN IDENTIFYING GJ 367B

- ❖ TESS is Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite. The GJ 367b was identified using the data provided by TESS. TESS revealed the super short orbital period of GJ 367b.
- ❖ Also, HARPS (High Accuracy Radial Velocity Planet Searcher) helped the researchers to calculate the mass of the planet. HARPS is an instrument installed on a 3.6 metre telescope located in European Southern Observatory in Chile.
- ❖ 70% the size of the earth.
- ❖ And it is 55% the mass of the earth.



The planet dominated by an disproportionately large core made of iron and nickel. Because of this, the planet has high density.

## NATIONAL BLOCKCHAIN STRATEGY

The Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEiTy) adopted multi – institutional approach for the National Blockchain Strategy. It involves NIC (National Informatics Centre), C – DAC (Centre for Development of Advanced Computing) and NICSi (National Informatics Centre services Inc) for offering blockchain as service.

### ABOUT NATIONAL BLOCKCHAIN STRATEGY

**OBJECTIVE:** Provide trusted digital platform for providing e–governance services using blockchain technology.

- 🌀 Explore the possibility of use of technology for medical supplies and vaccines.
- 🌀 Improve transparency and efficiency in governance.

### STRATEGY

- 🌀 Human resource development
- 🌀 Collaboration with partners
- 🌀 Formulation of a regulatory framework
- 🌀 Technology stack
- 🌀 Standards development

## IMAGING X – RAY POLARIMETRY EXPLORER IXPE MISSION

The Imaging X – Ray Polarimetry Explorer, also called IXPE is a NASA Space Observatory developed by Small Explorer Program of NASA.

### ABOUT IXPE MISSION

- 🌀 Studies the exotic astronomical objects.
- 🌀 Maps the magnetic fields of neutron stars, black holes, pulsars, magnetars, supernova remnants, quasars and active nuclear galactic nuclei.
- 🌀 Understand the high – energy astrophysical processes and their sources.
- 🌀 Measure the polarization of X – Rays from different cosmic sources.
- 🌀 Determine the radiation processes of specific cosmic X – ray sources
- 🌀 Explore the general relativistic and quantum effects in extreme environments

### STUDY BY IXPE MISSION

- 🌀 PULSARS: Rotating stars, that emit electromagnetic radiation from their magnetic poles
- 🌀 GALACTIC CENTRE: Rotational centre of the Milky Way Galaxy.
- 🌀 ACTIVE GALACTIC NUCLEI: Compact region at the centre of a galaxy with higher than normal luminosity in some of the portion of its electromagnetic spectrum. They can be observed in radio, infrared, microwave, optical, X-ray and gamma ray wavebands.
- 🌀 X – RAY BINARIES: Binary stars luminous in X-rays comprising of matter is called the donor from which the X-ray emitting donor matter and X-ray absorbing accretor matter.
- 🌀 SUPERNOVA REMNANTS: Structure made of expanding material formed from the explosion of a star in supernova.
- 🌀 PULSAR WIND NEBULAE: Nebula found inside the supernova remnant

## ZERO BUDGET NATURAL FARMING (ZBNF)

### ABOUT ZERO BUDGET NATURAL FARMING

- ☞ Alternative method of chemical free agriculture drawing from traditional Indian practices.
- ☞ Agriculturist and Padma Shri recipient Subhash Palekar originally promoted Zero Budget Natural Farming in the mid 1990s as an alternative to the Green Revolution's methods driven by chemical fertilizers, pesticides and intensive irrigation.
- ☞ Intermediation of microorganisms to make these nutrients present in the soil available to plants.

### FOUR WHEELS OF ZBNF

- ☞ BIJAMRIT: Microbial coating of seeds with formulations of cow urine and cow dung.
- ☞ JIVAMRIT: Inoculum of cow dung, cow urine, and jaggery for the enhancement of soil-microbes.
- ☞ MULCHING: Covering of soil with crops or crop residues to retain moisture.
- ☞ WAAPHASA: Building up of soil humus to increase soil aeration.

ZBNF includes three methods of insect and pest management:

Agniastra, Brahmastra and Neemastra (Concoctions using cow urine, cow dung, tobacco, fruits, green chilli, garlic and neem are prepared for insect and pest management).

### UNACCOUNTED EXPENDITURES

<p>ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE: Focus on promoting soil aeration, minimal watering, intercropping, bunds and topsoil mulching and discourages fertiliser centric intensive irrigation and deep ploughing.</p>	<p>The claims of ZBNF system, supposed to become self-sustaining after a period of 3 years has not been yet verified. Besides, yields have been declining in farmlands, where it is practiced.</p>
<p>ECONOMICALLY SUSTAINABLE: Rising cost of external inputs - farm labour, fertilisers, herbicides, weedicides, HYV seeds etc was a leading cause of indebtedness and suicide among farmers, while the impact of chemicals on the environment and on long-term fertility was devastating.</p>	<p>The supporters of ZBNF adeptly overlook the unaccounted expenditures - wages of hired labour, imputed value of family labour, imputed rent over owned land, costs of maintaining cows, paid-out costs on electricity and pump sets.</p>
<p>SCIENTIFICALLY FLAWED: The premise that all nutrients are present in adequate quantities in all types of soils, but not in a usable form and that plants absorb 98.5% of the nutrients from air, water and sunlight and only 1.5% is from the soil is flawed.</p>	<p>Given nitrogen content of 0.5% in cow dung and 1% in cow urine, the application of Jivamrit prescribed under Subhash Palekar's methodology for a five-month season translates to just about 750 g of nitrogen per acre per season is totally inadequate considering the nitrogen requirements of Indian soils. Indian soils are poor in organic matter content. About 59% of soils are low in available</p>



phosphorus; and about 48% are low or medium in available potassium. Indian soils are also varyingly deficient in micro-nutrients, such as zinc, iron, manganese, copper, molybdenum and boron.

## CENTRAL BANK DIGITAL CURRENCY (CBDC)

*The Reserve Bank of India has been working on a phased implementation strategy for a CBDC and the pilot may be launched by the end of this year.*

### ABOUT CENTRAL BANK DIGITAL CURRENCY (CBDC)

Digital form of a country's fiat currency backed by the full faith and credit of the government.

APPLICATIONS:

#### 'FIT-FOR-PURPOSE' MONEY:

- ☒ Social benefits and other targeted payments in a country
- ☒ Faster cross-border remittance payments
- ☒ Instant lending to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)

#### Need for CBDC:

- ☒ Provides a safe, robust, and convenient alternative to physical cash
- ☒ An official digital currency would
- ☒ reduce the cost of currency management while
- ☒ enabling real-time payments without any inter-bank settlement.
- ☒ India's fairly high currency-to-GDP ratio holds out another benefit of CBDC — to the extent large cash usage can be replaced by CBDC, the cost of printing, transporting and storing paper currency can be substantially reduced.
- ☒ The need for inter-bank settlement would disappear as it would be a central bank liability handed over from one person to another.
- ☒ Instead of printing paper currency or minting coins, the central bank issues electronic tokens. This token value is.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OF SC GARG COMMITTEE, 2019:

- ☒ Prohibits mining, holding, transacting or dealing with cryptocurrencies in any form.
- ☒ Recommends a jail term of one to 10 years for exchange or trading in digital currency.
- ☒ Proposed a monetary penalty of up to three times the loss caused to the exchequer or gains made by the cryptocurrency user whichever is higher.
- ☒ The government should keep an open mind on the potential issuance of cryptocurrencies by the Reserve Bank of India.

#### CHALLENGES IN ROLLING OUT NATIONAL DIGITAL CURRENCY:

Potential cyber security threat.

- ☒ Lack of digital literacy of the population.
- ☒ Introduction of digital currency also creates various associated challenges in regulation, tracking investment and purchase, taxing individuals, etc.
- ☒ Threat to Privacy: The digital currency must collect certain basic information of an individual so that the person can prove that he's the holder of that digital currency.

## PARKER SOLAR PROBE

*Parker Solar Probe, launched by NASA became the the first spacecraft to fly through the outer atmosphere of the Sun- 'Corona'.*

### SIGNIFICANCE

- ☒ Help scientists discover critical information about the sun and its influence on our solar system.

### ABOUT PARKER SOLAR PROBE MISSION

- ☒ LAUNCHED: 2018

#### SCIENTIFIC GOALS:

- ☒ Trace the flow of energy that heats the corona and accelerates the solar wind.
- ☒ Determine the structure and dynamics of the magnetic fields at the sources of solar wind.
- ☒ Determine what mechanisms accelerate and transport energetic particles.

### INSTRUMENTS

- ☒ ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELDS INVESTIGATION (FIELDS) - Directly measure electric and magnetic fields, radio waves, Poynting flux, absolute plasma density, and electron temperature.
- ☒ INTEGRATED SCIENCE INVESTIGATION OF THE SUN (ISIS) - Measure energetic electrons, protons and heavy ions.
- ☒ WIDE-FIELD IMAGER FOR SOLAR PROBE (WISPR) – Optical telescopes will acquire images of the corona and inner heliosphere.
- ☒ SOLAR WIND ELECTRONS ALPHAS AND PROTONS (SWEAP) – count the electrons, protons and helium ions, and measure their properties such as velocity, density, and temperature.
- ☒ HELIOSPHERIC ORIGINS WITH SOLAR PROBE PLUS (HeliOSPP) – Theory and modeling investigation to maximize the scientific return from the mission.

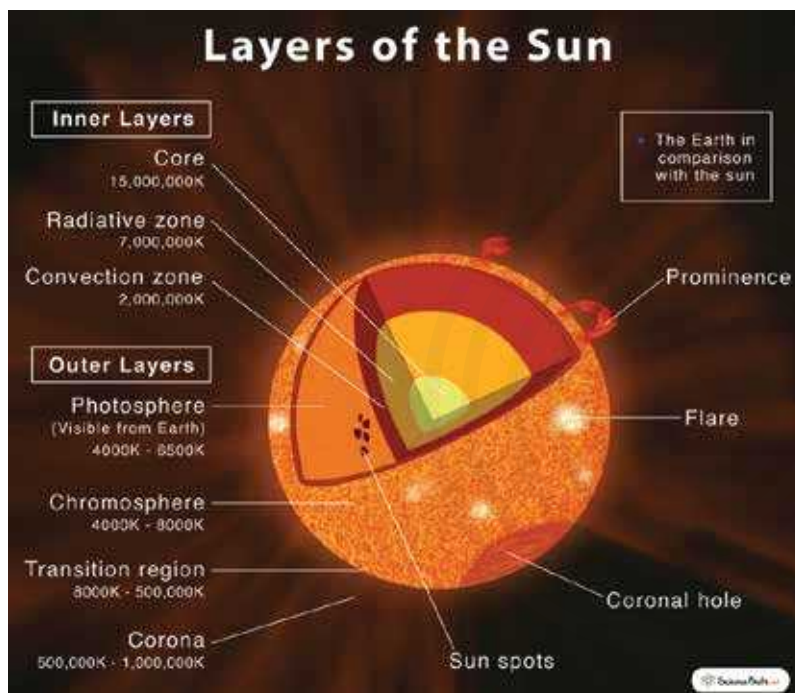
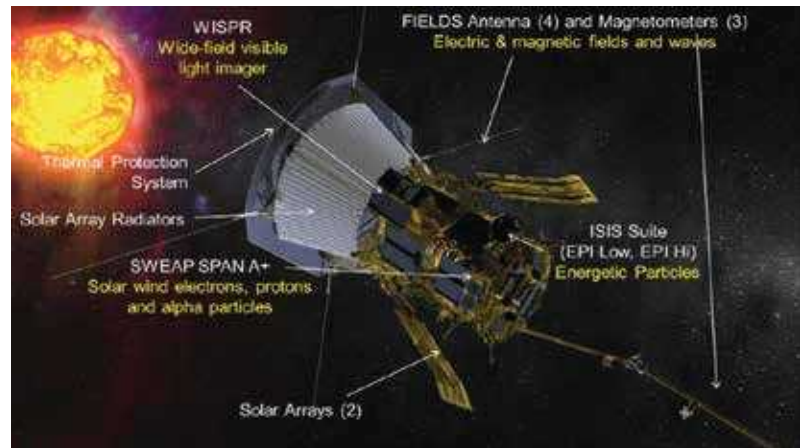
### SCIENCE OBJECTIVES

- ☒ Trace the flow of energy that heats and accelerates the solar corona and solar wind.
- ☒ Determine the structure and dynamics of the plasma and magnetic fields at the sources of the solar wind.
- ☒ Explore mechanisms that accelerate and transport energetic particles.

