

# PANORAMA

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## CURRENT EVENT ANALYSIS

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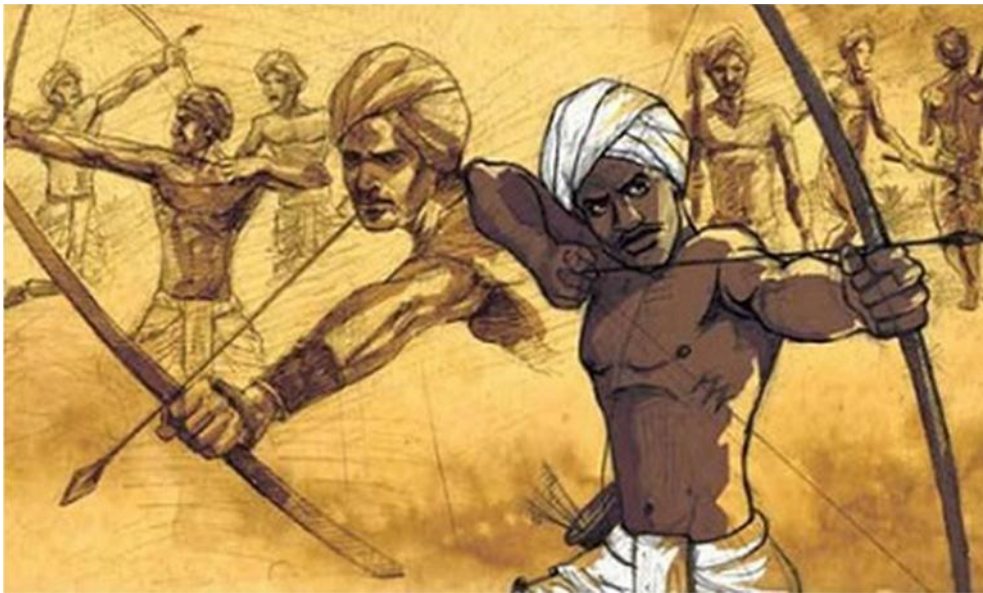
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## GS I - HISTORY & CULTURE

### Tribal Revolts

- ✓ President Murmu invoked following four tribal revolts in her inaugural speech



#### Santhal Revolution:

In 1832, the East India Company created **Damin-i-koh region** in the forested belt of Rajmahal hills, Jharkhand and invited the Santhals to settle there.

Over the time, the Santhals found that they were losing the land they had worked on and brought under cultivation because of oppressive provisions of **Permanent Settlement Act of 1793**.

Heavy taxes were levied by Company government and money had to be borrowed to pay off debts, so money lenders started exploiting Santhal tribals with very high interest rates, their lands were confiscated because of their inability to pay the debt.

In 1855, over 10,000 Santhals were mobilised by their leaders, **Kanho Murmu, Chand Murmu, Bhairab Murmu and Sidho Murmu**, to revolt against the East India Company over oppression by revenue officials, zamindars, and corrupt moneylenders.

The revolt was suppressed heavy handedly by the British and Santhal Pargana was created with special laws.

#### Paika Rebellion:

In several recent descriptions, the 1817 Paika Rebellion in Odisha's Khurda is referred to as the **"original" first war of Indian Independence**.

The Paiks were the traditional landed militia and enjoyed rent free land tenures for their military service and policing functions on a hereditary basis.

Conquest of Odisha by the British in 1803 and dethronement of Raja of Kurda had greatly reduced the prestige and powers of the Paiks.

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Extortionist land revenue policy of the Company, rise in prices of salt, abolition of cowrie currency and the requirement of payment of taxes in silver caused resentment among zamindars, peasants and common masses.

The Paikas set fire to government buildings in Banapur, killed policemen, looted the treasury, and killed several British officials.

Paikas fought bloody battles at several places, but the colonial army gradually crushed the revolt.

## Kol Revolt:

The Kols, tribal people from the Chhota Nagpur area, rose in revolt against the British in 1831.

The trigger here too was gradual takeover of tribal land and property by non-tribal settlers who were aided by new land laws.

The simmering discontent over economic exploitation of the original inhabitants, led to an uprising led by **Buddhu Bhagat, Joa Bhagat and Madara Mahato** among others.

The Kols were joined by other tribes like the **Hos, Mundas and Oraons**.

The tribals fought with traditional weapons taking the battle to colonial forces who finally overpowered them with modern weaponry.

The uprising, which spread to areas like Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Palamau, and Manbhum and continued for almost two years before being snuffed out, mainly targeted colonial officials and private money-lenders.

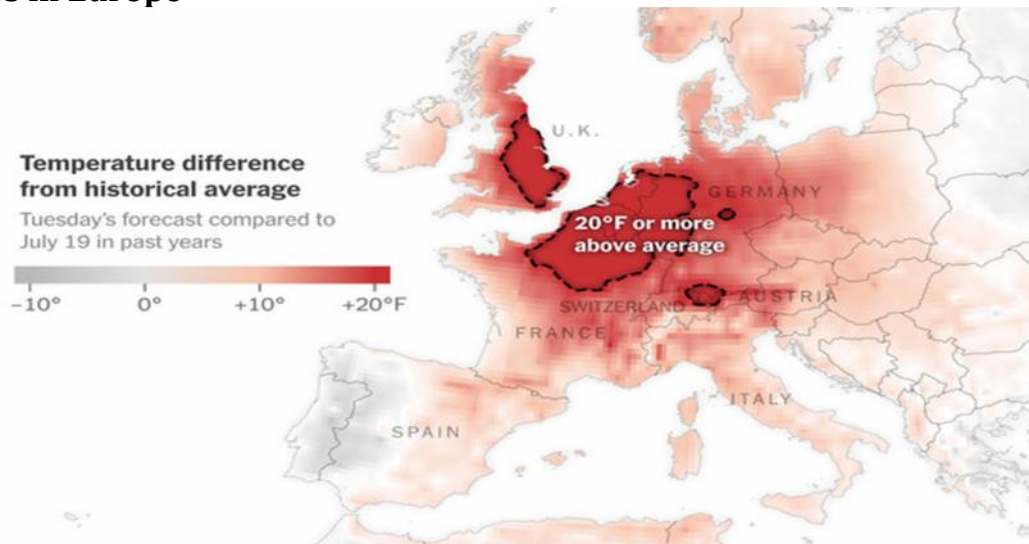
## Bhil Uprising:

After the British intruded into the **Bhil territory in Maharashtra's Khandesh region**, the tribals pushed back fearing exploitation under the new regime in 1818.

The revolt was led by their leader, Sewaram and was brutally crushed using the British military might.

## GS I - GEOGRAPHY

### Heatwaves in Europe



The magnitude of the heatwave in Europe can be discerned from the fact that for the first time temperature above 40°C was recorded in Britain and France had recorded temperatures in excess of 45°C - this too an all-time high for that country.

#### What is a heat wave?

Qualitatively, heat wave is a condition of air temperature which becomes fatal to human body when exposed.

Quantitatively, it is defined based on the temperature thresholds over a region in terms of actual temperature or its departure from normal.

It is a type of extreme weather event.

It is occurring mainly during March to June and in some rare cases even in July. The peak month of the heat wave over India is May.

#### What are extreme weather events?

Extreme weather events include unexpected, unusual, severe, or unseasonal weather events such as heat waves, cold waves and tropical cyclones.

Climate change is said to have increased the frequency of such extreme weather events.

The effects of extreme weather events are increasing economic costs for dealing with such events, loss of human lives, droughts, floods, landslides and changes in ecosystems.

#### Criterion for declaring a heat wave by IMD

Heat wave is considered if maximum temperature of a weather station reaches:

- ✓ at least 40°C or more for Plains
- ✓ at least 30°C or more for Hilly regions
- ✓ for coastal areas actual maximum temperature is 37°C or more and maximum temperature departure is 4.5°C or more from normal

#### Nature of heatwaves:

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Peak temperatures are reached only for a small period of time.

There is a fall in temperature shortly afterwards.

### Why severe heat waves in recent years?

#### Global level factors:

Climate change and global warming has been driving the temperatures upwards which are evident across the world.

Considering average annual temperature, last eight years have been the hottest ever recorded.

Most regions of the world have been reporting higher-than-usual temperatures year after year.

#### Local factors:

These kinds of high temperatures are usually a result of some unusual combinations of local, short-term, warming phenomena which accentuate the already high baselines by climate change.

A low pressure system over the European region has been found to be attracting hot air from northern Africa.

An unusual warming in the Arctic Ocean is also said to be playing a role.

#### Impacts in Europe:

- ✓ Heatstroke which cause deaths
- ✓ Wildfires which cause loss of life and property
- ✓ Disruption of life and economic activity

## GS I - SOCIAL ISSUES, SOCIAL JUSTICE

### UN's World Population Prospects 2022

#### Important findings of the report:

1. India is projected to surpass China as the world's most populous country in 2023.
2. World population will reach 8 billion this year.
3. The world's population continues to grow, but the pace of growth is slowing down. In 2020, the global growth rate fell under 1% per year for the first time since 1950.
4. Rates of population growth vary significantly across countries and regions. More than half of the projected increase in global population up to 2050 will be concentrated in just eight countries; the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and the United Republic of Tanzania.
5. The population of older persons is increasing both in numbers and as a share of the total. The share of the global population aged 65 years or above is projected to rise from 10% in 2022 to 16% in 2050.

Report highlights that countries with ageing populations should take steps to adapt public programmes like improving the sustainability of social security and pension systems and by establishing universal healthcare and long-term care systems.

6. A sustained drop in fertility has led to an increased concentration of the population at working ages (between 25 and 64 years) i.e. Demographic Bulge, creating an opportunity for accelerated economic growth per capita.

To maximize the potential benefits of a favourable age distribution, countries need to invest in the development of their human capital by ensuring access to health care and quality education at all ages and by promoting opportunities for productive employment and decent work.

7. Over the next few decades, international migration will be the sole driver of population growth in high-income countries.

#### Demographic Dividend:

According to UNFPA, Demographic Dividend is an economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population age structure, mainly when the share of the working age population (15 to 64) is larger than the non-working age share of the population.

India has 62.5% of its population in the age group of 15-59 years which will be at the peak around 2036 when it will reach approximately 65%.

With the passage of time, the share of the older population rises and that of the working age population begins to fall and hence the dividend is available for a specific period of time, called as **'the window of demographic opportunity'**.

Realisation of the benefits of potential demographic dividend is not automatic and presents many challenges. Without proper policies, the increase in the working-age population may lead to rising unemployment, fueling economic and social risks, can lead to **demographic disaster**.



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Countries like Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, and China have successfully reaped the Demographic Dividend, and achieved incredible economic growth by adopting forward-looking policies and programmes to empower the youth in terms of their education, skills and health choices.

### Advantages of Demographic Dividend

- ✓ It brings better economic growth due to higher working age population and lower dependent population. This is the result of increased labour force, rise in women's workforce, increase in savings rate and rise of aspirational class.
- ✓ Demographic dividend has historically contributed up to 15 % of the overall growth in advanced economies such as Japan.
- ✓ It results into rapid industrialisation and urbanisation because of higher number of employment seeking population.

### Challenges of reaping the Demographic Dividend:

- ✓ Issues of skill development
- ✓ Lack of enough employment opportunities
  - Majority jobs are in informal sector which has low productivity, more than 45% of labour force engaged in agriculture.
  - Service sector has high productivity but employment generation potential is less and requires specific skills.
  - Industrial sectors lacks growth and not able to create enough employment opportunities.
- ✓ Poor health outcomes i.e. High IMR, high MMR, Malnutrition, lack of access to sanitation, prevalence of communicable diseases.
- ✓ Inadequate capacity of public health care infrastructure.
- ✓ Infrastructure and quality issues with public education
- ✓ Women constitute near about half of India's demographic dividend, but their labour force participation is just 20%, employed mostly in unorganised sector.

### Solutions:

Human resource capabilities development is precondition for harnessing demographic dividend.

1. Improving public health care infrastructure and increasing capacity.
1. Improving public education infrastructure.
2. Investment in skill development (Skill India, PMKVY, Strengthening existing ITIs)
3. Structural changes needed in economy, India need to develop its manufacturing sector as it is labour intensive to remove extra labour force from low productivity agriculture.
4. Increasing productivity of agriculture by investing in agriculture related infrastructure like micro irrigation facilities, cold storage facilities, food processing units, logistics facilities etc.
5. Need for policy coordination between States on various emerging population issues such as migration, ageing, skilling, female workforce participation and urbanisation.

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6. Need special efforts to increase women's effective participation in labour force by focusing on some key areas like improving their employability, providing affordable child care facilities, flexible employment opportunities, by bridging gender pay gap, improving working conditions etc.

If today's Demographic dividend is not properly harnessed it will be tomorrow's burden. In future there will be high dependency ratio and working population will be less. If India failed to create enough high productivity jobs, there will be a big challenge of social security infrastructure for India in near future. Unless they are not incorporated into gainful employment; we will not be able to reap the hoped demographic dividend.

Fine-tuning the planning and implementation of schemes and programmes by factoring in population dynamics is likely to yield greater socio-economic impact and larger benefits for people.

## Maternal Health

A recent study published in the PLOS Global Public Health, suggests 70% of districts in India have reported MMR above 70 deaths, a target under the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

- ✓ SDGs are blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. SDGs are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that:



### Maternal Mortality Rate:

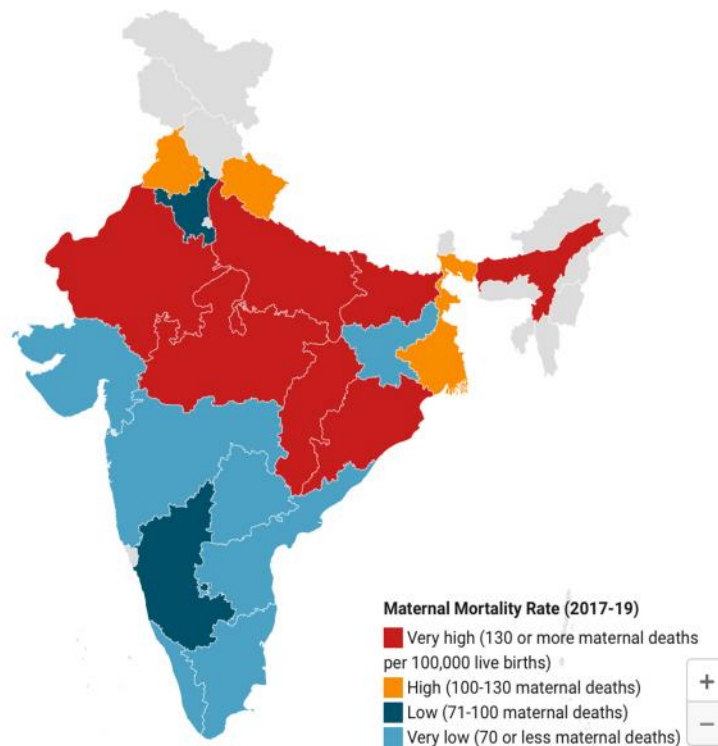
MMR means the number of mothers who die from complications in pregnancy for every one lakh live births.

High MMR Implies:

- ✓ Poor state of health infrastructure
- ✓ Women's inability to access health care/given secondary treatment related to health care
- ✓ Lack of access to quality contraceptive options.
- ✓ Poor state of nutritional indicators for women's nutrition.

## Seven states have very high maternal mortality

India's maternal mortality ratio (MMR) has improved from 113 in 2016-18 to 103 in 2017-19. The ratio has worsened in West Bengal, Haryana, Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh.



Source: Special Bulletin on MMR released by Registrar General of India.

### SDG 3.1:

By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100 000 live births

### Solutions:

- ✓ Promotion of institutional deliveries through **Janani Suraksha Yojana**.
- ✓ Operationalization of sub-centres, Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres and District Hospitals for providing 24x7 basic and comprehensive obstetric care services.
- ✓ **Name Based Web enabled Tracking of Pregnant Women** to ensure antenatal, intranatal and postnatal care, to monitor service delivery for mothers.
- ✓ Engagement of more than 8.9 lakhs **Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs)** to generate demand and facilitate accessing of health care services by the community.
- ✓ **Village Health and Nutrition Days** in rural areas as an outreach activity, for provision of maternal and child health services.
- ✓ **Adolescent Reproductive Sexual Health Programme (ARSH)** – Especially for adolescents to have better access to family planning, prevention of sexually transmitted Infections, Provision of counselling and peer education.
- ✓ **Health and nutrition education** to promote dietary diversification, inclusion of iron and foliate rich food as well as food items that promote iron absorption.

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- ✓ **Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK)** entitles all pregnant women delivering in public health institutions to absolutely free and no expense delivery including Caesarean section. The initiative stipulates free drugs, diagnostics, blood and diet, besides free transport from home to institution, between facilities in case of a referral and drop back home.

## Laws on abortion in India

Supreme Court passed an order to allow an unmarried woman to abort her pregnancy of 24-weeks arising out of a live-in relationship, which was earlier denied by Delhi HC on the ground of Rule 3B of The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Rules, 2003, which allows only some categories of women to seek termination between 20 and 24 weeks.

### Takeaway points from SC order in this case:

Denying an unmarried woman the right to a safe abortion violates her personal autonomy and freedom.

A woman's right to reproductive choice is an inseparable part of her personal liberty under Article 21 of Constitution.

Women have a sacrosanct right to bodily integrity. Forcing a woman to continue with her pregnancy would not only be a violation of her bodily integrity.

It will also aggravate her mental trauma.

The court noted that an amendment to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act in 2021 had substituted the term 'husband' with 'partner', a clear signal that the law covered unmarried women within its ambit.

### Nature of India's abortion laws:

Abortion is not right in India, abortion causing miscarriage continue to be criminal offence in India according to IPC, 1960.

The MTP Act is centered around abortion service providers or registered medical practitioners and seeks to protect them from criminal liability for abortions performed on permissible grounds, and not women whose reproductive rights are violated.

Indian abortion law is indeed progressive when compared to the US, yet it continues to place restrictions on women's access to abortion. The continued criminalisation of abortion creates an aura of illegality around it, and put together with fear of the criminal justice system, makes women fight their way through medical and judicial institutions to seek abortion.