ABOUT CORONA - Outermost layer of the Sun's atmosphere.

## Why the corona can be viewed during a total solar eclipse?

The corona is usually hidden by the bright light of the Sun's surface, making it difficult to see without using special instruments. During a total solar eclipse, the moon passes between Earth and the Sun. When this happens, the moon blocks out the bright light of the Sun. The glowing white corona can then be seen surrounding the eclipsed Sun.



## Why is the corona so hot?

The corona is hundreds of times hotter than the Sun's surface. A NASA mission called IRIS may have provided one possible answer. The mission discovered packets of very hot material called "heat bombs" that travel from the Sun into the corona. In the corona, the heat bombs explode and release their energy as heat. But astronomers think that this is only one of many ways in which the corona is heated.

## Why is the corona so dim?

The corona is about 10 million times less dense than the Sun's surface. This low density makes the corona much less bright than the surface of the Sun.

## How does the corona cause solar winds?

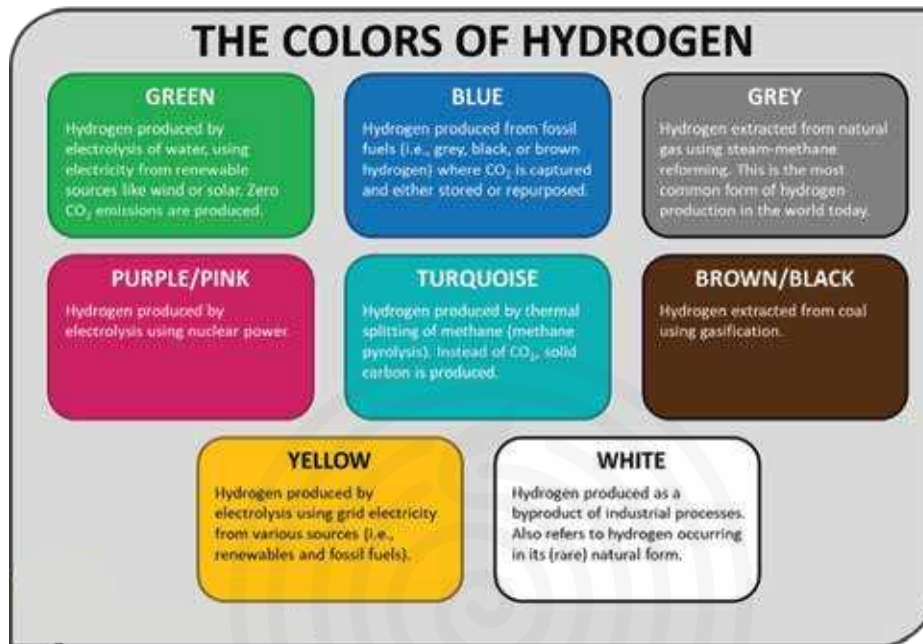
The corona extends far out into space. From it comes the solar wind that travels through our solar system. The corona's temperature causes its particles to move at very high speeds. These speeds are so high that the particles can escape the Sun's gravity.

An advertisement for Vedhik IAS Academy. The background shows a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard. On the left is the logo for Vedhik IAS Academy, featuring a stylized 'V' and the text "VEDHIK IAS ACADEMY The New Learning Mantra". In the center, the text "Excellence through Education &amp; Dedication" is written in large, bold, red letters, with the website "www.vedhikiasacademy.org" below it. On the right, three phone numbers are listed: +91 9383 432 123, +91 7777 875 588, and 0484 452 77 77.

# GREEN HYDROGEN

The Centre is planning to use the solar energy from wastewater to produce the green hydrogen fuel. The Union Budget 2021 has proposed the launch of the National Hydrogen Energy Mission in line with India's commitments to limit global average temperature rise below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, as envisioned in the Paris Agreement.

## COLOUR CODING OF HYDROGEN



## ABOUT GREEN HYDROGEN

Hydrogen produced by electrolysis using renewable energy such as solar power and wind energy with no carbon footprint.

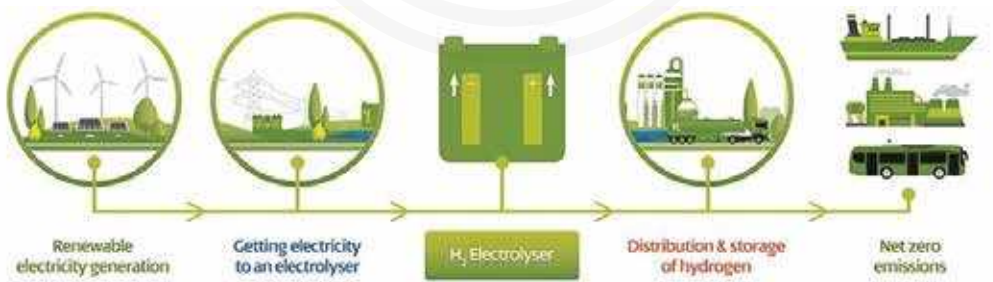


FIGURE: Schematic representation of production of Green Hydrogen

## SIGNIFICANCE

Vital for India to meet India's Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) targets  
Serve as repository of energy, essential to meet intermittenancies (of renewable energy) in the future.

## APPLICATIONS OF GREEN HYDROGEN:

Green Chemicals like ammonia and methanol can directly be utilized in existing applications like fertilizers, mobility, power, chemicals, shipping etc.

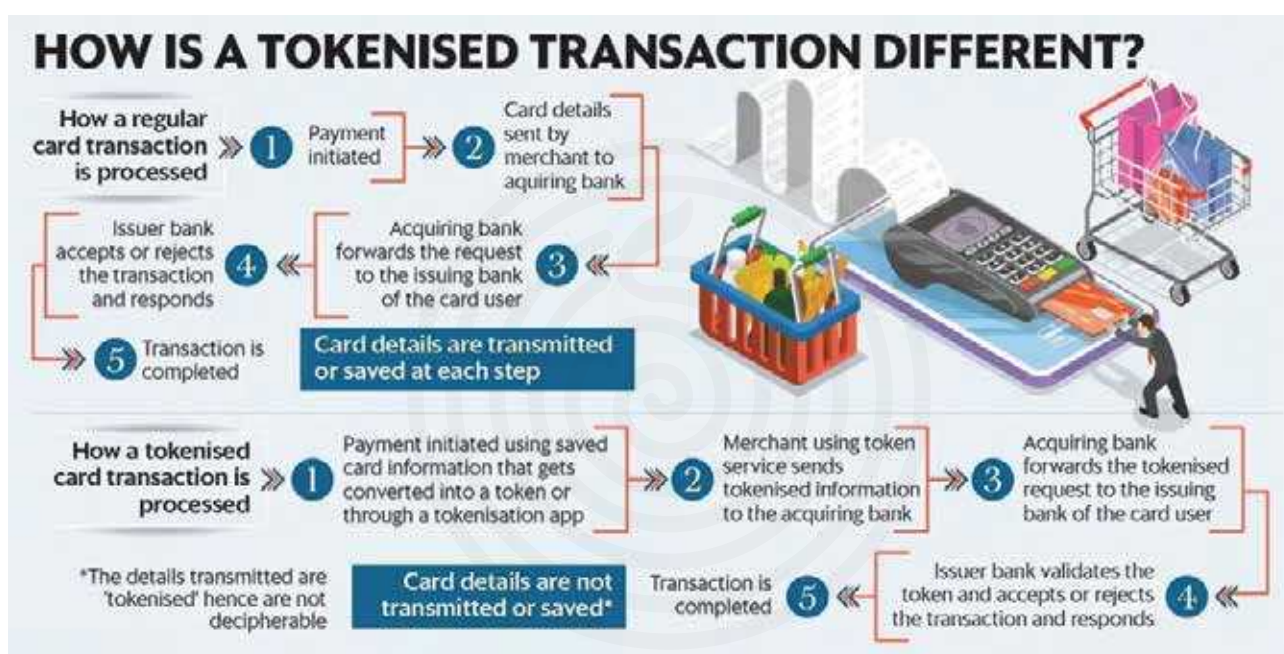
Green Hydrogen blending up to 10% may be adopted in CGD networks to gain widespread acceptance.



In terms of mobility, for long distance mobilisations for either urban freight movement within cities and states or for passengers, Green Hydrogen can be used in railways, large ships, buses or trucks, etc.

## CARD TOKENIZATION

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued guidelines regarding tokenization in March 2020. Later, the RBI issued fresh guidelines in September 2021 giving companies until the end of the year to comply with the regulations and offering them the option to tokenize.



### ABOUT CARD TOKENIZATION

- Preventing merchants to save card information on their websites to boost data security. The Reserve Bank of India's plans to move towards card tokenization is likely to hit a wide range of companies from major e-commerce firms and food delivery firms to lenders, while increasing the use of cash.
- Tokenization will replace card details with a code, called a "token," which will be specifically for the card, the token requestor and the device being used to pay. Instead of the card's details, the token will act as the card at point of sale (POS) terminals and quick response (QR) code payment systems.
- The goal of the process is to improve the safety and security of payments.

ETHICAL

N



## ATTITUDE - FORMATION AND CHANGES



# ATTITUDE - FORMATION AND CHANGES

*In psychology, an attitude refers to a set of emotions, beliefs, and behaviors toward a particular object, person, thing, or event. Attitudes are often the result of experience or upbringing, and they can have a powerful influence over behavior. While attitudes are enduring, they can also change.*

## OVERVIEW

What's your opinion on the death penalty? Which political party does a better job of running the country? Should prayer be allowed in schools? Should violence on television be regulated?

Chances are that you probably have fairly strong opinions on these and similar questions. You've developed attitudes about such issues, and these attitudes influence your beliefs as well as your behavior. Attitudes are an important topic of study within the field of social psychology. But what exactly is an attitude? How does it develop?

## HOW PSYCHOLOGISTS DEFINE ATTITUDES

Psychologists define attitudes as a learned tendency to evaluate things in a certain way. This can include evaluations of people, issues, objects, or events. Such evaluations are often positive or negative, but they can also be uncertain at times.

For example, you might have mixed feelings about a particular person or issue. Researchers also suggest that there are several different components that make up attitudes. The components of attitudes are sometimes referred to as CAB or the ABC's of attitude.

## COMPONENTS OF ATTITUDE

- 🌀 **COGNITIVE COMPONENT:** Your thoughts and beliefs about the subject
- 🌀 **AFFECTIVE COMPONENT:** How the object, person, issue, or event makes you feel
- 🌀 **BEHAVIORAL COMPONENT:** How attitude influences your behavior

Attitudes can also be explicit and implicit. Explicit attitudes are those that we are consciously aware of and that clearly influence our behaviors and beliefs. Implicit attitudes are unconscious but still have an effect on our beliefs and behaviors.

## ATTITUDE FORMATION

There are a number of factors that can influence how and why attitudes form. Here is a closer look at how attitudes form.

### EXPERIENCE

Attitudes form directly as a result of experience. They may emerge due to direct personal experience, or they may result from observation.

### SOCIAL FACTORS

Social roles and social norms can have a strong influence on attitudes. Social roles relate to how people are expected to behave in a particular role or context. Social norms involve society's rules for what behaviors are considered appropriate.



## LEARNING

Attitudes can be learned in a variety of ways. Consider how advertisers use classical conditioning to influence your attitude toward a particular product. In a television commercial, you see young, beautiful people having fun on a tropical beach while enjoying a sports drink. This attractive and appealing imagery causes you to develop a positive association with this particular beverage.

## CONDITIONING

Operant conditioning can also be used to influence how attitudes develop. Imagine a young man who has just started smoking. Whenever he lights up a cigarette, people complain, chastise him, and ask him to leave their vicinity. This negative feedback from those around him eventually causes him to develop an unfavorable opinion of smoking and he decides to give up the habit.

## OBSERVATION

Finally, people also learn attitudes by observing people around them. When someone you admire greatly espouses a particular attitude, you are more likely to develop the same beliefs. For example, children spend a great deal of time observing the attitudes of their parents and usually begin to demonstrate similar outlooks.

## ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR

We tend to assume that people behave according to their attitudes. However, social psychologists have found that attitudes and actual behavior are not always perfectly aligned.

After all, plenty of people support a particular candidate or political party and yet fail to go out and vote. People also are more likely to behave according to their attitudes under certain conditions.