Unless the law is amended to guarantee an affirmative right to reproductive choice, women's access to abortion will continue to depend on external agencies like medical professionals, judiciary, law enforcing agencies.

### Provisions of Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act 2021:

It increases the maximum permissible gestation age for abortion to 24 weeks.

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Opinions will be required from two doctors rather than one. Done keeping in mind “vulnerable women including survivors of rape, victims of incest and other vulnerable women (like differently-abled women, Minors) etc.

The upper gestation limit will not apply in cases of substantial foetal abnormalities diagnosed by a Medical Board.

Clause of Confidentiality: The name and other particulars of a woman whose pregnancy has been terminated shall not be revealed, except to a person authorised in any law that is currently in force.

New law also allows unmarried women to abort foetus in case of failure of contraceptive.

### Way forward:

The MTP Act, 2021 was hailed by WHO as a progressive step towards equitable access to abortion services. The new MTP Act 2021 expands the access to safe and legal abortion services on therapeutic, eugenic, humanitarian and social grounds to ensure universal access to comprehensive care. It will definitely contribute towards ending preventable maternal mortality to help meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## Gender of institutions (patriarchy in interpersonal relations)

Recently Madras High Court noted that the removal of the mangalsutra by the woman from her body amounted to “mental cruelty” towards her husband. The mangalsutra, is only removed at the death of the husband.

Another event: Recently published National Education Policy related survey in Karnataka has suggested that a very broad cross-section of society thinks that women’s primary role is as wives and mothers (or, at least, that they should combine this with other aspirations) and that domestic violence should be tolerated for the “good” of the family.

- ✓ The gender of institutions like courts, bureaucracies, schools, civic associations, etc. is not much discussed and yet, it is fundamental to both the circulation of ideas about women, men and those of other genders.
- ✓ For ideas about what is “good” for the family and society which emanate from powerful institutions and their functionaries, find fertile ground much quicker than those from other sources.
- ✓ As institutions like courts, education, laws are seen to be “above” society. Example: courts of law enjoy a superior position in the hierarchy of institutions. They are frequently seen to guide social mores, so followed and enforced in society.
- ✓ Symbols of marriages are indispensable for women, but no such requirement for men, highlights deeply entrenched patriarchy and domination-subordination relations within family.
- ✓ Patriarchy and inequality in gender relations at family and cultural level also percolate in so called modern institutions like education, laws, judiciary, representative organisations.

(We can use these examples while writing answers as well as essay based on Patriarchy ,gender like issues)

## GS II - POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

### The Whistleblowers

Currently, two news brought the issue of whistleblowers in limelight.

- ✓ UK approved the extradition of Julian Assange, editor-founder of Wikileaks. Wikileaks in 2006. Some of the leaks were documents from US government that said the US military had killed hundreds of civilians in incidents in Afghanistan.
- ✓ Uber Files are a leak of data that from an anonymous source and shared with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ). The Uber Files show how the ride-hailing company found ways around laws, and lobbied aggressively with governments during the period of its dramatic expansion.



#### What is whistleblower?

Whistleblowing is officially defined as making a disclosure that is in the public interest. It will usually occur when an employee (whistleblower) discloses to a public body, usually the police or a regulatory commission that their employer is partaking in unlawful practices.

Most whistleblowers are internal whistleblowers, who report misconduct on a fellow employee or superior within their company.

External whistleblowers report misconduct to outside persons or entities. Whistleblowers may report the misconduct to lawyers, media, law enforcement agencies, etc.

Whistleblowing is an effective way of curbing unlawful practices. As a result there is significant legislation in place to protect whistleblowers.

#### Laws on Whistleblowing in India

According to the Law Commission of India in 2001, a law protecting informants was required.

The Indian Supreme Court ordered the Central government to "put administrative machinery in place for acting on whistleblower complaints till a legislation is enacted" in 2004.

The Second Administrative Reforms Commission's 2007 report made the recommendation that a separate law be passed to safeguard whistleblowers.

Whistleblowers Protection Bill, which was first presented in 2011 and eventually passed into law in 2014, was created to comply with such regulations.

#### Issues with whistleblowing in India

- ✓ Illegal and corrupt practices in private and public offices are carried by influential people, due to which whistleblowers with lack of protection from laws avoid to take the action.
- ✓ Whistleblowers risk being sacked from any position, office, or work, legal action, criminal accusations, and social disgrace.

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- ✓ There have been countless cases of whistle-blowers being murdered in India. So it shouldn't come as a surprise that so few people report incidents of wrongdoing.
- ✓ There is lack of awareness about whistleblowing.
- ✓ The absence of infrastructure is main issue.

### Examples

- ✓ Golden Quadrilateral project in Bihar was following corrupt practices in 2003, according to Satyendra Dubey, a project engineer at the National Highways Authority of India. In 2003 he was shot to death. In the wake of his death, calls for legislation protecting whistleblowers emerged.
- ✓ Shareholder activist Arvind Gupta revealed the alleged loan fraud and bribery between the Videocon group and the bank's then-CEO Chanda Kochhar and her family. Kochhar resigned as a result of the accusations.

### Committee

- ✓ Law Commission of India Report from 2001 - Whistleblower protection was first emphasised. Even a law was created by the Committee to address the problem.
- ✓ Hota Committee in 2004 - How to protect government officials who report sensitive information about the abuse of power and authority.

### Killings of Whistleblowers

Since the implementation of RTI Act more than 100 RTI activists have been killed. Strong legal and institutional safeguards are needed to prevent the whistleblowers.

These killings have raised an urgent question of the

- ✓ state's responsibility to provide legal assistance
- ✓ time-bound grievance redressal and compensation
- ✓ dignified access to justice to the families of those killed.

### What needs to be done?

- ✓ State governments must direct law-enforcement agencies to expeditiously and in a time-bound manner complete investigations in all cases where RTI users are harassed.
- ✓ Taking proactive efforts to provide adequate compensation to the victim's family.
- ✓ State governments must take immediate efforts to institutionalise proactive disclosure of actionable information.
  - Eg. Rajasthan's Jan Soochna portal subsequently followed by Karnataka's Mahiti Kanaja are outstanding examples of practical ways of mandatory disclosure.
- ✓ In all cases of threats, attacks or killings of RTI users, the State Information Commission must immediately direct the relevant public authorities to disclose and publicise all the questions raised and the answers given to the user.

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- ✓ Giving wide publicity to such information may potentially act as a deterrent against attacks on RTI users.

## Misleading advertisements

Fifteen companies withdrew their advertisements after the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) found them “misleading”.

### What are misleading advertisements?

Consumer Protection Act, 2019 defines misleading advertisements as any advertisement in relation to any product or service which:

- ✓ Falsely describes such product or services
- ✓ It gives a false guarantee
- ✓ Mislead consumers as to nature, substance, quantity or quality of such product or services
- ✓ It conveys unfair trade practices
- ✓ Deliberately conceals important information

### Central Consumer Protection authority (CCPA) Guidelines

CCPA has notified guidelines in 2022 with an objective to curb misleading advertisements and protect the consumers, who may be exploited or affected by such advertisements.

The guidelines seek to ensure that consumers are not being fooled with unsubstantiated claims, exaggerated promises, misinformation and false claims.

Such advertisements violate various rights of consumers such as:

- ✓ right to be informed
- ✓ right to choose
- ✓ right to be safeguarded against potentially unsafe products and services

Keeping in view the sensitiveness and vulnerability of children and severe impact advertisements make on the younger minds, several preemptive provisions have been laid down on advertisements targeting children.

Guidelines says that advertisement targeting children shall not feature any personalities from the field of sports, music or cinema for products which under any law requires a health warning for such advertisement or cannot be purchased by children.

Guidelines are laid for duties of manufacturer, service provider, advertiser and advertising agency, due diligence to be carried out before endorsing and others.

Guidelines aim to protect consumer’s interest through bringing in more transparency and clarity.

Penalty for violating the Guidelines are also clearly outlined.

### About Central Consumer Protection Authority:

Established under Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

It is a statutory body.



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Works under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs.

Seeks to enquire into and take action on the violations of consumer rights and the question of misleading ads.

Central Consumer Protection Authority shall consist of following members appointed by the Central Government.

- ✓ Chief Commissioner
- ✓ Two Commissioners: One commissioner each will represent goods and services respectively.



## MPs suspension from Parliament

Recently, nineteen opposition members were suspended from Rajya Sabha for a period of one week.

Reason for suspension: “unruly behaviour”.

### Suspension of MP's

Parliamentary etiquette has some guidelines that MPs must follow.

In the House, members are not allowed to shout slogans, hold up signs, torn up papers as a show of disapproval, or use a cassette player or tape recorder.

### Procedure for suspension:

The chairman of the Rajya Sabha has the right to designate a member who persistently and purposefully obstructs business, disobeys the Chair's authority, or violates the Council's norms.

In this case, the House may pass a motion suspending the Member from House duty for a time limit not to exceed the remainder of the current session.

### Role of Presiding Officer:

The Presiding Officer's responsibility is to keep the House in good order so that business can proceed.

Speaker of Lok Sabha and Chairman of Rajya Sabha are referred to as presiding officers.

The Speaker or Chairman has the authority to compel a Member to leave the House in order to ensure that business is handled properly.