## FACTORS INFLUENCING ATTITUDE STRENGTH

- ☒ Are an expert on the subject
- ☒ Expect a favorable outcome
- ☒ Experience something personally
- ☒ Stand to win or lose something due to the issue
- ☒ Are repeatedly expressed attitudes

## CHANGING TO MATCH BEHAVIOUR

In some cases, people may actually alter their attitudes in order to better align them with their behavior. Cognitive dissonance is a phenomenon in which a person experiences psychological distress due to conflicting thoughts or beliefs.<sup>3</sup> In order to reduce this tension, people may change their attitudes to reflect their other beliefs or actual behaviors.

## COGNITIVE DISSONANCE AND WAYS TO RESOLVE IT

### USING COGNITIVE DISSONANCE

Imagine the following situation: You've always placed a high value on financial security, but you start dating someone who is very financially unstable. In order to reduce the tension caused by the conflicting beliefs and behavior, you have two options.

You can end the relationship and seek out a partner who is more financially secure, or you can de-emphasize fiscal stability importance.

In order to minimize the dissonance between your conflicting attitude and behavior, you either have to change the attitude or change your actions.

### **WHY ATTITUDES CHANGE**

While attitudes can have a powerful effect on behavior, they are not set in stone. The same influences that lead to attitude formation can also create attitude change.

### **LEARNING THEORY**

Classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and observational learning can be used to bring about attitude change. Classical conditioning can be used to create positive emotional reactions to an object, person, or event by associating positive feelings with the target object.

Operant conditioning can be used to strengthen desirable attitudes and weaken undesirable ones. People can also change their attitudes after observing the behavior of others.

### **ELABORATION LIKELIHOOD THEORY**

This theory of persuasion suggests that people can alter their attitudes in two ways. First, they can be motivated to listen and think about the message, thus leading to an attitude shift.

Or, they might be influenced by the characteristics of the speaker, leading to a temporary or surface shift in attitude. Messages that are thought-provoking and that appeal to logic are more likely to lead to permanent changes in attitudes.

### **DISSONANCE THEORY**

As mentioned earlier, people can also change their attitudes when they have conflicting beliefs about a topic. In order to reduce the tension created by these incompatible beliefs, people often shift their attitudes.

**SPACE FOR ROUGH NOTES**

**SPACE FOR ROUGH NOTES**

# TOPICS OF THE MONTH





**RIGHT TO INFORMATION**

**- DR. ALEXANDER JACOB IPS**

**CRYPTOCURRENCY**

**- Mr. SOLOMON JOHN**

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

**- DR. BABU SEBASTIAN**

**UN & TERRORISM**

**- Mr. SHAHUL HAMEED**

# RIGHT TO INFORMATION

## WHAT IS RTI

RTI stands for Right to Information. Right to Information is a part of fundamental rights under Article 19(1) of the Constitution. Article 19 (1) says that every citizen has freedom of speech and expression. The Supreme Court stated in 1976 that people cannot communicate or express themselves unless they are aware. As a result, article 19 includes the right to information. India, according to the Supreme Court, is a democracy. People are the masters. As a result, the masters have a right to know how the governments that are supposed to represent them, work and function. Furthermore, every person is required to pay taxes. When a beggar on the street buys a bar of soap from the store, he pays tax (in the form of sales tax, excise duty, and so on). Thus, people have a right to know how their money is spent. The RTI is also useful for fighting abuses, mismanagement, and corruption, as well as implementing basic economic and social rights.

Why do we need an Act to grant us this right if RTI is a fundamental right? This is because if you go to some government department and tell an officer, "RTI is my fundamental right, and I am the master of this country," as a result, please show me all of your files," the officer will dismiss you. He will refuse and certainly kick you out of his office. therefore, we need a machinery or a procedure to exercise this fundamental right. This machinery is provided by the Right to Information Act of 2005, which took effect on October 13, 2005. So, the Right to Information Act does not grant us any additional rights. It simply lays out the steps for how to apply for details, including where to request, how much to pay, and so on.

## RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT 2005

In October, 2005, the Central Right to Information Act took effect. Prior to that, nine state governments had passed state laws. J&K, Delhi, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Assam, and Goa were among them. The Right to Information Act's main goal is to empower citizens, encourage openness and accountability in government operations, combat corruption, and make our democracy truly work for the people. A well-informed citizen of the country would be better able to maintain necessary vigilance over government instruments and hold the government more accountable to the people.

### RTI laws deals with the following things:

- A right of an individual, organization, or legal entity to demand information from public bodies, without having to show a legal interest in that information.
- A duty of the relevant body to respond and provide the information. This includes mechanisms for handling requests and time limits for responding to requests.
- Exemptions to allow the withholding of certain categories of information. These exemptions include the protection of national security and international relations, personal privacy, commercial confidentiality, law enforcement and public order, information received in confidence, and internal discussions
- Internal appeals mechanisms for requestors to challenge the withholding of information.
- Mechanisms for external review of the withholding of information. This includes setting up an external body or referring cases to the court system.
- Requirement for government bodies to affirmatively publish some types of information about their structures, rules, and activities. This

is often done using information and communications technologies.

## SCOPES

The Right to Information Act's main goal is to empower citizens, encourage openness and accountability in government operations, combat corruption, and make our democracy truly work for the people. A well-informed citizen would be better able to maintain necessary vigilance over government instruments and hold the government more accountable to the people. The Act covers India as a whole. It includes the executive, legislature, and judiciary, as well as any agency or entity created or constituted by an act of Parliament or a state legislature.

Body or authorities created by order or notification of appropriate government, are also specified in the Act. The Act does not apply to private entities. The Central Information Commission reaffirmed that privatised public utility companies are subject to RTI. As of 2014, the Act applies to private institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that receive more than 95 percent of their infrastructure funding from the government.

The Central Information Commission (CIC) ruled that political parties are public authorities subject to the RTI Act and must respond to people. However, in August 2013, the government introduced a Right to Information (Amendment) Bill that would exclude political parties from the law's reach. Currently, no political parties are covered by the RTI Act, although a lawsuit has been filed to bring all political parties under the law.

## GOVERNANCE

In India, there are two major bodies that regulate the right to information: The Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) is in

charge of all central departments and ministries, with their own public information officers (PIOs). CICs immediately report to India's President.

State Information Commissions – SPIOs, or State Public Information Officers, are in charge of all state departments and ministries. The State Governor is solely responsible for the SPIO office.

The State and Central Information Commissions are separate entities, with the Central Information Commission having no authority over the State Information Commission. A individual who wishes to obtain information from a public authority must submit a fee prescribed for seeking information, along with the application (a Postal order, DD (Demand draft), or bankers cheque) payable to the public authority's Accounts Officer. If the individual is from a low-income neighbourhood, he or she is not required to pay. The applicant will be expected to pay an additional fee to cover the cost of obtaining the information, the details of which will be given to the applicant by the PIO (Public Information Officer) in accordance with the RTI Act.

A digital portal, RTI Portal, has been developed to provide people with fast access to information on the details of first Appellate Authorities (related to appeal process), PIOs, and other public officials, as well as access to RTI-related information/ disclosures published on the web by various public authorities under the Indian government and state governments.

## CONTROVERSIES & ATTACKS ON RTI ACTIVISTS

In India, the right to information has been overshadowed by controversies ranging from its use in political wars, such as requests for political opponents' educational degrees, to outright refusals to provide

information on high-profile ventures, to accusations of misuse by civil society. The state's reaction against RTI hindered citizens' right to information.

According to the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), over 310 people have been assaulted, killed, physically or psychologically harassed, or had their property destroyed as a result of the information they requested under RTI. Over 50 suspected murders and two suicides have been connected to RTI applications, according to the data. There is strong consensus that the RTI Act should be amended to provide safeguards to those seeking information under the Act.

Protection measures proposed include: Compulsory registration of threats or attacks to RTI activists in the FIR and submit it to the local magistrate or judge within 24 hours and provide protection for those people and their families who are under threats. Conducting a 90-day investigation into threats or assaults by a police officer not below the level of Deputy Superintendent of Police/Assistant Commissioner of Police. Many civil society members have recently accused government departments for violating the right to information act by invoking Intellectual Property rights arguments from time to time. The following are the most notable: The Right to Information on Demonetization was denied by the RBI, citing Intellectual Property Laws as the reason. After more than 8 months of waiting for information on the under construction Gomti Riverfront Development Project, the Uttar Pradesh Irrigation Department denied it.

(Intellectual property rights are the rights given to persons over the creations of their minds. They usually give the creator an exclusive right over the use of his/ her creation for a certain period of time.)

## ADVANTAGES OF RTI

RTI is a right granted by the government to the citizens of our country, and to a far greater degree to our country's consumers and customers, in which they can write to a government body or public authority and request accurate information about any good, service, or related operation, and the request must be answered within 30 working days. RTI has been in place since its inception, with both advantages and disadvantages, which is only natural in a country with more than 100 crores of people and diverse requirements and needs. Now let's see what are the advantages of RTI.

- Empowerment of the common man: The entire spectrum of common man in the country has been empowered by such an initiative, in which they have full rights to be told about anything that directly or indirectly affects their lives, and responsible bodies must react positively.
- Easy mode of spreading information rightfully: The RTI has developed a very concrete and simple method of distributing information of all kinds in all forms, in which appropriate information is received by only the individual concerned, resulting in easy access to information on the one side and time conservation on the other.
- Protection of Information: Since only those with specific questions will be entertained and properly updated, details will be protected, preventing everyone from being incorrectly or improperly informed.
- Corruption will decrease gradually: When an individual requests information on specific goods and services, and the response must be provided by a knowledgeable and responsible authority, the chances of corruption are greatly reduced. People will no longer have to worry about being tricked or being victims of fraud or scams.



## DISADVANTAGES OF RTI

Now, if we talk about the disadvantages or drawbacks of RTI there are some major issues associated with it. They are:

- Unnecessary chaos all over: There is a major flaw that persists in our country, and that is the tradition of causing needless disruption and confusion over a newly incorporated initiative just to cause inconvenience. Cases have been filed against officials at various levels obtaining incorrect information and calling for sudden information, which has resulted in nothing but confusion.
- An extra burden to the Authorities: Since approved persons already have a lot of work and activities to do, they now have an added responsibility to complete and deliver after this new bill is committed.
- Multiple Public Information Officers (PIO): PIOs have been named by the government in large numbers. As a result, people are rushing from office to office in search of the right PIO who can provide accurate information.
- People's accessibility is hectic and time consuming: Many PIO offices have long lines for the general public, making the procedure extremely difficult to complete.

In a nutshell, the RTI has found itself in a zone where its effects and implementations have taken on a variety of shades. There are benefits and drawbacks to such enactments, but the bottom line is that they must be carried out in accordance with the intended proposal and dedication.

## CRITICISM

The Act has been criticised for a variety of reasons. It provides information on demand, but it does not place enough emphasis on information on food, water, the

atmosphere, and other survival needs, which must be provided pro-actively, by public authorities. The Act does not prioritise active involvement in educating citizens about their right to access information, which is critical in a country with high levels of illiteracy and poverty, or the promotion of a transparency culture within government institutions. It could only stay on paper if there isn't widespread education and knowledge about the new Act's possibilities.

The Act further strengthens the government official's commanding position, since he or she maintains broad discretionary powers to withhold details. Critics who concentrate on the Bill's sweeping exemptions have been the most harsh in their criticism. Terrorism, foreign policy, defense, law enforcement, and public safety details are all subject to restrictions. However, Cabinet documents, including reports of the council of ministers, secretaries, and other officials, are exempt from the Right to Information Act, which effectively shielding the entire decision-making process from mandatory disclosure.

When it comes to the government's policymaking, file noting is critical. These notes explain why such acts were taken or why a policy was changed, why a contract was awarded, or why a penalty was withheld to punish a corrupt official. As a result, the government's plan to exclude file noting from the Act has been met with harsh criticism.

## PROCESS

One or more existing officers in every Government Department have been designated as Public Information Officers (PIO). These PIOs act like nodal officers. You have to file your applications with them. They are responsible for collecting information sought by you from various wings of that Department and providing

that information to you. there is an application fee. For Central Government Departments, it is Rs 10. However, different states have prescribed different fee. Similarly, there is a fee for inspection of documents. There is no fee for first hour of inspection, but after that, you have to pay Rs. 5 for every subsequent hour or fraction thereof.

RTI is said to be successful because, for the first time in the history of independent India, there is a law which casts a direct accountability on the officer for non-performance. If the concerned officer does not provide information in time, a penalty of Rs 250 per day of delay can be imposed by the Information Commissioner. If the information provided is false, a penalty of a maximum of Rs 25,000/- can be imposed. A penalty can also be imposed for providing incomplete or for rejecting your application for malafide reasons. This fine is deducted from the officer's personal salary.

## SPACE FOR ROUGH NOTES

# CRYPTOCURRENCY

## WHAT IS CRYPTOCURRENCY

Cryptocurrency is digital money. That means there's no physical coin or bill — it's all online. You can transfer cryptocurrency to someone online without a go-between, like a bank. Bitcoin and Ether are well-known cryptocurrencies, but new cryptocurrencies continue to be created. People might use cryptocurrencies for quick payments and to avoid transaction fees. Some might get cryptocurrencies as an investment, hoping the value goes up. You can buy cryptocurrency with a credit card or, in some cases, get it through a process called "mining." Cryptocurrency is stored in a digital wallet, either online, on your computer, or with other hardware. Cryptocurrencies work using a technology called a block chain. Blockchain is a decentralized technology spread across many computers that manages and records transactions. Part of the appeal of this technology is its security.

Cryptocurrencies appeal to their supporters for a variety of reasons. Here are some of the most popular:

People see cryptocurrencies as the currency of the future and are racing to buy them now, presumably before they become more valuable. Some supporters like the fact that cryptocurrency removes central banks from managing the money supply, since over time these banks tend to reduce the value of money via inflation. Other supporters like the technology behind cryptocurrencies, the block chain, because it's a decentralized processing and recording system and can be more secure than traditional payment systems.

Some speculators like cryptocurrencies because they're going up in value and

have no interest in the currencies' long-term acceptance as a way to move money. While some cryptocurrencies, including Bitcoin, are available for purchase with U.S. dollars, others require that you pay with bitcoins or another cryptocurrency. To buy cryptocurrencies, we need a "wallet," an online app that can hold your currency. Generally, you create an account on an exchange, and then you can transfer real money to buy cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin or Ethereum.

## HOW DOES CRYPTOCURRENCY WORK

As we discussed before Crypto functioning is Blockchain. A blockchain is a public ledger that keeps records of all prior bitcoin transactions. These data units or blocks use cryptographic validation to link themselves together. The entire network is used to monitor and verify both the creation of native tokens through mining, and the transfer of tokens/coins between users.

Miners are individuals or organizations who, with the use of powerful computers carry out mining process. Mining is the process by which transactions are verified and added to the public ledger, block chain, and also the means through which new coin are released. The mining process involves compilation of recent transactions into blocks and finding solutions of a computationally difficult puzzle. The successful miners who solve the puzzle get to place the next block on the block chain and are rewarded. The reward is twofold. The newly minted tokens/coins and the fees paid by users sending transactions are rewarded to the miners for their efforts.

Lets see how this cryptocurrencies work with an example. When we want to buy something normally using our normal

bankcard first we give our card details to the shop, the shop asks the bank if I have enough money to buy. The bank checks its records to see if we have enough in my account. If we do it lets the shop now, It updates the record to show the movement from my account to the shop's and bank takes a little cut for its services. Now if we want to remove the bank from that system, who else we would trust to keep those records and not alter them or sscheat in any ways?

The idea is that we don't have a central record of transactions, instead you distribute many many copies of this ledger around the world; each owner of each copy records every transaction. So to buy something using cryptocurrency, we give the shop our details, the shop asks all the bookkeepers' if we are good with money, the bookkeepers all check their records to see if we have enough money, if we do they tell the shop and then all updates the records to show the usage of money. So there is no way a forged transaction can make it in, if we try to alter a ledger it won't match all of the other copies, and gets rejected. And one of them at random will be given a reward of some newly created Cryptocurrency. This is how cryptocurrencies work and remember all of these bookkeepers, all these ledgers, they are not actually people they are computers

## **BITCOINS**

There are a lot of cryptocurrencies available in the market, with new currency coming out each day and old ones disappearing. But there are a few cryptocurrencies that are always in the limelight. Remember that the price of cryptocurrencies constantly fluctuates, and the facts and figures shown here are based on the market situation. Bitcoin was the first cryptocurrency developed on top of blockchain

technology and so far, it is in the first position. The basic idea behind inventing bitcoin is to cut-down the middleman and develop a decentralized peer-to-peer network; where everyone can participate and transfer their funds and the system also can be used as an alternative to the traditional banking system.

The concept of Bitcoin was introduced by Satoshi Nakamoto (an unknown group or a person) in 2008. Initially, bitcoin was not as popular as it is nowadays. Gradually everyone realized that bitcoin has the potential to change the traditional payment system, and then it became part of day-to-day life. The price of a bitcoin in 2010 was \$0.003 USD, then 2017 was the most volatile period where the price of bitcoin went up to \$19,000 USD. The price of any cryptocurrency is dependant on demand and supply of that currency; as the total supply is fixed, bitcoin is still in high demand. Many big firms including Overstock, KFC Canada, Microsoft, Reddit, Subway, Shopify are accepting bitcoin payments.

The physical Bitcoins you see in photos are a novelty. They would be worthless without the private codes printed inside them.

Each Bitcoin is basically a computer file which is stored in a 'digital wallet' app on a smartphone or computer. People can send Bitcoins (or part of one) to your digital wallet, and you can send Bitcoins to other people. Every single transaction is recorded in a public list called the blockchain. This makes it possible to trace the history of Bitcoins to stop people from spending coins they do not own, making copies or undo-ing transactions.

There are three main ways people get Bitcoins.



You can buy Bitcoins using 'real' money. You can sell things and let people pay you with Bitcoins. Or they can be created using a computer. In order for the Bitcoin

system to work, people can make their computer process transactions for everybody.

The computers are made to work out incredibly difficult sums. Occasionally they are rewarded with a Bitcoin for the owner to keep. People set up powerful computers just to try and get Bitcoins. (mining.) But the sums are becoming more and more difficult to stop too many Bitcoins being generated. If we started mining now it could be years before we got a single Bitcoin.

## ADVANTAGES OF CRYPTOCURRENCY

If we discuss the advantages of cryptocurrency following points emerge

a) Inflation has caused many currencies to get their value declined with time. Almost every cryptocurrency, at the time of its launch, is released with a fixed amount. The source code specifies the amount of any coin; like, there are only 21 million Bitcoins released in the world. So, as the demand increases, its value will increase which will keep up with the market and, in the long run, prevent inflation.

b) Governance and maintenance of any currency is a major factor for its development. The cryptocurrency transactions are stored by developers/miners on their hardware, and they get the transaction fee as a reward for doing so. Since the miners are getting paid for it, they keep transaction records accurate and up-to-date, keeping the integrity of the cryptocurrency and the records decentralized.

c) Privacy and security have always

been a major concern for cryptocurrencies. The blockchain ledger is based on different mathematical puzzles, which are hard to decode. This makes a cryptocurrency more secure than ordinary electronic transactions. Cryptocurrencies, for better security and privacy, use pseudonyms that are unconnected to any user, account or stored data that could be linked to a profile.

d) Cryptocurrency can be bought using many currencies like the US dollar, European euro, British pound, Indian rupee or Japanese yen. With the help of different cryptocurrency wallets and exchanges, one currency can be converted into the other by trading in cryptocurrency, across different wallets, and with minimal transaction fees.

e) A major pro of cryptocurrency is that they are mainly decentralized. A lot of cryptocurrencies are controlled by the developers using it and the people who have a significant amount of the coin, or by an organization to develop it before it is released into the market. The decentralization helps keep the currency monopoly free and in check so that no one organization can determine the flow and the value of the coin, which, in turn, will keep it stable and secure, unlike fiat currencies which are controlled by the government.

f) One of the major uses of cryptocurrencies is to send money across borders. With the help of cryptocurrency, the transaction fees paid by a user is reduced to a negligible or zero amount. It does so by eliminating the need for third parties, like VISA or PayPal, to verify a transaction. This removes the need to pay any extra transaction fees.

g) Cryptocurrencies have always kept itself as an optimal solution for transactions. Transactions, whether international or

domestic in cryptocurrencies, are lightning-fast. This is because the verification requires very little time to process as there are very few barriers to cross.

## DISADVANTAGES OF CRYPTOCURRENCY

Following are the disadvantages and weakness of cryptocurrency

a) Since the privacy and security of cryptocurrency transactions are high, it's hard for the government to track down any user by their wallet address or keep tabs on their data. Bitcoin has been used as a mode of exchanging money in a lot of illegal deals in the past, such as buying drugs on the dark web. Cryptocurrencies are also used by some to convert their illicitly obtained money through a clean intermediary, to hide its source.

b) The developers wanted to create virtually untraceable source code, strong hacking defenses, and impenetrable authentication protocols.

This would make it safer to put money in cryptocurrencies than physical cash or bank vaults. But if any user loses the private key to their wallet, there's no getting it back. The wallet will remain locked away along with the number of coins inside it. This will result in the financial loss of the user.

c) The cryptocurrencies are known for its feature of being decentralized. But, the flow and amount of some currencies in the market are still controlled by their creators and some organizations. These holders can manipulate the coin for large swings in its price. Even hugely traded coins are susceptible to these manipulations like Bitcoin, whose value doubled several times in 2017.

d) Some cryptocurrencies can only be traded in one or a few fiat currencies. This

forces the user to convert these currencies into one of the major currencies, like Bitcoin or Ethereum first and then through other exchanges, to their desired currency. This applies to only a few cryptocurrencies. By doing this, the extra transaction fees are added in the process, costing unnecessary money.

e) Mining cryptocurrencies require a lot of computational power and electricity input, making it highly energy-intensive. The biggest culprit in this is Bitcoin. Mining Bitcoin requires advanced computers and a lot of energy. It cannot be done on ordinary computers. Major Bitcoin miners are in countries like China that use coal to produce electricity. This has increased China's carbon footprint tremendously.

f) Although cryptocurrencies are very secure, exchanges are not that secure. Most exchanges store the wallet data of users to operate their user ID properly. This data can be stolen by hackers, giving them access to a lot of accounts.

g) After getting access, these hackers can easily transfer funds from those accounts. Some exchanges, like Bitfinex or Mt Gox, have been hacked in the past years and Bitcoin has been stolen in thousands and millions of US dollars. Most exchanges are highly secure nowadays, but there is always a potential for another hack.

h) If there is a dispute between concerning parties, or if someone mistakenly sends funds to a wrong wallet address, the coin cannot be retrieved by the sender. This can be used by many people to cheat others out of their money. Since there are no refunds, one can easily be created for a transaction whose product or services they never received.

## IMPACT OF CRYPTOCURRENCY ON WORLD ECONOMY

The official response to cryptocurrencies has been lukewarm at best across central banks and financial institutions. While there are some organizations that have been supportive of the cryptocurrency, many central banks remain cautious given the market's extreme volatility. Issues with tax evasion and capital controls also have led to some widespread concerns.

- **United States Federal Reserve:** U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell believes that technical issues remain and governance and risk management will be crucial before cryptocurrencies become part of mainstream society.
- **European Central Bank:** Former European Central Bank Vice President Vitor Constancio called Bitcoin a “tulip” in reference to the 17th-century bubble in the Netherlands and many other governors have expressed similar skepticism.
- **People's Bank of China:** The People's Bank of China believes that conditions are “ripe” to embrace cryptocurrencies, but the central bank wants full control, and authorities are cracking down on the cryptocurrency ecosystem in the country.
- **Bank of Japan:** The Bank of Japan doesn't see a market for cryptocurrencies.
- **Bank of England:** The Bank of England Governor Mark Carney called cryptocurrencies part of a “revolution” in finance, making the central bank one of the few governmental proponents of the technology.

The Venezuelan government, facing capital restrictions of its own, launched its own cryptocurrency in 2018—called the petro—that's allegedly backed by barrels of crude oil. While official sources indicate

that the country raised billions of dollars, many analysts are skeptical of these figures and the United States has outlawed U.S. citizens from purchasing the cryptocurrency. Cryptocurrencies have many benefits when it comes to frictionless transactions and inflation control, but many investors are adding these currencies as assets to their diversified portfolios. In particular, the noncorrelated nature of the market makes cryptocurrencies a potential hedge against risk, similar to precious metals like gold. Many cryptocurrency exchange-traded products (ETFs and ETNs) have arisen for this very reason.

On the other hand, some experts fear that a cryptocurrency crash could have an adverse impact on the wider market, similar to how mortgage-backed securities (Mortgage-backed securities (MBS) are investments that are secured by mortgages. They're a type of asset-backed security.) sparked a wider global financial crisis. It's worth noting, however, that the total market capitalization of all cryptocurrencies is less than that of many public companies, such as Microsoft Corp., which means that it may not have a meaningful impact on global markets. In the end, many investors view cryptocurrencies as either a vehicle for speculation or a hedge against inflation, but the size of the market doesn't represent a systemic risk, as of 2020.