### Result of suspension

In order for the House to run smoothly, it is the responsibility of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha (and his or her counterpart in the Rajya Sabha) to keep the peace.

According to Rule 373 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business, the Speaker has the authority to order a Member to leave the House immediately if they are behaving in an excessively disruptive manner.

### What laws says about suspension?

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**Rule 255:** According to Rule 255 of the Rajya Sabha Rules, the Chairman may ask any member whose behaviour is, in his judgment, highly disruptive, to leave the Council right away.

**Rule 256:** According to Rule 256 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, the MPs were suspended for the remainder of the winter session.

**Rule 374A:** Since the addition of Rule 374A to the Lok Sabha Rules in 2001, any MP who interferes with the House's work is automatically suspended for a period of up to five days by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha.

## FEMA, PMLA cases triples

Supreme Court recently upheld provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 which relate to the power of arrest, attachment and search and seizure conferred on the Enforcement Directorate. Court underlined that the principle of innocence of the accused/offender is regarded as a human right but that presumption can be interdicted by a law made by the Parliament/Legislature.

In the years since 2014, three times rise has been seen in the total number of cases registered by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) under the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA) and the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA).

## What is FEMA?

It is a set of regulations that empowers the Reserve Bank of India to pass regulations and enables the Government of India to pass rules relating to foreign exchange in tune with the foreign trade policy of India.

FEMA replaced an act called Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA).

- ✓ FERA (Foreign Exchange Regulation Act) legislation was passed in 1973. FERA was passed to regulate the financial transactions concerning foreign exchange and securities. FERA was introduced when the Forex reserves of the country were very low. FERA did not comply with the post-liberalization policies of the Government. So was replaced.

FEMA was primarily implemented in India in order to de-regulate and establish an open economy.

## Features of FEMA

- ✓ FEMA offers free transactions on current accounts in accordance with the RBI's rules.
- ✓ The transaction was categorised by FEMA as both a current and capital account.
- ✓ It grants the Central Government the authority to control the flow of money to and from a person who is located outside of the nation.
- ✓ The FEMA does not apply to Indian nationals who live abroad.
- ✓ It listed the locations where currency holding was allowed but only with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) or the government's express approval.

## Objectives:

- ✓ To facilitate external trade and payments.
- ✓ To assist orderly development and maintenance of the Indian forex market.

- ✓ To outline the formalities and procedures for the dealings of all foreign exchange transactions

### What is PMLA?

The Prevention of Money Laundering Act of 2002 was passed to combat the crime of making money or gains from unlawful sources legal. The statute gives the government or a public authority the power to seize any property obtained through illicit means.

#### 3 Objectives of PMLA

- 1.To prevent and control money laundering.
- 2.To confiscate and seize the property obtained from the laundered money.
- 3.To deal with any other issue connected with money laundering in India.

### Significant Provisions of PMLA:

- ✓ Resolution of disputes: The central government appoints the adjudicating authority. It determines if the confiscated or attached property is being used for money laundering.
- ✓ Appellate Tribunal: A government-appointed appellate tribunal has the authority to consider appeals against decisions made by the adjudicating authority. The appropriate High Court can hear appeals of the tribunal's decisions.
- ✓ PMLA has provisions enabling the Union government to establish a special court.

### Role of Agencies:

- ✓ The investigation of money laundering offences in accordance with the PMLA is carried out by the **Enforcement Directorate**. Enforcement Directorate is within the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.
- ✓ The **Economic Intelligence Council (EIC)** is chaired by the Finance Minister and receives direct reports from the Financial Intelligence Unit - India (FIU-IND).
- ✓ **Financial Intelligence Unit - India (FIU-IND)** is an autonomous organisation under the Department of Revenue in the Ministry of Finance. The primary federal agency in charge of gathering, processing, analysing, and disseminating data about alleged financial activities is FIU-IND.
- ✓ The agencies listed under the relevant legislation, such as the local police, CBI, customs departments, SEBI, or any other investigative agency, as the case may be, each conduct their own independent investigations into the scheduled offences.

### Way forward

Effective coordination and collaboration between various enforcement agencies can prove crucial for proper investigation.

In cases of cross-border money laundering, mutual legal assistance treaties with other states and the proper implementation of these treaties are the key to capturing economic offenders.

There is a long way to go in bolstering the Indian anti-money laundering regime more specifically in vulnerable domains like the banking sector.

A stricter treatment being meted out to economic offenders may act as a deterrent and avoid more scams of likes of the ABG Shipyard, ICICI Bank, Yes Bank or the Punjab National Bank scam.

## Cases Pendency in India

The judicial system in India is under tremendous pressure due to issues of pendency of cases. The proposal to increase the retirement age of Supreme Court and High Court judges was raised as a solution to reduce pendency of cases.

### Magnitude of pendency of cases:

As of May 2022, over 4.7 crore cases are pending in courts across different levels of the judiciary. As per the National Judicial Data Grid, there was an increase of over 27% in pendency between December 2019 and April 2022.

According to PRS Legislative Research, pending cases saw an increase of 20% in High Courts and 13% in subordinate courts during the pandemic period (2019 to 2020).

### Reasons for high pendency of cases:

- ✓ There is a chronic problem of shortage of judges.
- ✓ Due to the rising trend of litigation, more people and organisations are approaching courts.
- ✓ Less number of judges available to hear huge cases.
- ✓ Inadequate infrastructure has resulted in overburdened courts at all levels.
- ✓ Increased pending across different levels of the judiciary.
- ✓ Disruptions due to the coronavirus pandemic further clogged the Indian judicial system.
- ✓ Profession of advocates turned into service based to money based
- ✓ Abuse of Public Interest Litigation for personal interests.
- ✓ Appeal provisions are often made in cases to earn more money from the parties. This increases the number of pending cases in the high courts.
- ✓ There is an increase in the number of under trials lodged in prisons.
- ✓ An undertrial is a prisoner on trial in a court of law.

### Solutions:

- ✓ **Improve the judge-to-population ratio** : There is a need to improve the judge-to-population ratio to reduce the workload of judges.

## Panorama

- ✓ **Alternative dispute resolution (ADR):** Alternative Dispute resolution aims to resolve a dispute without resort to litigation. All the petitions which are compoundable can be easily resolved through ADR which will reduce its litigation pendency.
- ✓ **Fast track courts:** In 2005 the Eleventh Finance Commission recommended a scheme for creation of fast track courts. There is a need for every state of India to set up Fast Track Courts in districts so that the problem of litigation pendency can be solved.
- ✓ **Lok Adalat:** Any dispute pending in the subordinate court can be brought into the Lok Adalat. The advantage of the Lok Adalat is that the parties directly interact with the judge which helps the judge to settle the dispute in less time.
- ✓ **Plea Bargaining:** Plea Bargaining means a pre-negotiation between the accused and the prosecution where the accused pleads guilty in exchange for certain concession by the prosecution. It reduces the time in criminal trials and gives the accused a lesser punishment leading to fast disposal of cases.
- ✓ **Increasing SC, HC retirement Age (Discussed separately)**
- ✓ The Centre had suggested measures like
  - Increased usage of the technology. In Covid 19 pandemic many courts acquitted with using technology.
  - Increasing the number of working days and increasing the daily timing
  - Increase the productivity of the court system.

## Increasing SC, HC retirement Age

### Constitutional Provisions on Judges Retirement age

- ✓ **Article 124(2)** - the age of retirement for Supreme Court judges is 65.
- ✓ **Article 217(1)** - High Court judges retire at 62.  
114<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment 1963 increased the retirement age of High Court judges from 60 to 62.

### Demand to increase SC, HC judges' retirement age

- ✓ Attorney General of India K K Venugopal has been one of the vocal advocates of it.
- ✓ In 1974, the 58th report of the Law Commission recommended bringing parity between the age of retirement of judges of High Court and Supreme Court.
- ✓ In 2002, Justice Venkatchaliah Report recommended that the age of retirement should be increased for judges of High Courts and Supreme Court to 65 and 68, respectively.

In 2021, the Supreme Court had refused to entertain a PIL seeking uniform retirement age for judges of High Courts and the top court.

### Retirement age as solution to pendency of cases

This would help retain the existing judges.

It would help in reducing vacancy and pendency of cases in the short run.

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The experience of the Senior Judges will lay down a great milestone in law and justice. It will help in restoring the lost faith in the Indian Courts in the justice delivery system.

### **Droupadi Murmu: 15<sup>th</sup> President of India**

Droupadi Murmu has been elected as 15th president of India.

She became the first tribal politician to be President of world's largest democracy.

#### **Droupadi Murmu Background:**

She belongs to the Santhal tribal group.

In 2015, she became first woman Governor of Jharkhand.

She is second female president.

She was also the first Odia woman and tribal leader to be named governor of an Indian state.

She is the second female president in the country's history.



#### **About Santhals:**

After Gond and Bhil, Santhal is the country's third largest scheduled tribal community.

The name 'Santhal' is formed from two words: 'santha,' which means quiet and tranquil, and 'ala,' which means man.

The Santhali people are predominantly found in Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal.