## INDIA'S RESPONSE TO CRYPTOCURRENCY

India plans to introduce a new law banning trade in cryptocurrencies, placing it out of step with other Asian economies which have chosen to regulate the fledgling market. The bill is expected to be discussed shortly by the federal cabinet before it is sent to parliament. The federal government will encourage blockchain, the technology underlying cryptocurrencies, but is not keen on cryptocurrency trading. The Indian central

bank had in 2018 banned crypto transactions after a string of frauds in the months following PM Narendra Modi's sudden decision to ban 80% of the nation's currency.

The win in court prompted an almost 450% surge in trading in just two months since March, according to TechSci Research, reviving concerns as more Indians risk savings amid job losses and an economic slowdown worsened by the coronavirus pandemic. India's decision will be crucial as more Asian nation countries weigh pros and cons of virtual currencies. Rival China, which banned initial coin offerings and virtual currencies in 2017, recently allowed Bitcoin trading as virtual property, not as fiat money. It is also planning its own central bank digital currency. Both Singapore and South Korea regulate crypto trades.

India's federal government think tank, Niti Aayog, is exploring possible uses of blockchains -- structures that publicly store transactional records or blocks in several networked databases -- to manage land records, pharmaceutical drugs supply chain or records of educational certificates. And while it is planning a virtual currency, the government is averse to the idea of the cryptocurrency trades.

A renewed trading ban could affect more than 1.7 million Indians trading in digital assets and a rising number of companies setting up platforms for the trade, data shows. It will also affect companies like Singapore-based CoinSwitch, which added 200,000 users after starting India operations in June and was reporting volumes of about \$200-300 million, according to chief executive officer Ashish Singhal.

Instead of a ban, India needs a regulatory framework to protect uninformed retail consumers "to ensure adequate oversight of the government and the RBI over

cryptocurrency businesses," said Sanjay Khan, Partner, Khaitan & Co, a New Delhi-based lawyer who advises firms. "India can actually benefit from such a regulation

to attract cryptocurrency investors and businesses."

## **FUTURE OF CRYPTOCURRENCY**

Experts and Financial gurus say that Cryptocurrency is gonna be a great democratizing force for the world because it can level the playing field and allow anybody with cell phones to access the financial services and this is going to transform how we think about a real global economy. When it comes to Cryptocurrency people are focusing much on the problem sides of current currency or financial system, the current systems are very centralized, we have big banks and big governments and lots of middle men who make this incredibly inefficient. With the existing financial system you can go to a situation like Venezuela where the money is being printed and folks savings are basically being destroyed, the value of their wealth has been completely eroded. So many people take this idea for granted that if someone gives us money it will be in our bank account and it is not going to disappear or be taken away from us but there are billions of people in this world today who have cell phones but don't have access to any financial services. And when it comes to Cryptocurrency is that it let's anybody who has a smart phone and internet connection participate in the global economy. It takes the stability that we have then gives it to the rest of the world. If we have a single bank and that bank has all your money and then the bank fails we will be out of money, where as we have lots of different individuals nodes, hard drives and phones and so on have the money probably not all going to fail at the same time. Right now when it comes to Cryptocurrency



people think about investments, there is lots of speculation, lots of talk of prices and values. The shift to people actually using Cryptocurrency to buy goods and services and transact in the economy. It's not just send money back and forth that means employ each other or fund each other. A more global economy is important because there is talent everywhere but opportunity is not evenly distributed. In a world where this technology is fully adapted, it won't matter what country you're born in, you only need knowledge, smart phone and internet connection to contribute to the global economy. You can benefit from the world and world can benefit from you. Cryptocurrency gives a great vision to an economy with a global currency that we respect and responsible for, it opens up opportunity for everyone. If we do good work in this world and someone compensates us for it and we be able to keep the wealth that such a powerful idea that it actually encourages people to try to do more good things in the world. In the future Cryptocurrency going to be as impactful to humanity as the internet has been. Digital currency and block chain can bind us in the ways that we wouldn't be bound before.

### **CRYPTOCURRENCY IN 2021**

Bitcoin, as of December 2020, has experienced a steady rise to reach new all-time highs, breaking through \$20,000 per BTC, but it was not always so steady. To get a sense of just how troubling the market had been, just look to 2018: Heading into 2018, Bitcoin traded for close to \$13,500 after reaching an all-time high of \$19,783.06 in December of 2017. Ethereum (ETH), for example, fell from an early-year high of \$1,300 to just \$91 by December 2018 before rallying back to over \$450 by the end of 2020. Cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin and Ethereum have indeed proven resilient. Investor interest, both retail and institutional, in digital currencies has risen dramatically

in recent months. Many early investors who were eager to make gains from the "cryptocurrency craze" have since moved on to other ventures, leaving a smaller group of stalwart HODL-ers (to buy- and- hold strategies in the context of bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies.)behind. But there are still reasons to believe that the cryptocurrency industry has some fight in it left.

Investors are again asking: how high digital coins could fly? And Bitcoin indeed has risen back to all-time highs as of December 2020, reaching over \$23,625 and Ethereum to nearly \$700. Now, looking into the end of 2020 into 2021, the better question might be how this space will adapt in order to survive. There are several potential developments projected to take place in 2020 and 2021 that could significantly impact institutional participation in the digital currency market. If crypto is floated on the Nasdaq or a similar exchange, for example, it will immediately get a boost in reputation—and likely, value. Some analysts believe that the approval of a mainstream Bitcoin ETF could provide a significant jolt to the digital currency world, opening up the industry to investors eager to participate without some of the risks associated with buying and selling tokens directly. While it's difficult to say which, if any, digital currencies will see dramatic price gains in 2021, we can say with confidence that cryptocurrency is not going away anytime soon. Blockchain, the underlying technology behind many cryptocurrencies, has spread far outside of the digital currency industry and is likely to see new applications this year. Governments and regulators will continue to grapple with how to best facilitate and control digital tokens.

The heyday of cryptocurrencies may have come and gone, but it's also possible that the crypto market still has a lot of upsides to go.

# CLIMATE CHANGE

## CLIMATE CHANGES

You might know what weather is? Weather is the changes we see and feel outside from day to day. It might rain one day and be sunny the next. Sometimes it is cold. Sometimes it is hot. Weather also changes from place to place. People in one place might be wearing shorts and playing outside. At the same time, people far away might be shovelling snow. Climate is the usual weather of a place. Climate can be different for different seasons. A place might be mostly warm and dry in the summer. The same place may be cool and wet in the winter. Different places can have different climates. You might live where it snows all the time. There's also Earth's climate. Earth's climate is what you get when you combine all the climates around the world together. So, what is Climate change? Climate change is a change in the usual weather found in a place. This could be a change in how much rain a place usually gets in a year. Or it could be a change in a place's usual temperature for a month or season.

Climate change is also a change in Earth's climate. Climate takes hundreds or even millions of years to change. People who study Earth see that Earth's climate is getting warmer. Earth's temperature has gone up about one-degree Fahrenheit in the last 100 years. This may not seem like much. But small changes in Earth's temperature can have big effects. Some effects are already happening. Warming of Earth's climate has caused some snow and ice to melt. The warming also has caused oceans to rise. And it has changed the timing of when certain plants grow.

A recent NASA study has shaken the entire world with its space-based report that

this year, the average rise in the concentration of Carbon Dioxide present in the atmosphere has been stated as the highest compared to the past 20,000 years. With terrifying facts and figures like accelerating sea levels, melting icebergs and disappearing coastlines, it has become a primary subject of study for scientists and researchers over conserving the climate from its degradation. Leaders of all countries have already started taking a serious interest in this alarming subject.

## CAUSE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Human activity is the main cause of climate change. People burn fossil fuels and convert land from forests to agriculture. Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, people have burned more and more fossil fuels and changed vast areas of land from forests to farmland. Burning fossil fuels produces greenhouse gases. It is called a greenhouse gas because it produces a "greenhouse effect". Greenhouse gases like Carbon Dioxide, methane, nitrogen oxide etc are responsible for creating the greenhouse effect on the planet. The greenhouse effect makes the earth warmer. "Greenhouse effect is the process by which radiations from the sun are absorbed by the greenhouse gases and not reflected back into space. This insulates the surface of the earth and prevents it from freezing." With the constant rise of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, the heat trapped is no way escaping hence increasing the average temperature of the earth. Other gases, such as chlorofluorocarbons, trap the heat and is thousand times more lethal than carbon dioxide. CFCs (any of a class of compounds of carbon, hydrogen, chlorine, and fluorine, typically gases used in refrigerants and aerosol propellants. They are harmful to the ozone layer in the earth's

atmosphere owing to the release of chlorine atoms on exposure to ultraviolet radiation.) are released by the air conditioners, petrol driven cars etc and largely contributes to the ozone layer depletion. The world now demands more electricity with the exponential growth in Science and Technology. Coal, natural gas, and oil are the primary fossil fuels widely used to generate power and electricity which in turn releases harmful gases like Carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is the main cause of human-induced climate change. Deforestation is another major concern when it comes to global warming. Trees and plants play a vital role in maintaining the temperature balance and absorbing atmospheric Carbon dioxide.

## **EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

Effects of climate change include higher temperatures, increases in precipitation patterns, rising sea levels, weather-related natural disasters, increased drought and decreased food security. NASA reports recently predict the tremendous rise in the sea level estimated around 8 inches rise which is double the rate estimated last decade. With the rise in average temperature of the earth, there has been a massive shrinking of the snow cover especially in the northern hemisphere of the globe. Extreme climatic conditions have been reported across the world. This variation in the climate pattern is gradual but evident in many parts of the globe. Elongated days and warm winters are some of the unlikely changes occurring in the atmosphere.

With the constant increase of Carbon dioxide gas in the atmosphere, acidification of oceans has been reported. Seawater has now started absorbing this atmospheric carbon emitted by humans. China and the United States each produce about a third of the world's carbon emissions. As of 2018 the oil use continues to rise globally,

as it for five consecutive years. The 1997 Kyoto Protocol was an international agreement intended to cut greenhouse gas emissions, but many nations failed to hold to the protocol's standards.

Another important effect of Climate Change is the spread of a vector-borne disease called Lyme Disease. The black-legged tick (or deer tick, *Ixodes scapularis*, although ticks are commonly thought of as insects, they are actually arachnids like scorpions, spiders and mites. All members of this group have four pairs of legs as adults and have no antennae. Adult insects have three pairs of legs and one pair of antennae.) spreads the disease in the north-eastern, mid-Atlantic, and north-central United States. Ticks can attach to any part of the human body but are often found in hard-to-see areas such as the groin, armpits, and scalp. Most humans are infected through the bites of immature ticks called nymphs. Nymphs are tiny (less than 2 mm) and difficult to see; they feed during the spring and summer months. Adult ticks can also transmit Lyme disease bacteria, but they are much larger and are more likely to be discovered and removed before they have had time to transmit the bacteria. Studies provide evidence that climate change has contributed to the expanded range of ticks, increasing the potential risk of Lyme disease, such as in areas of Canada where the ticks were previously unable to survive. The life cycle and prevalence of deer ticks are strongly influenced by temperature. With the average temperature rising day by day, US now experiences warm winters where the ticks get highly activated.

## **INFLUENCE OF GRETA THUNBERG**

Greta Thunberg is the Swedish teenager who skipped school and inspired an

international movement to fight climate change. She has become a leading voice, inspiring millions to join protests around the world. She is a 17-year-old who grew up in Stockholm, in Sweden. Greta has Asperger's syndrome, a developmental disorder, and has described it as a gift and said being different is a "superpower". In May 2018, When Greta was 15, she won a climate change essay competition in a local newspaper. Three months later, in August, she started protesting in front of the Swedish parliament building, vowing to continue until the Swedish government met the carbon emissions target agreed by world leaders in Paris, in 2015.

She held a sign that read "School Strike for Climate" and began regularly missing lessons to go on strike on Fridays, urging students around the world to join her. Her protests went viral on social media and as support for her cause grew, other strikes started around the world, spreading with the hashtag #FridaysForFuture. By December 2018, more than 20,000 students around the world had joined her in countries including Australia, the UK, Belgium, the US and Japan. She joined strikes around Europe, choosing to travel by train to limit her impact on the environment.

In September 2019, she travelled to New York to address a UN climate conference. Greta refuses to fly because of its environmental impact, so she made her way there on a racing yacht, in a journey that lasted two weeks.

When she arrived, millions of people around the world took part in a climate strike, underlining the scale of her influence. Addressing the conference, she blasted politicians for relying on young people for answers to climate change.

She said: "How dare you? I shouldn't be up

here. I should be back in school on the other side of the ocean, yet you all come to us young people for hope. How dare you? You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words?"

Greta says big governments and businesses around the world are not moving quickly enough to cut carbon emissions and has attacked world leaders for failing young people. Initially, her protests focused on the Swedish government's climate targets, and she urged students around the world to make similar demands in their own countries. But as her fame has grown, she has called for governments around the world to do more to cut global emissions. She has spoken at international meetings, including the UN's 2019 climate change gathering in New York, and World Economic Forum in Davos. At the forum, she called for banks, firms and governments to stop investing and subsidising fossil fuels, such as oil, coal and gas. "Instead, they should invest their money in existing sustainable technologies, research and in restoring nature," she said.

Millions of students around the world have been inspired by her strikes, and Greta has received support from climate activists, scientists, world leaders and the Pope, who told her to "continue" her work. But her message has not been well received by everyone. After her UN appearance in September 2019, US then President Donald Trump appeared to mock her by saying "she must work on her anger management problem". Russian President Vladimir Putin and US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin joined hands with Mr Trump in holding Greta as an object of ridicule.

## **PARIS SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate



change. It was adopted by 197 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, (The Paris Climate Conference is officially known as the 21st Conference of the Parties) on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016. Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.

To achieve this long-term temperature goal, countries aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible to achieve a climate neutral world by mid-century. The Paris Agreement is a landmark in the multilateral climate change process because, for the first time, a binding agreement brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects. Implementation of the Paris Agreement requires economic and social transformation, based on the best available science. The Paris Agreement works on a 5- year cycle of increasingly ambitious climate action carried out by countries. By 2020, countries submit their plans for climate action known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). In their NDCs, countries communicate actions they will take to reduce their Greenhouse Gas emissions in order to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement. Countries also communicate in the NDCs actions they will take to build resilience to adapt to the impacts of rising temperatures.

The Paris Agreement reaffirms that developed countries should take the lead in providing financial assistance to countries that are less endowed and more vulnerable, while for the first time also encouraging voluntary contributions by other Parties. Climate finance is needed for mitigation, because large-scale investments are required to significantly reduce emissions. Climate finance is equally important for adaptation, as significant

financial resources are needed to adapt to the adverse effects and reduce the impacts of a changing climate. Paris Agreement establishes a technology framework to provide overarching guidance to the well-functioning Technology Mechanism. The mechanism is accelerating technology development and transfer through its policy and implementation arms. Not all developing countries have sufficient capacities to deal with many of the challenges brought by climate change. As a result, the Paris Agreement places great emphasis on climate-related capacity-building for developing countries and requests all developed countries to enhance support for capacity-building actions in developing countries.

## **PARIS SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE - SUCCESS & FAILURE**

In the closing day of the Climate Summit, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon shared to the media: "I have been attending many difficult multilateral negotiations, but by any standard, this negotiation is most complicated, most difficult, but most important for humanity." This statement reflects the weight of expectations placed on COP21. For many, the Paris Agreement was a monumental success, reflecting a universal, explicit acknowledgement among the nations of the world, that climate change is a serious issue requiring urgent action. However, while long on ambition, the agreement falls short on steps for concrete action.

Let's see where the agreement succeeds. This is the first time 197 countries made a fully revealed or expressed without vagueness, implication, or ambiguity acknowledgement that climate change is a serious threat. Every nation involved in the COP21 agreed to aim to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial

levels. Inclusion of a legally binding five-year review process of national emission plans, supported by a transparent monitoring system. Continued and sustained commitment to financing mitigation and adaptation initiatives in developing countries and countries hardest hit by climate change. The allocation of responsibility to developed nations to “take the lead” on reducing greenhouse gas emissions; Overall, the Paris Agreement provides the impetus for more ambitious, progressive change.

Politics and science are two very different beasts. Science, at its best, tries to extract some measure of truth about the world from a combination of observation and theory. Politics, even at its best, may be more concerned with perception than truth, using the former as a means to advance policy goals. So, now let's find out the failures or the short comings of COP21. Where the Agreement disappoints: - The Agreement does not include any reference to leaving fossil fuels in the ground, no specific date is set for a peak in global greenhouse gas emissions, The Agreement does not include emissions from global shipping and aviation, Vague references are made to technologies and actions which may pave the way for false solutions with potentially harmful social and ecological implications.

The Paris Agreement will take effect from 2020, with challenging times ahead, especially if planned and coordinated steps are not implemented immediately. Despite some of the notable gaps, the agreement presents a crucial step forward, providing a landing ground for countries like Ireland, to prepare for the shift towards achieving a low carbon society.

## INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

So many other International Efforts

are introduced and started for achieving tranquillity in Earth's climate.

Global seeds Vault: - Deep inside a mountain on a remote island in the Svalbard archipelago, halfway between mainland Norway and the North Pole, lies the Global Seed Vault. It is a long-term seed storage facility, built to stand the test of time and the challenge of natural or man-made disasters. The Seed Vault represents the world's largest collection of crop diversity. It has almost 1,35,000 seed deposits generated by scientists around the world. It is said to contain not just the seeds but also the deposits full of genetic code which the scientists can engineer to produce the yield required by the youth during any kind of global climatic despair.

Most of the countries, in a recent UN Convention, have agreed to extend their national parks in order to expand the area under protected land to nearly 17 percent. This would also help in the upliftment of endangered species such as panda, tiger, and elephants. Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) is an International network of environmental organizations in 74 countries which connects national members from each continent with the active participation of 5,000 local groups campaigning on urgent environmental issues and adopting sustainable practices. Friends of the Earth was founded in 1969 in San Francisco by David Brower, Donald Aitken and Gary Soucie. Tree people mission: Tree People is an environmental non-profit organization whose mission is to inspire, engage and support people to take personal responsibility for the urban environment, making it safe, healthy, fun and sustainable and to share our process as a model for the world. It is a project started in Los Angeles with the sole aim of caring about their neighbouring and taking good care of the plants, trees, and environment.

## STEPS TAKEN BY INDIAN GOVERNMENT

So many developed nations and countries failed to keep up with the pledges of Paris Climate summit, India has done and taken some steps towards achieving and hitting the targets of Paris Climate Summit. Indian Solar Mission takes a new target of installing approximately 20 Gigawatts of solar capacity by the end of 2020. This has been globally appreciated and idealized. India is counted active under Paris Agreement act especially in controlling the greenhouse issue and promises to adopt sustainable practices using non-fossil fuel power generation by 2030. India's first National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) was found on June 30, 2008, which has been successfully coming up with environmental projects and long-term policies in order to regain the spoilt global image of the country in terms of environmental law and order. In 2019 Diwali (Diwali is a festival of lights and one of the major festivals celebrated by Hindus, Jains and Sikhs.) was not as loud as it was before for Delhi NCR people. (National Capital Region). The government banned the sale of crackers and explosives in Delhi because of the dangerous air quality index reports. 2019 proved to be the best Diwali with the lowest pollution rate in Delhi in 3 years.

The Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change (Government of India) published a document named "India: National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)" which, aims at creating awareness among the representatives of the public, different agencies of the government, scientists, industry and the community as a whole, on the threat posed by climate change and the steps proposed at the level of India to counter these changes. The document describes India's willingness and desire, as a responsible member of the global community

to cooperate in all efforts at climate change mitigation and argues that future International Cooperation on Climate Change should aim at: (i) minimising the negative impacts of climate change through suitable adaptation methods; (ii) fairness and equity in action and measures; and (iii) common, but differentiated responsibilities in actions to be taken.

## WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

Change only happens when individuals take action. There's no other way, if it doesn't start with people. The goal is simple. Carbon dioxide is the climate's worst enemy. It's released when oil, coal, and other fossil fuels are burned for energy—the energy we use to power our homes, cars, and smartphones. By using less of it, we can curb our own contribution to climate change while also saving money. Here are some easy, effective ways each one of us can make a difference:

The first and foremost thing is to Speak up! that's the single biggest way you can make an impact on global climate change? "Talk to your friends and family, and make sure your representatives are making good decisions," By voicing your concerns—via social media or, better yet, directly to your officials—you send a message that you care about the warming world. Encourage government to enact new laws that limit carbon emissions and require polluters to pay for the emissions they produce. Power your home with renewable energy. Choose a utility company that generates at least half its power from wind or solar and has been certified by Green-e Energy, an organization that vets renewable energy options. If that isn't possible for you, take a look at your electric bill; many utilities now list other ways to support renewable sources on their monthly statements and

websites. "Building heating and cooling are among the biggest uses of energy," Indeed, heating and air-conditioning account for almost half of home energy use. You can make your space more energy efficient by sealing drafts and ensuring it's adequately insulated. Invest in energy-efficient appliances. Energy efficiency is the lowest-cost way to reduce emissions. When shopping for refrigerators, washing machines, and other appliances, look for the Energy Star label. It will tell you which are the most efficient. Reduce water waste. Saving water reduces carbon pollution, too. That's because it takes a lot of energy to pump, heat, and treat your water. So, take shorter showers, turn off the tap while brushing your teeth, eat the food you buy. If you're wasting less food, you're likely cutting down on energy consumption. And since livestock products are among the most resource-intensive to produce, eating meat-free meals can make a big difference, too. Buy better bulbs. LED lightbulbs use up to 80 percent less energy than conventional incandescent. They're also cheaper in the long run. Pull the plug, don't leave fully charged devices plugged into your home's outlets, unplug rarely used devices or plug them into power strips and timers, and adjust your computers and monitors to automatically power down to the lowest power mode when not in use. Drive a fuel-efficient vehicle. Avoid the usage of vehicles for short distance travel, walk or cycle for your small travel.

Sadly, over 3 billion rich people are mainly responsible for wrecking the future of planet earth where, the other half which is the poorer one, would be facing the bitter consequences of this catastrophic scenario. Hence, we need to be better stewards of the planet and take efforts in rebuilding what we have lost and building what we believe would be fruitful for future generations.

## SPACE FOR ROUGH NOTES



# UN & TERRORISM

## Introduction to UN

The nations of the world formed the League of Nations after World War I. This organization was a platform where Nations could peacefully talk about their problems. Some Nations, however, such as Germany, Italy and Japan, rejected the League and tried by war to fix their problems. The League failed, when members of the League of Nations did not want to go to war to support other members. Soon World War II started. The World War II Allies (France, United Kingdom, United States & Soviet Union) also referred to themselves as "the United Nations" united against the Axis Powers (Germany, Japan & Italy). After the war, a new organization for World Peace was founded by the winners. They agreed on the name "United Nations" on 25 April 1945 in San Francisco. "They signed the Charter of the United Nations in June, explaining how the organization will operate. On 24 October 1945, the UN was established and its first meeting was held in January 1946. The 24th of October has been named "United Nations Day" since 1947. The UN had 51 member states when it was founded; there are now 193.

Many Nations are members of the United Nations and send ambassadors to headquarters to meet and decide on global issues. The United Nations Headquarters is in New York City. The United Nations has its own flag, a post office and postage stamps of its own. At the United Nations, six official languages are used - Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. The European headquarters of the United Nations is situated in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland. The senior officer of the United Nations Secretariat is the Secretary-General. Present secretary General of UN is Antonio Guterres.

The Aims of the United Nations are:-To keep peace throughout the world,To develop friendly relations between nations,To work together to help people live better lives, to eliminate poverty, disease and illiteracy in the world, to stop environmental destruction and to encourage respect for each other's rights and freedoms & To be a centre for helping nations achieve these aims.

## HISTORY OF TERRORISM

Terrorism is the use of deliberate violence for political or religious reasons, in the broadest sense. In this respect, it is mainly used to refer to violence in peacetime or in the sense of war against non-combatants (mostly civilians and neutral military personnel). The words 'terror' and 'terrorism' emerged during the late 18th century French Revolution, but gained prominence in the 1970s during the conflicts between Northern Ireland, the Basque Country (Spain-ETA conflict) and Palestine. From the 1980s onwards, the increased use of suicide attacks was symbolised by the 11 September attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C. in the year 2001. With no universal agreement about it, there are various meanings of terrorism. Terrorism is a ridiculous term. "It is also used with a "morally wrong" connotation of something. To abuse or condemn opposing parties, governments and non-state groups use this phrase. Various government institutions have been accused of using terrorism to accomplish their goals. They include political parties, nationalist groups, religious groups, protestors and governing authorities of the right and left-wing.