## GS II - INDIA AND WORLD

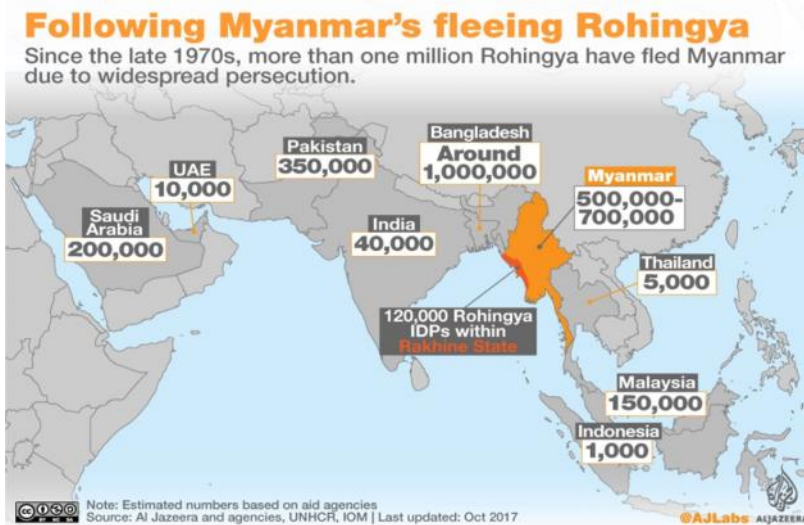
### Genocide in Myanmar

#### What is issue in Myanmar?

Since 2017, more than millions of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar have fled to Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Pakistan and other countries. This Rohingya refugee crisis is among the largest, fastest movements of people in recent history.

The Rohingya, a mostly Muslim minority ethnic group in predominantly Buddhist Myanmar, are escaping what the United Nations has described as genocidal violence that follows decades of persecution and human rights abuses.

Myanmar security forces have been accused of widespread rapes, massacres, and torching thousands of Rohingya houses.



#### ICJ's judgment on Myanmar Genocide:

ICJ has dismissed objections by Myanmar to a case alleging Myanmar is responsible for genocide against the Rohingya ethnic minority. The decision clears the way for the highly charged case, brought by Gambia, to go ahead at the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

#### What is genocide?

Genocide is defined as the wholesale annihilation of a certain group of people. It consists of the Greek prefix *genos*, meaning race or tribe, and the Latin suffix *cide*, meaning killing.

Genocide, according to the 1948 Genocide Convention, is defined as any of the following five crimes done with the goal to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group.

1. Killing members of the group
2. Causing them serious bodily or mental harm
3. Imposing living conditions intended to destroy the group
4. Preventing births
5. Forcibly transferring children out of the group

Victims are targeted because of their real or perceived membership of a group, not randomly.

#### States' obligations under the Genocide Convention

## Panorama

- ✓ not to commit genocide
- ✓ to prevent genocide which, according to the ICJ, has an extraterritorial scope
- ✓ to punish genocide
- ✓ to enact the necessary legislation to give effect to the provisions of the Convention
- ✓ to ensure that effective penalties are provided for persons found guilty of criminal conduct according to the Convention
- ✓ to try persons charged with genocide in a competent tribunal of the State in the territory of which the act was committed, or by an international penal tribunal
- ✓ to grant extradition when genocide charges are involved particularly related to protection granted by international human rights law prohibiting refoulment where there is a real risk of flagrant human rights violations in the receiving State

### Genocide as a crime

Genocide was first recognised as a crime under international law in 1946 by the United Nations General Assembly.

It was codified as an independent crime in the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the Genocide Convention). The Genocide Convention was the first human rights instrument established by the United Nations General Assembly.

It symbolised the world community's pledge to "never again" following the atrocities done during WWII.

The Convention has been ratified by 149 States.

International Court of Justice (ICJ) stated that whether or not States have ratified the Genocide Convention, they are all bound to it.

### International Court of Justice (CJI)

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations (UN). It was established in June 1945 by the Charter of the United Nations and began work in April 1946.

The seat of the Court is at the Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands).

Of the six principal organs of the United Nations, it is the only one not located in New York (United States of America).

The Court's role is to settle, in accordance with international law, legal disputes submitted to it by States and to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by authorized United Nations organs and specialized agencies.

The Court is composed of 15 judges, who are elected for terms of office of nine years by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council.

Its official languages are English and French.

### Some Examples of Genocide

- ✓ 2003–12: Sudanese genocide in Darfur
- ✓ 2012–17: Syria: Civil war; mass civilian deaths by bombardment and gas, displacement of millions; genocide of Yazidis and Christians.



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- ✓ 2017 Expulsion and mass violence against over 600,000 Rohingya Muslim population of Myanmar.

### Genocide and India

India has ratified the Genocide Convention 1948. Genocide has not been defined by any law in India, while India ratified the Convention over 5 decades ago.

India has a constitutional obligation under Article 51 to respect international law and treaty obligations. Article 253 makes it mandatory for Parliament to enact any law per implement any treaty, agreement or convention.

The reasonable step is to enact legislation at the earliest after the ratification of any treaty so on avoid the time gap between ratification and implementation within the domestic structure of the state. India has however taken no such steps regarding Genocide under its International and Constitutional obligation.



## United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency has expressed "deep appreciation" for India's contribution to support Palestinian refugees.

### What is UNRWA and its agenda?

It is a United Nations organisation that was founded in 1949 by the General Assembly.

In all five of its operational areas, it promotes the relief and human development of Palestinian refugees.

Its offerings include protection, microfinance, camp infrastructure and improvement, health care, education, and relief and social services.

Its goal is to assist Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria.

### India's role in refugee protection

India has been a committed supporter of UNRWA since 2018, contributing USD 20 million to help fund the organization's essential programmes for Palestinian refugees throughout the Middle East.

## GS III - ECONOMY

### NITI Aayog's Innovation Index

Karnataka has bagged the top rank in NITI Aayog's India Innovation Index, 2022.

#### About the Index:

Index is released by NITI Aayog and the Institute for Competitiveness every year.

The index attempts to evaluate the innovation environment and capacities in all States and Union Territories.

There are three categories

- ✓ The Major States category- Karnataka topped
- ✓ The Northeast and Hill States category - Manipur topped
- ✓ The Union Territories and City States category - Chandigarh topped

#### Findings of report

India's Gross Domestic Expenditure on Research and Development (GDERD) is 0.7% of GDP which is significantly lower than 1.5-3% of GDP (amount spent by top 10 economies of the world) Hence, GDERD must be increased in order to reach the goal of \$5 trillion economy.

India's average innovation score is insufficient, given the country's ambitious targets to be named among the top 25 nations in the Global Innovation Index.

Countries that spend less on GDERD fail to retain their human capital in the long run. This results in low performance in innovation. Ability to innovate is dependent on the quality of human capital.

Less expenditure on human capital has been unable to create a sufficient knowledge base.

Innovation is skewed against the manufacturing sector due to the problem of missing middle.

#### What is the problem of missing middle?

There are too many tiny, informal enterprises on one side. On another side, there are too few large ones to employ thousands of people. But there is lack of middle size enterprises.

These middle-sized enterprises connect small and informal enterprises with the larger, formal institutions of the economy.

The absence of these enterprises discourages smaller enterprises to scale up and invest in innovations.

#### Measures required to foster innovation

- ✓ Increasing GDERD to around 1.5-3% of GDP
- ✓ Promoting private sector participation in R&D as in countries such as Germany, Japan
- ✓ Improving education system to satisfy industry demand
- ✓ Focus of skill development of youth
- ✓ Increased focus on improving the state of human capital

## Culture of freebies (Revdi)

The recent speech by the Prime Minister called for ending “revdi” i.e. freebies culture.

### Volume of subsidies:

The total volume of subsidies came down from 13 percent of GDP in 1987-88 to a little over 10 per cent.

State governments provide the bulk of these subsidies, mainly for social services like education and health.

The central government accounts for less than 30 per cent of total subsidies, provided mainly for economic services including food.

There are two kinds of subsidies:

1. Merit subsidies
2. Demerit Subsidies (Freebies)

### Merit Subsidies

Merit subsidies are those which are required in public interest. Merit subsidies account for only a third of total subsidies. These include:

- ✓ Food subsidies save the vulnerable section of the population from hunger.
- ✓ Basic education and health services have large benefits for society beyond the benefit accruing to the immediate recipient of the service
- ✓ Expenditure on water supply and sanitation, where again the benefit to society is much larger, for example prevention of infectious diseases.

### Demerit Subsidies (Freebies)

Freebies are the goods and services provided by the government to the citizens, free of cost or at a subsidised rate. Examples of freebies are free or subsidised electricity, free laptops and bicycles provided to the students, subsidised fertilizers, etc.

Two-thirds of total subsidies, about 6 percent of GDP, are unwarranted freebies or “demerit subsidies” which should be eliminated.

### Need for eliminating “demerit” subsidies and freebies:

#### Fiscal logic

- ✓ These unwarranted freebies amount to about 6 percent of GDP. If these are eliminated that would free up huge fiscal space.
- ✓ This would reduce the combined fiscal deficit of the Centre and the states and help governments to achieve targets of FRBMA.
- ✓ Thus the extra fiscal space could be used for stepping up required expenditure on education, health and infrastructure.
- ✓ Subsidised electricity creates a huge burden on electricity distribution companies.