The most influential ideology connected with terrorism was anarchism (belief

in the abolition of all government and the organization of society). Anarchist parties or individuals committed assassinations of a Russian tsar and a U.S President at the end of the 19th century. Terrorism tended to be associated with a wide number of anarchist, socialist, fascist and nationalist movements in the 20th century, many of them participating in struggles for freedom in the 'Third World.' (The term Third World was originally coined in times of the Cold War to distinguish those nations that are neither aligned with the West (NATO) nor with the East, the Communist bloc.) Civilization or cultural disputes, globalization, religion, the Israeli-Palestinian war, or the Russian invasion of Afghanistan are the most prominent causes or sources of terrorism.

## **MODERN TERRORISM**

The terrorist attack on the British Parliament (2017) has brought modern terrorism to the mainstream. Terrorist groups started to use the internet and communication lines to operate mass harm and to use sophisticated weapons.

Establishment of Internet really changed the face of terrorism. While the military of the modern age has intelligence & law enforcement agencies, satellites, drones, laser-guided missiles and a variety of other equipment in its arsenal, the terrorists of today have their sophisticated network of cyber criminals and media savvy ways to spread their agendas with easy access to the internet. For a terrorist, killing one person in front of a camera is better than killing a hundred in a hidden spot. Today's terrorist wants his audience. Entry to instant contact, mobility and destructive technologies ensures the world will continue to be threatened by terrorism.

After security forces around the

World strengthened their hold on the internet, contact lines, weapons acquisition, terrorist groups seem to have taken a step back and reverted to their old methodology. Attacks in Berlin, Fien and London were carried out by people who turned day to day using objects into possible weapons. Though Fien attacker used kitchen knife, London and Berlin attackers have converted vehicle into a killing weapon. These people have no relation with any parent organization, they have not been directed to their service in real time. They were all negatively inspired men who were washed away by the videos of extremism published by terrorist organizations. These so "lone wolves" have raised a new kind of threat to the world's security forces. It is hard to track them because they do not interact and remain as a sleeping cell that can be triggered when the time requires.

## **UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL**

One of the six major organs of the United Nations (UN) is the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), which is responsible for ensuring international peace and security, recommending the admission of new members of the United Nations to the General Assembly, and authorizing any amendments to the UN Charter. Its powers include the setting up of peacekeeping operations, the enactment of international sanctions, and the authorisation of military action. The UNSC is still the only UN body with the power to issue binding resolutions affecting Member States.

The Security Council, like the UN as a whole, was established after World War II to resolve the League of Nations' failures to preserve world peace. On 17 January 1946, it held its first session, approving military operations in the Suez Crisis, Cyprus and West New Guinea during the Korean War and the Congo Crisis and peacekeeping

missions. UN peacekeeping operations have significantly increased in size with the fall of the Soviet Union, with the Security Council approving large military and peacekeeping missions in Kuwait, Namibia, Cambodia, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The Security Council is composed of 15 members, five of whom are permanent. China, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and the United States of America. These were the great powers, or their constituent countries, that were the victors of the Second World War. Permanent members may veto (referring to the power of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council) any significant resolution, including those on the entry of new member states or nominations to the office of Secretary-General. The remaining ten members are chosen to serve for a term of two years on a regional basis. Among its members, the body's presidency rotates monthly. Usually, Security Council resolutions are implemented by UN peacekeepers, armed forces voluntarily supported by Member States, and financed separately from the main budget of the United Nations.

### **SECURITY COUNCIL COUNTER-TERRORISM COMMITTEE**

The Committee, comprising all 15 Security Council members, was tasked with monitoring implementation of resolution 1373 (2001), which requested countries to implement a number of measures intended to enhance their legal and institutional ability to counter terrorist activities at home, in their regions and around the world, including taking steps to:

- Criminalise the financing of terrorism.
- Freeze without delay any funds related to persons involved in acts of terrorism.
- Deny all forms of financial support for terrorist groups.

- Suppress the provision of safe haven, sustenance or support for terrorists.
- Share information with other governments on any groups practicing or planning terrorist acts.
- Cooperate with other governments in the investigation, detection, arrest, extradition and prosecution of those involved in such acts; and
- Criminalise active and passive assistance for terrorism in domestic law and bring violators to justice.

The resolution also calls on States to become parties, as soon as possible, to the relevant international counter-terrorism legal instruments. The resolution also called on States to continue international efforts to enhance dialogue and broaden understanding among civilizations. On 25 September 2020, Mr. Tarek Ladeb, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tunisia to the United Nations, was appointed Chair of the CTC (Counter Terrorism Committee)

### **UN GLOBAL COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY**

The United Nations Global Strategy for Counter-Terrorism is a unique global instrument designed to reinforce national, regional and international efforts to counter terrorism. By adopting it by agreement in 2006, all the Member States of the United Nations decided for the first time on a shared strategic and organizational approach to counter terrorism.

The policy not only sends a strong message that terrorism is intolerable in all its types and manifestations, but also agrees to take practical action to deter and fight terrorism, individually and collectively. These practical steps cover a wide range of initiatives, from improving state capacity to combating terrorist threats to better

integrating the counter-terrorism efforts of the UN framework.

In the form of a resolution and an annexed Plan of Action, the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Policy consists of 4 pillars, namely:

1. Addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism
2. Measures to prevent and combat terrorism
3. Measures to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in that regard
4. Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for the fight against terrorism

Every two years, the UN General Assembly reviews the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Policy and strategy, making it a living document in line with the counter-terrorism objectives of the Member States. The Sixth Review of the Strategy took place on 26 June 2018. The UN Secretary-General on the implementation of the Policy over the past two years was reviewed by the General Assembly. As it had done in the other five Resolutions on the strategy review. In June/July 2020, the next review will be performed.

## **INDIA & COUNTER-TERRORISM**

A number of the Indian government intelligence, military and police agencies are contributing to counter-terrorism efforts. These include state-run police, airport security forces and other high-profile targets and paramilitary forces that patrol borders and, give necessary assistance to police when required. In Kashmir there are 165,000 well-built and particularly active Central Reserve Police Force. The army is generally a last step in counter-terrorism operations, but they play a more consistent

role in Jammu and Kashmir.

India's nearest and similar structural equivalent to the US Homeland Security Department is the Ministry of Home Affairs, which is responsible for the monitoring of national police and paramilitaries and domestic intelligence operations. The Research & Analysis Wing (RAW) is the external intelligence office and gathers intelligence inside India from the Intelligence Bureau (IB), a division of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Intelligent data from RAW and IB as well as from a handful of military intelligence agencies, which typically include operational information obtained when conducting counter-terrorist operations, are reviewed by a Joint Intelligence Committee. The IB supervises a CIA-like intergovernmental counter-terrorism center. The Ministry of External Affairs supervises its own counter-terrorism agency, just like the U.S State Department monitoring the functions of diplomatic counter-terrorism, for example briefing other nations on Pakistan's suspected sponsorship of terrorism in India.

## **VICTIMS OF TERRORISM**

The General Assembly has scheduled 21 August in Resolution 72/165 (2017) as the International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to Terrorism Victims. The main aim of this day is to remember and help victims of terrorism and to encourage and protect the full value of their rights and fundamental constitutional rights. By declaration of an International victims' day, the General Assembly restated the value for preventing and fighting terrorism and for promoting and safeguarding human rights and the rule of law at national level.

The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, formally adopted in Resolution on 8 September 2006 that the marginalization



of victims is a foundation for spreading terrorism, and the most successful tool for counter-terrorism are the steps that respect human dignity and uphold the rule of law. Victims sometimes feel ignored and disregarded once the early part of a terrorist attack disappears, which may have major implications. Few Member States have the ability or resources to address the short- and long-term needs that victims need for a complete recovery, healing and rehabilitation in society. It is only with multi-dimensional help, including physical, psychological, social and financial care that victims can recover and cope with their trauma to heal and live with dignity.

The primary responsibility to support victims of terrorism and uphold their rights rests with Member States. The United Nations has an important role in supporting Member States to implement Pillar I and IV of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy through standing in solidarity and providing support to victims, capacity building assistance, establishing networks of and offering support to civil society organizations and encouraging Member States to promote, protect and respect the rights of victims.

## **SOLUTION TO TERRORISM**

Most nations are still terrorist victims. We all suffer because we don't live up to core principles. Self-awareness and a purpose of life are the long-term solution to Terrorism. Many developed countries speak about peace and do weapons trading for financial gain. The sale of guns and

explosives sells violence and someday, if anything goes against their interests, the same people to whom developing countries sell ammunition will go down the road of violence. The most prominent terrorist groups are example of this.

Whenever there is division of people in a country in the name of colour, creed, religion, caste, community, language and region there the scope of terrorism is huge. Political parties and Nations divide people to have and execute more power but this intolerable act is paying its price by giving roots to terrorism, the only solution to this is to increase the sense of unity among the people of the Country. Another key factor in terrorism is poverty, the majority of people engaging in terrorist activity are misguided young people. They are selling their life for small amount of money due to poverty, If we can regulate poverty from our World, studies say that we can control 30% of terrorism. People's reactive mode often activates a terrorist mind. A long-term solution can never be offered by emotional judgment. We must be more observant than reactive if we need to take a better decision.

Fighting is not a solution, the long-term solution to terrorism will never be fighting. Knowledge and awareness among all people are the long-term answer to terrorism. Let's recognize the root cause and let's get rid of terrorism from its root level. If we are only cutting the branches of Terrorism tree, it will grow with other strong branches.

# MODEL QUESTION PAPER-MCQ





## MODEL QUESTION PAPER – DECEMBER 2021

Q1. With reference to the DNA vaccines often seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. It involves the direct introduction into appropriate tissues of a plasmid containing the DNA sequence encoding the antigen(s) against which an immune response is sought

2. This approach offers a number of potential advantages over traditional approaches, including the stimulation of both B- and T-cell responses.

Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q2. Consider the following statements regarding with the RT-PCR.

1. It is considered the gold standard for diagnosing viral diseases like COVID-19 and Ebola.

2. It is a lab test that amplifies a tiny amount of genetic material, that is RNA, from a pathogen such as a virus.

3. It's accuracy is low as compare to the antigen test.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

Q3. With reference to the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. It is a non-statutory body functions under the Department of Telecommunications, Govt. of India

2. One of the main objectives of TRAI is to provide a fair and transparent policy environment which promotes a level playing

field and facilitates fair competition.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q4. Consider the following.

1. Higher multi-Gbps peak data speeds

2. Ultra low latency

3. More reliability

4. Massive network capacity

Which among the above can be consider as the advantage of the 5G network?

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- b) 2, 3 and 4 only
- c) 1, 3 and 4 only
- d) All the above

Q5. With reference to the 'National Digital Communications Policy-2018' often seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. The policy target to provide 1 Gbps connectivity to all Gram Panchayats by 2020 and 10 Gbps by 2022.

2. A major policy objective is to ensure connectivity to all uncovered areas and attract investments of \$100 billion in the Digital Communications Sector.

Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below.

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q6. Consider the following statements regarding with Dhawan-1 cryogenic rocket often seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. The company will use the engine as the upper stage of its Vikram-II Launch vehicle.

2. The engine has been completely 3D printed and made in India.



3. The engine was developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).  
Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below.

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

Q7. 'Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite' (TESS) often seen in news belongs to

- a) Indian Space Research Organisation
- b) National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- c) Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency
- d) European Space Agency

Q8. With reference to the 'cryptocurrency' frequently seen in news, consider the following statements.

- 1. It is a medium of exchange, such as the rupee or the US dollar, but is digital in format and uses encryption techniques.
- 2. Bitcoin is considered to be the world's best known cryptocurrency and is the largest in the world according to market capitalisation

Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q9. 'PARKER SOLAR PROBE' often seen in news belongs to

- a) Indian Space Research Organisation
- b) National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- c) Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency
- d) European Space Agency

Q10. Consider the following statements regarding with the 'tokenisation' often seen in news.

- 1. Tokenisation replace card details with an

alternative code called a 'token'.

2. Tokenisation reduces the chances of fraud arising from sharing card details.

3. Tokens are used to perform contactless card transactions at point-of-sale (PoS) terminals and QR code payments.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

Q11. Consider the following statements regarding with the 'Preamble' of the Indian constitution.

1. The Preamble is based on the Objective Resolution moved by Jawaharlal Nehru in the Constituent Assembly.

2. The Preamble of the Indian constitution not been amended so far.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q12. With reference to the 'citizenship', consider the following statements.

1. It signifies the relationship between individual and state.

2. The Parliament of India enjoy exclusive jurisdiction to enact laws regarding the citizenship.

3. It begins and ends with state and law, and is thus about the state, not people.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

Q13. With reference to the Citizenship, consider the following statements.

1. Citizenship obtained by fraud.
2. Displayed disloyalty to the Constitution of India.
3. Unlawful trading or communication with the enemy during a war.
4. Imprisoned in any country for two years for grave offences, within five years after registration or naturalisation.

Which among the above can be considered as the reason for the compulsory termination of Indian citizenship by the Central government?

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- b) 2, 3 and 4 only
- c) 1, 3 and 4 only
- d) All the above

Q14. With reference to the 'Basic Structure Doctrine' seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. The Supreme Court of India listed a few principles like federalism, secularism, democracy as being part of basic structure, but have not defined the 'Basic Structure Doctrine' via any verdict.
2. The 'Basic Structure Doctrine' is a part of the text of the Indian Constitution.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are NOT correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q15. With reference to the 'Contempt of Court', seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. The the 'Contempt of Court' was defined in the Indian constitution.
2. Civil contempt means wilful disobedience of any judgment, decree, direction, order, writ or other process of a court, or wilful breach of an undertaking given to a court.
3. Contempt of court may be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may

extend to six months, or with fine which may extend to two thousand rupees, or with both.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

Q16. Consider the following statements regarding with the Dam Safety Act, 2019.

1. The Dam Safety Act, 2019 aims to "provide for surveillance, inspection, operation and maintenance of the specified dam for prevention of dam failure-related disasters.
2. Under the Act, a State Dam Safety Organisation will be constituted, responsible for the dam safety.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q17. Consider the following statements regarding with Surrogacy in India.

1. Surrogacy procedures are open to married couples, live-in partners, single women, and also foreigners.
2. National Surrogacy Board will involved in policymaking, and act as a supervisory body, and State Boards that will act as executive bodies.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q18. With reference to the Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) often seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART)

includes all fertility treatments in which either eggs or embryos are handled.

2. Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) procedures involve surgically removing eggs from a woman's ovaries, combining them with sperm in the laboratory, and returning them to the woman's body or donating them to another woman.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q19. With reference to the Rajya Sabha (Council of States), consider the following statements.

1. Article 80 of the Constitution lays down the maximum strength of Rajya Sabha as 250.
2. All members of the Rajya Sabha is elected.
3. The Fourth Schedule to the Constitution provides for allocation of seats to the States and Union Territories in Rajya Sabha.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

Q20. With reference to the 'Electoral Bonds', Consider the following statements.

1. The 'Electoral Bonds' are interest-free bearer instruments used to donate money anonymously to political parties.
2. The 'Electoral Bonds' are sold in multiples of Rs 1,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 1 lakh, Rs 10 lakh, and Rs 1 crore, and the State Bank of India (SBI) is the only bank authorised to sell them.

Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only

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

Q21. Consider the following statements with reference to the 'anti-defection law' often seen in news.

1. The anti-defection law punish individual MPs/MLAs for leaving one party for another.
2. The Parliament of India added the Nineth Schedule in 1985 to deal with anti-defection of members of the leagislature, both at Cnetre and State level.
3. The Presiding Officers of the House serve as the adjudicatory authority under the 'anti-defection law'.

Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

Q22. Consider the following countries.

1. Brunei
2. China
3. Cambodia
4. Indonesia

Which among the above countries are the part of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)?

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- b) 2, 3 and 4 only
- c) 1, 3 and 4 only
- d) All the above

Q23. With reference to the 'Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)', consider the following statements.

1. It is an agreement between Syria and the P5+1 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States)
2. The Plan of Action is with regard to the conclusion of the Civil War in Syria.

Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only

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

Q24. With reference to the 'Bank for International Settlements' seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. The 'Bank for International Settlements' support initiatives of the Central Banks in pursuit of monetary and financial stability through international cooperation, and to act as a banker for Central Banks.
2. India is not a member of the 'Bank for International Settlements'.

Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below.

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q25. With reference to the India - Sri Lanka relations, consider the following statements.

1. There exist a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between India and Sri Lanka.
2. Sri Lanka is the second largest trading partner of India within the SAARC.
3. Buddhism is a strong pillar of India-Sri Lanka relations.

Select the NOT correct statement(s) from the code given below

- a) 2 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

Q26. With reference to the 'Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights', consider the following statements.

1. The UN General Assembly constituted the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
2. The 'Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' is one of the specialised agencies of the United Nations Organisation (UNO).

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q27. Which among the following countries surrounds the inland sea, 'Sea of Azov'?

- a) Ukraine and Belarus
- b) Ukraine and Russia
- c) Georgia and Russia
- d) None of the above

Q28. Consider the following countries.

1. Albania
2. Iceland
3. Spain
4. Russia

Which among the above countries are the part of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)?

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- b) 2, 3 and 4 only
- c) 1, 3 and 4 only
- d) All the above

Q29. With reference to the India- UAE bilateral trade, consider the following statements.

1. UAE is the third-largest trading partner of India.
  2. UAE is India's second-largest export destination after the United States of America.
- Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below.
- a) 1 only
  - b) 2 only
  - c) Both 1 and 2
  - d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q30. With reference to the 'S-400 Triumph Air Defence System' often seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. The 'S-400 Triumph Air Defence System' has the capability to protect against almost all sorts of aerial attacks, including drones,



missiles, rockets and even fighter jets.

2. The 'S-400 Triumph Air Defence System' has long-range surveillance radars that sends information to the command vehicle. Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below.

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q31. With reference to the 'International Telecommunication Union (ITU)', which among the following statement is NOT true?

- a) The 'International Telecommunication Union (ITU)' is committed towards Universal connectivity via telephony services.
- b) The 'International Telecommunication Union (ITU)' is a specialised agency of the United Nations.
- c) The membership of the The 'International Telecommunication Union (ITU)' is evolving in line with major trends in the industry.
- d) None of the above

Q32. With reference to the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958, consider the following statements.

- 1. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 empowers Armed Forces to maintain public order in 'Disturbed Areas'.
- 2. The Centre can exclusively declare the whole or part of the State or Union Territory as a 'Disturbed Area'.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q33. India holds Joint Military Exercise EKV-VERIN with

- a) Maldives
- b) Malaysia
- c) Thailand

d) Combodia

Q34. Consider the following statements regarding with the Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) transponders fitted on merchant ships, air and traffic management system.

1. International Air Transport Association (IATA) publishes the guidelines for onboard operational use of the ship borne Automatic Identification Systems (AIS).

2. It is mainly intended to enhance the safety of life at sea (SOLAS) through safe navigation in the marine environment.

Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q35. With reference to the 'zero-click attacks' often seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. Helps spyware like Pegasus gain control over a device without human interaction or human error.

2. Exploit software which receive data even before it can determine whether what is coming in is trustworthy or not, like an email client.

3. iOS based Devices are free from 'zero-click attacks'.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

Q36. Consider the following places.

- 1. Kedarnath
- 2. Badrinath
- 3. Yamunothri
- 4. Gangothri

Which among the above places are the part of Char Dham Pariyojana?

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- b) 2, 3 and 4 only
- c) 1, 3 and 4 only
- d) All the above

Q37. Consider the following:

1. Durga Puja, Kolkata
2. Traditional brass and copper utensil-making among the Thatheras of Jandi-  
la Guru, Punjab
3. Kathakali, Kerala

Which among the above are included in the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

Q38. With reference to the 'Namda Project' often seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. Industry-based training programme with beneficiaries involved in Namda Crafts Production
2. The Union Ministry of Minority affairs serve as the nodal agency for the implementation of the scheme

Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below.

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q39. Consider the following statements regarding with the 'Paika Rebellion' often seen in news.

1. Paiks were peasant militias of the Gajapati rulers of Odisha.
2. The land revenue policy introduced by the British served as a reason for the rebellion.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only

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

Q40. The cyclonic wind system are known by different names around the world. Match the following appropriately:

1. Hurricanes : Atlantic Ocean and the eastern north Pacific Ocean.
2. Typhoons : Western Pacific Ocean.
3. Tropical cyclones : south Pacific Ocean and Indian Ocean.

Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below.

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

Q41. With reference to the rainfall in India, consider the following statements.

1. India receives about 75 % of the annual rainfall from the Southwest Monsoon between June and September.
2. The Northeast Monsoon between October to December is a comparatively small-scale monsoon, which is confined to the Southern peninsula.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q42. With reference to the Smart Cities Mission often seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. The Mission aims to drive economic growth and improve quality of life through comprehensive work on social, economic, physical and institutional pillars of the city.
2. The NITI Ayog serves as the Nodal Implementing Entity (NIE) of the Smart Cities Mission.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only

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

Q43. Which among the following statement is NOT correct regarding with the 'Pacific Ring of Fire'?

- a) The 'Pacific Ring of Fire' are vulnerable to Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.
- b) The 'Pacific Ring of Fire' is a seismically and volcanically active zone in the world.
- c) The 'Pacific Ring of Fire' comprise of convergent plate boundaries only.
- d) None of the above.

Q44. With reference to the heat waves often seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. Heat waves are based on the temperature thresholds over a region in terms of actual temperature or its departure from normal.
2. Heat wave is considered if maximum temperature of a station reaches at least 40°C or more for Plains and Hilly regions.
3. It is occurring mainly during March to June and in some rare cases even in July.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

Q45. Chocolate-bordered Flitter/ Zographetus dzonguensis, recently seen in news is

- a) Bird
- b) Butterfly
- c) Medicinal Plant
- d) Green Algae

Q46. With reference to the 'ACROSS scheme' recently seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. The Union Ministry of Science and Technology (S&T) serve as the nodal agency for the

implementation of the scheme .

2. The scheme provide improved weather, climate, ocean forecast and services, and other hazard related services.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q47. With reference to the 'Invasive alien species' often seen in news, consider the following statements.

1. The introduction of species outside their natural past or present environment threatens biological diversity.
2. Such species occur in all taxonomic groups, including animals, plants, fungi and microorganisms, and can affect all types of ecosystems.

Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below.

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q48. The species, Parthenium hysterophorus (cotton grass) and Lantana camara (Lantana) often seen in news are

- a) Keystone species.
- b) Flagship species.
- c) Invasive alien species.
- d) Endangered species.

Q49. With reference to the 'Monetary Policy Framework' in India, consider the following statements.

1. The framework aims at setting the policy (repo) rate based on an assessment of the current and evolving macroeconomic situation.
2. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) formulates the Monetary Policy Framework.

Which among the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

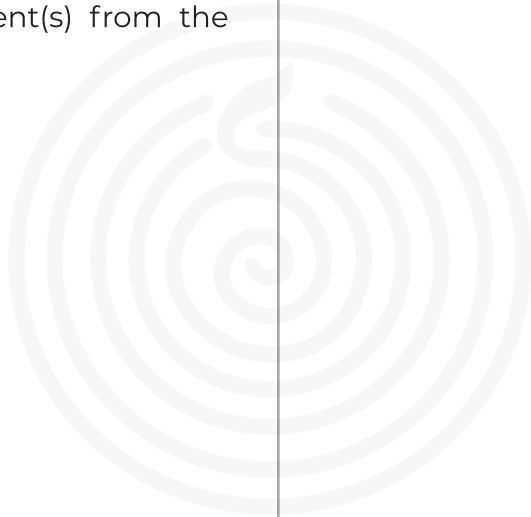
Q50. With reference to the 'Consumer Price Index' in India, consider the following statements.

1. The Office of the Economic Adviser, Govt. of India publishes 'Consumer Price Index'.
2. The 'Consumer Price Index' tracks the changes in retail prices of goods and services included in the CPI basket.
3. The Centre revise wages / salaries and biannual revision Dearness Allowance (DA) of the Central Government employees based on the 'Consumer Price Index'.


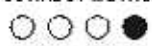

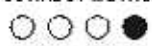

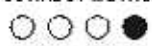
Select the correct statement(s) from the code given below.

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

**SPACE FOR ROUGH NOTES**





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<b>Candidate Sign</b>	<p><b>INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING THE SHEET</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This sheet should not be folded or crushed.</li> <li>2. Use only blue/black ball point pen to fill the circles.</li> <li>3. Use of pencils is strictly prohibited.</li> <li>4. Circles should be darkened completely and properly.</li> <li>5. Cutting and erasing on this sheet is not allowed.</li> <li>6. Do not use any stray marks on the sheet.</li> <li>7. Do not use marker or white fluid to hide the mark.</li> </ol> <p><b>WRONG METHODS</b>      <b>CORRECT METHOD</b></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div>																																																																																																																																																
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**CURRENT  
AFFAIRS**  
**DECEMBER 2021**

**VEDHIK IAS ACADEMY**

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Registered Office : Mercy Estate 4<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
Ravipuram, Pin - 682 015



**VEDHIK**  
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*The New Learning Mantra*