## Panorama

### Social logic

- ✓ These freebies are not provided as per the socioeconomic status of an individual, resulting in wastage of fiscal resources.
- ✓ They create a habit among members of society to want free items such as free electricity, free water or fertilizer.
- ✓ Political parties or candidates to win the elections use freebies to get more votes. This results in win of candidates without capabilities, resulting in overall loss to the society.

### Environmental logic

- ✓ Subsidised electricity provided to the farmers cause depletion of groundwater because of overuse of water as farmers tend to keep water pumps running when provided with subsidised electricity.
- ✓ Subsidised fertilizers leads to overuse of fertilizers which causes
  - Salinification of soil
  - Leaching of fertilizers into groundwater the consumption of which causes various ailments.

## GST levies on food items

5% GST has been levied on pre-packed, labeled form food items even if they are not branded.

These items include curd, lassi, buttermilk, puffed rice, wheat, pulses, oats, maize, and flour which were exempted from the GST net.

### Why this move?

- ✓ To increase the government revenue.
- ✓ To reduce the number of items on which GST had been exempted or applied at a concessional rate.

### Concerns:

- ✓ Increased price burden on consumers.
- ✓ It may worsen food inflation.

## GIFT (Gujarat International Finance Tec-City)

GIFT City is a global financial hub.

It is India's first operational smart city to target India's economic and strategic activities globally.

GIFT aspires to become India's gateway for the international financial services.

GIFT City consists of

- ✓ Special Economic Zone (SEZ) for International Financial Services Centre (IFSC)
- ✓ Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) - it means the area within India which is not a part of SEZ.

### About International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) Authority:

## Panorama

IFSCA has been established under the International Financial Services Centres Authority Act, 2019.

The IFSCA is a unified authority for the development and regulation of financial products, financial services and financial institutions in IFSC in India.

At present, the GIFT IFSC is the maiden international financial services centre in India.

Prior to the establishment of IFSCA, the domestic financial regulators, namely, RBI, SEBI, PFRDA and IRDAI regulated the business in IFSC.

### Benefits of having IFSC in India:

- ✓ It provides services related to capital markets, offshore insurance, offshore banking and asset management, aircraft and ship leasing, and ancillary services
- ✓ It brings back financial services that are carried out in offshore financial centres by Indian corporate entities.
 

This is done by offering a business and regulatory environment comparable to international financial centres like London and Singapore.
- ✓ It would provide Indian corporations with easier access to global financial markets.
- ✓ It would promote further development of financial markets in India.

### About Special Economic Zone (SEZ), in brief:

An SEZ is a territory within a country that is typically duty-free i.e. given fiscal incentives.

It has different business and commercial laws to:

- ✓ encourage investment
- ✓ create employment
- ✓ develop infrastructure facilities
- ✓ create additional economic activity
- ✓ boost the export of goods and services

SEZs are created also to better administer these areas, thereby increasing the ease of doing business.

Major Incentives and Facilities Available to SEZ are

- ✓ Duty free import/domestic procurement of goods for development of SEZ units.
- ✓ Exemption from various taxes like Income Tax, corporation tax, etc.
- ✓ Relaxed norms for external commercial borrowing by SEZ units
- ✓ Single window clearance for Central and State level approvals.

## India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX)

It is India's first bullion exchange.

Launched at Gujarat's GIFT City

### What is bullion?

Bullion refers to physical gold and silver of high purity.

They are often kept in the form of bars, ingots (blocks), or coins.

## Panorama

It can be considered legal tender.

They are often held as reserves by central banks or held by institutional investors.

### What is bullion exchange?

A place where bullion is traded by the buyers and sellers

It is similar to a stock exchange where stocks are traded.

### Significance:

It will facilitate efficient price discovery with focus on quality.

It will help in financialisation of gold in India.

It will gain rightful place for India in global bullion market.

It will enable India to influence global bullion prices, as India is a principal consumer.

### About Gold demand in India:

Reasons for high demand:

- ✓ Required during weddings and other traditional functions
- ✓ To acquire gold is traditionally promoted
- ✓ Considered as a safe investment
- ✓ Investment returns from government sources such as FDs, Postal Savings are decreasing.
- ✓ Even though investments in secondary (stock) markets are increasing but they are risky. After pandemic stock markets crashed leading to losses to consumers.

Impact of high demand:

High demand in India and low domestic supplies

- ✓ Lead to import dependence for gold.
- ✓ This leads to the depletion of foreign exchange reserves.
- ✓ This leads to a current account deficit.

## Labour codes

The labour codes consolidate 44 labour laws under four categories of codes namely-

1. Wage Code
2. Social Security Code
3. Occupational Safety, Health & Working Conditions Code
4. Industrial Relations Code

The Parliament has already passed all the four Codes and it has also received the President's assent.

The four codes are:

### 1. The Code on Wages, 2019

- ✓ Applies to all the employees in the organized as well as unorganized sector

## Panorama

- ✓ Aims to regulate wage and bonus payments in all employment
  - ✓ Aims at providing equal remuneration to employees performing work of a similar nature in every industry, trade, business, or manufacture.
- 2. The Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions, 2020**
- ✓ Seeks to regulate the health and safety conditions of workers in establishments with 10 or more workers, and in all mines and docks.
- 3. The Code on Social Security, 2020**
- ✓ Consolidates laws related to social security and maternity benefits.
- 4. The Code on Industrial Relations, 2020**
- ✓ Seeks to consolidate three labour laws namely, The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947; The Trade Unions Act, 1926 and The Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946.
  - ✓ The Code aims to improve the business environment in the country largely by reducing the labour compliance burden of industries.

### Why are labour codes needed?

- ✓ Streamlining legal framework of labour laws
- ✓ Enhancing Ease of Doing Business
- ✓ Attracting investments in the labour intensive manufacturing sector
- ✓ Improving the lives of gig and platform workers by providing them social security

A study undertaken by a think tank under the Union Labour Ministry reveals that in states which reformed labour laws

- ✓ The average plant sizes went up
- ✓ There was a rise in formal employment in the manufacturing sector.

(There are exceptions which are explained by the varying level of industrialisation and nature of industries in different states).

### Proposed benefits of the labour codes:

- ✓ Bringing in a national minimum wage.
- ✓ Widening of coverage of social security to cover informal and gig/ platform workers
- ✓ Easier dispute resolution by simplifying archaic laws dealing with industrial disputes.
- ✓ Tries to bring in gender parity.
- ✓ Providing greater flexibility to employers in hiring decisions without government permission.

**Issue with the labour codes:**

- ✓ Labour is a subject in the concurrent list where both the Central and State Governments are competent to enact legislations.
- ✓ Many states have been slow in drafting the labour codes.
- ✓ A key change in the definition of "wage" would impact take-home pay, but increase retirement savings, something that a section of employers are opposed to as it may increase their employee costs.
- ✓ Firms will have to bear a higher provident fund liability.
- ✓ Due to the new changes, industrial strikes may become harder which has a negative impact on the workers.
- ✓ India has 94% of its workforce in its unorganised sector. It is challenging to bring the informal sector under the ambit of labour laws.
- ✓ Flexibility in firing the workers may lead to the loss of job security.



## GS III - AGRICULTURE

### Minimum Support Price

Recently the government notified a committee with a mandate

- ✓ To promote zero budget based farming
- ✓ To change crop patterns keeping in mind the changing needs of the country
- ✓ To make MSP (minimum support price) more effective and transparent

### Zero Budget farming

Zero Budget farming means without using any loan and without spending any money on purchase of inputs such as seeds, fertilizers and pesticides

Benefits of Zero budget based farming

- ✓ Substantial savings for farmers as there would be a reduction in input costs for them.
- ✓ Improvement in soil health because of reduction in excessive use of chemical nitrogenous fertilizers which damage the NPK (Nitrogen Phosphorus Potassium) ratio of soil.
- ✓ Improvement in the quality of groundwater which gets polluted because of the leaching of chemical fertilizers from the soil.
- ✓ Reduction of fiscal deficit as large quantities of fertilizers are required to be imported.

### What is MSP?

Minimum Support Price (MSP) is a form of market intervention by the Government of India to insure agricultural producers against any sharp fall in farm prices

### What is the need for MSP?

Under the State APMC Acts, the first sale of agriculture commodities can occur at Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) Mandis only.

However, a farmer may not get remunerative prices at the Mandi due to following reasons:

- ✓ Bumper production leading to an increased supply and fall in market prices
- ✓ Cartelization / price-fixing by the mandi-merchants.

In order to protect the farmers from the vagaries of the market and procure foodgrains for distribution the Government of India announces MSP before each crop sowing season.

### Who announces MSP?

The minimum support prices are announced by the Government of India at the beginning of the sowing season for certain crops on the basis of the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP).

Agriculture Ministry's Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) recommends MSP (& FRP for sugar) to the Cabinet Committee on Economic (CCEA)

CCEA chaired by the PM approves & announces MSP.

**List of crops for which MSP is declared:**

- ✓ Cereals (7) - paddy, wheat, barley, jowar, bajra, maize and ragi
- ✓ Pulses (5) - gram, arhar/tur, moong, urad and lentil
- ✓ Oilseeds (8) - groundnut, rapeseed/mustard, toria, soyabean, sunflower seed, sesamum, safflower seed and niger seed
- ✓ Raw cotton
- ✓ Raw jute
- ✓ Copra
- ✓ De-husked coconut
- ✓ Sugarcane (Fair and remunerative price)
- ✓ Virginia flue cured (VFC) tobacco

**Benefits of MSP:**

- ✓ Farmers can sell produce to the government, if they can't get remunerative prices from private traders. This prevents distress-sale of produce at throwaway prices.
- ✓ MSP is declared before sowing season. This helps farmer to make an informed decision about which crop to sow for maximum economic benefit.
- ✓ MSP sets price-signal to market that if merchants don't offer higher than MSP prices the farmer may not sell them produce. Thus MSP serves as an anchor or benchmark for the agro commodity market.
- ✓ While MSP doesn't guarantee that market prices will always be higher than MSP, at least it ensures the market prices will not be drastically lower than MSP.

**Limitations of MSP:**

- ✓ FCI/NAFED procurement is usually confined to big towns and district centres. Farmers in remote & tribal areas unable to bring their produce to the procurement agencies due to high cost of transportation.
- ✓ Procurement is usually confined to rice and wheat (cereal grains). Not usually done for pulses, oilseeds and other crops.
- ✓ Hence, aforementioned benefits of MSP remain 'only on paper', they are not implemented in reality. So farmers are demanding MSP as a 'legal right'.
- ✓ MSP is not even announced for vegetables and fruits.

**Direct Sowing of Rice (DSR)**

Punjab has seen an 85.7% decline in the DSR area from the last season even with the state government announcing a Rs 1,500 per acre incentive to the farmers for adopting the DSR method.

**What is DSR?**

In DSR, the pre-germinated seeds are directly drilled into the field by a tractor-powered machine. There is no nursery preparation or transplantation involved in this method.

Farmers have to only level their land and give one pre-sowing irrigation.

**Comparison of DSR with traditional method of transplantation:**

In the transplantation method farmers prepare nurseries where the paddy seeds are first sown and raised into young plants. These seedlings are then uprooted and replanted 25-35 days later in the puddled field.

In the transplantation method, the paddy field is flooded with water which acts as a herbicide and prevents weed infestation.

But the main drawback of this transplantation technique is that it leads to large greenhouse gas emission in the form of methane because of anaerobic respiration by soil organisms.

**Advantage of DSR technique:**

- ✓ The main purpose of promoting DSR is to save groundwater.
- ✓ Less numbers of labourers required which leads to reduced labour cost.
- ✓ Reduce methane emissions which are due to a shorter flooding period.
- ✓ Decreased soil disturbance compared to transplanting rice seedlings.

**Drawbacks of DSR technique:**

Water saving is only 15-20% in DSR.

Large quantities of herbicides required to check weed infestation.

The seed requirement for DSR is also high compared to the transplanting method.

Precision in land levelling is required in DSR which is not required in transplanting.

The sowing needs to be done timely so that the plants have come out properly before the monsoon rains arrive.

**Why are farmers reluctant to use DSR**

There are erratic power cuts because of which fields could not be moistened.

Canal water is not available in adequate amounts during the sowing time of DSR.

The results of the DSR vary from farmer to farmer and soil types. Some farmers get more yield from this method, while some get less. Light soils are bad and heavy soils are good for DSR.

The majority of the farmers are still not well-versed in the DSR technique

Though DSR does not need labour, it needs several sprays of weedicides to control weeds. In the traditional method of transplantation flood irrigation acts as a weedicide.

**Way forward:**

- ✓ The Punjab government and other state governments should adopt the Haryana government model to save groundwater wherein the Haryana government under its scheme "Mera Pani Meri Virasat" is offering Rs 7,000 per acre to the farmers who will shun paddy crops and adopt other alternative crops like fruit and vegetables.
- ✓ Creating awareness about DSR

## Panorama

- ✓ Improved procurement of produces

### Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project

Central government has directed to stop all work in view of lack of consent by other States on proposed Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project (ERCP).

The Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project aims to harvest surplus water available during the rainy season in rivers in southern Rajasthan such as Chambal and its tributaries including Kunnu, Parvati, Kalisindh and transfer to deficit basins in South-Eastern Rajasthan.

This scheme is planned to meet the Drinking / Irrigation and Industrial water needs of the thirteen districts of Southern & South Eastern Rajasthan.

#### Objectives of the project:

- ✓ It aims at supplying drinking water in 13 districts.
- ✓ It also aims to provide irrigation water.
- ✓ It will also supply water to the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor.
- ✓ It also aims to take care of the flood and drought situation in the area.

### New Coffee Act

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry is planning to replace the 80-year-old Coffee Act with the new Coffee (Promotion and Development Bill), 2022. It aims to:

- ✓ promote the sale and consumption of Indian coffee, including through e-commerce platforms
- ✓ reduce government restrictions
- ✓ encourage economic, scientific and technical research in order to align the Indian coffee industry with global best practices

#### About coffee production in India:

India is among the top 10 coffee-producing countries, with about 3% of the global output in 2020. Indian coffee is one of the best coffees in the world due to its high quality and gets a high premium in the international markets.

India exports over 70% of its domestic production.

India produces two types of coffee: Arabica and Robusta.

Arabica has higher market value than Robusta coffee due to its mild aromatic flavour.

Robusta coffee is mainly used in making various blends due to its strong flavour.

#### Areas where coffee is grown:

Coffee production in India is dominated in the hill tracts of South Indian states with:

- ✓ Karnataka - 71% of production (Kodagu alone produces 33% of India's coffee)
- ✓ Kerala - 21% of production
- ✓ Tamil Nadu - 5% of overall production

These three states are traditional coffee growing areas of the country.

## Panorama

The new areas have developed in

- ✓ the non-traditional areas of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha in the eastern coast of the country and
- ✓ third region comprising the states of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh

### **Coffee Act 1942:**

The Coffee Act, 1942 was first introduced during World War II, in order to protect the struggling Indian coffee industry from the economic downturn caused by the war.

The government is now trying to scrap the law because it claims that many of the provisions have become redundant and are too restrictive.

### **Coffee Board:**

Coffee board is a statutory organization established under the Coffee Act, 1942.

It is under the administrative control of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The activities of the Board are broadly aimed at

- ✓ enhancement of production, productivity & quality
- ✓ export promotion for achieving higher value returns for Indian Coffee
- ✓ supporting the development of the domestic market

### **Pooling system:**

The Coffee Act, 1942 introduced a pooling system. In this system, each planter was required to distribute their entire crop to a surplus pool managed by the Board, apart from the small quantities that were allowed for domestic use and seed production.

## GS III - ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

### Plastic pollution in oceans

While Sustainable Development Goal 14 calls for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas, and marine resources, plastic pollution in oceans stands as a hindrance in achieving this goal.

According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), India generates close to 26,000 tonnes of plastic a day and over 10,000 tonnes a day of plastic waste remains uncollected.

A large part of this plastic ends up in oceans especially in the coastal areas and coastal metropolises such as Mumbai and Chennai.

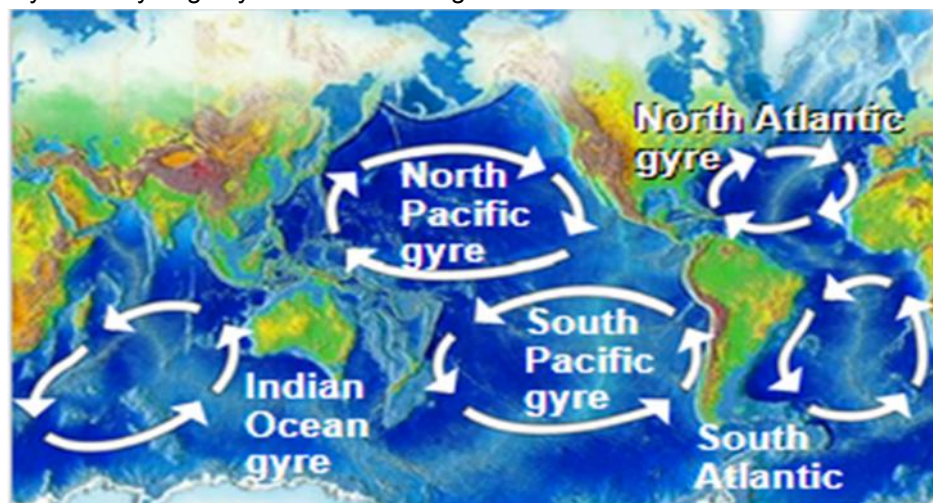
#### Impact of plastic waste on ocean ecology:

- ✓ Ingestion of plastic causes blockage of digestive and respiratory pathways in marine organisms.
- ✓ Ingestion of plastic by marine organisms leads to bioaccumulation along the food chain.
- ✓ Chemicals released from plastics affect the biological and reproduction process resulting in reduced numbers of offspring thus disrupting the food chain.
- ✓ Marine animals can also be trapped in plastic waste where they are exposed to predators or starve to death.
- ✓ Seafloor plastic waste sheets could act like a blanket, inhibiting gas exchange and leading to anoxia or hypoxia (low oxygen levels) in the aquatic system, which in turn can adversely affect marine life.
- ✓ Plastic can release harmful chemicals into the surrounding soil, which can then seep into groundwater or water sources. This can cause harmful effects on species.

#### What is a garbage patch?

A garbage patch is a gyre of marine debris particles caused by the effects of ocean currents and increasing plastic pollution by human populations.

- ✓ Gyre is any large system of circulating ocean currents



## Panorama

These are made of plastic and other debris.

Garbage patches grow as a result of widespread loss of plastic from human trash collection systems.

### How garbage patches are formed?

Debris becomes mobile once it enters water.

It can be blown by the wind, or follow the flow of ocean currents.

It often ends up in the middle of oceanic gyres where currents are weakest leading to the formation of garbage patches.

### Effects of garbage patch:

- ✓ Cause ecosystem and environmental problems that affect marine life
- ✓ Contaminate oceans with toxic chemicals
- ✓ Contribute to greenhouse gas emissions

### Major garbage patches

Following are the major garbage patches formed in major gyres:

- ✓ Great Pacific garbage patch
- ✓ Indian Ocean garbage patch
- ✓ North Atlantic garbage patch
- ✓ South Pacific garbage patch

### Plastisphere

Plastisphere refers to ecosystems which have evolved to live in human-made plastic environments. Plastic that is accumulating in marine ecosystems serves as a habitat for a variety of microorganisms which is referred to as plastisphere.

Plastic pollution acts as a more durable "ship" than biodegradable material for carrying the organisms over long distances.

This can move microbes to different ecosystems and potentially introduce invasive species, insects as well as harmful algae.

The microorganisms found on the plastic debris include autotrophs, heterotrophs and symbionts.

### Provisions to tackle plastic pollution:

Following acts provides measure to tackle the plastic pollution:

- ✓ The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
- ✓ Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016
- ✓ Ban of single-use plastics in India
- ✓ India has notified the draft regulations of recycled content in packaging.

**India's efforts in dealing with ocean plastic pollution:**

At the United Nations Ocean Conference India assured that it is committed to protecting at least 30 percent of lands, waters and oceans.

India announced that it will undertake coastal clean-up drive that will cover 75 beaches.

India also offered to provide science and innovation-based solutions for the implementation of SDG-Goal 14 through partnerships and environmentally-friendly solutions at the World Ocean Summit.

### About United Nations Ocean Conference

The Ocean Conference 2022 was held to ensure global cooperation towards protection and sustenance of the Ocean ecosystem of the world.

The Minister of Earth Sciences led the Indian delegation at the UN Ocean Conference.

### 30x30 Target

The High Ambition Coalition (HAC) for Nature and People is an intergovernmental group of more than 100 countries.

It aims to promote an international agreement to protect at least 30 percent of the world's land and ocean by 2030.

The 30x30 target is a global target which aims to halt the accelerating loss of species, and protect vital ecosystems that are the source of our economic security.

India is part of it.

## Cheetah reintroduction in India

India is set to bring cheetahs from South Africa to Madhya Pradesh's Kuno-Palpur National Park.



### About Cheetah:

The cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) is a large cat. There are two types of cheetahs:

1. Asian Cheetah:



## Panorama

- ✓ Native to Central Iran
  - ✓ IUCN Status: Critically Endangered (CR)
2. African Cheetah:
- ✓ Native to Africa
  - ✓ IUCN Status: Vulnerable (VU)

It is the fastest land animal.

### Site of relocation-Kuno National Park:

The cheetahs would be relocated to Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh

Will be brought from Namibia and South Africa

Kuno National Park used to be home to Sahariya tribe (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group)



### Reasons behind extinction of Cheetah:

- ✓ The cheetah was frequently used by Indian nobility for sport-hunting.
- ✓ Habitat loss: Under the British Raj, forests were extensively cleared, so as to develop settlements and to set up indigo, tea and coffee plantations. This further resulted in the loss of habitat for big cats, contributing to their decline.
- ✓ Over-hunting: British officials considered the animal as “vermin” and also distributed monetary rewards for the killing of cheetahs.

### Importance of restoration:

It aims to revive a species that first went extinct in India in the 1950s.

It is seen as a means to conserve India's fast-depleting grasslands, which is home to other species — such as the critically-endangered Great Indian Bustard and the endangered Indian wolf.

### Concern about restoration:

- ✓ It is feared that the plan will detract attention from the conservation of other endangered species in need of translocation, like the Asiatic lion.
- ✓ According to wildlife conservationist Valmik Thapar
  - India doesn't have any habitat to ensure a natural reintroduction
  - Also India doesn't have the prey species or space for cheetahs to grow in number.
- ✓ Concerns about carrying capacity of the habitat when the population of the introduced cheetahs will increase.
- ✓ Concerns about inbreeding leading to genetic defects due to a limited population size.
- ✓ Concerns of gene flow in such a small group of cheetahs
  - Gene flow is the transfer of genetic material from one population to another.

## Panorama

- Most of the cheetahs are found in small, privately owned reserves which are not close to each other and are rather spread across the country. If the cheetahs breed with members of their small groups gene flow is not ensured. Because of this genetic defects may develop in the offsprings. Hence the cheetahs need to be moved around to ensure healthy gene flow.

## Namami Gange Programme

Recently a survey of National Green Tribunal found that inspite of Namami Gange Program nearly 50% of untreated sewage is still being discharged in Ganga.

### About Namami Gange Programme (NGP)

It was launched by the Union Government in 2014. To accomplish the twin objectives of

- ✓ effective abatement of pollution and conservation
- ✓ rejuvenation of National River Ganga

It is being operated under the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti.

The program is being implemented by the National Mission for Clean Ganga and its state counterpart organizations.

The main pillars of the programme are:

1. Sewage Treatment Infrastructure
2. River-Front Development
3. River-Surface Cleaning
4. Biodiversity conservation
5. Afforestation
6. Public Awareness
7. Ganga Gram
8. Industrial Effluent Monitoring



### Successes:

Data available with the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) show that 43 per cent projects are completed. A majority of projects are related to sewage infrastructure.

The completed projects have created sewage treatment capacity and are presently in operation. Programme has created river-front development projects, projects for ghats, and crematoria.

### Failures:

'Namami Gange' has failed to deliver on most of its promises.

It has become more about sewage and effluent management and a lot less about improving the quality or quantity of flow across the river's length of 2,500 km.

The fixation with treatment plants, toilets and beautification has made it more of an infrastructure project with little concern for nature's hydrological cycle.

## Panorama

Natural flow the river is not maintained continuously except in the monsoon season.

Inspite of this nearly 50% of untreated sewage is still being discharged in Ganga.

### Way forward

Currently, government is only focusing on establishing sewage and effluent treatment plants and not on river's minimum flow.

The concept of 'sewage-free' water need to be seriously considered, which would mean all treated waters will need to be recycled and reused in the towns and cities that produce them, even as the river's flow is completely supported by water from the Himalaya.

It's time to understand Ganga more deeply from a hydrological perspective, through automated flow gauges and water quality sensors, linked to automated reservoir operations that ensure minimum flow in across different sections of the river. This will help flush the pollution loads.

Project design needs to incorporate externalities linked to mining, environmental degradation, the climate emergency, seismicity, floods, landslides, flood-bank encroachment, marine environment and groundwater recharge.

The success needs to be measured in terms river discharge, colour, floating matter, pollution load, odour, livelihood, fish varieties.

Decentralised and energy-neutral sewage treatment plants that can recover fertilisers, bio-plastics, cellulose and even protein are the way to do. India needs to develop a business model to recover secondary products, including water, to enable a sewage-free Ganga.

It also needs to develop economic models that help local bodies maintain the systems and so reduce the risks of failure.

## Five more Ramsar Wetlands in India

India has added five more Ramsar sites, or wetlands that are of international importance, bringing the number of such sites to 54.

The following is the list of newly added Ramsar sites:

Sr.No	Site Name	State
1	Karikili Bird Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu
2	Pallikaranai Marsh Reserve Forest	Tamil Nadu
3	Pichavaram Mangrove	Tamil Nadu
4	Sakhya Sagar	Madhya Pradesh
5	Pala Wetland	Mizoram

### What is a wetland?

According to the Environment Ministry wetlands, are an

- ✓ area of marsh, fen, peatland or water,

## Panorama

- ✓ whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt,
- ✓ including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres,
- ✓ but does not include river channels, paddy fields, human-made water bodies/ tanks specifically constructed for drinking water purposes and
- ✓ structures specifically constructed for aquaculture, salt production, recreation and irrigation purposes.

### What are Ramsar sites?

Ramsar Convention is a convention on wetlands that was signed in 1971 in Ramsar (Iran).

The Ramsar Convention came into force in 1975.

To be a Ramsar site a wetland must meet at least one the criteria as defined by the Ramsar Convention of 1961, such as

- ✓ It supports vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species or threatened ecological communities
- ✓ It regularly supports 20,000 or more waterbirds or, is an important source of food for fishes, spawning ground, nursery and/or migration path on which fish stocks are dependent upon.

### Importance of Wetlands:

- ✓ Wetlands are essential for preserving public water supplies, especially in urban areas.
- ✓ They play a major role in carbon sequestration and are known to have among the highest soil-carbon densities.
- ✓ They play a significant role in housing and conserving biodiversity.
- ✓ They play an important role in nutrient cycling in phosphorus, sulphur and nitrogen cycle.
- ✓ They act as natural filters by filtering pollutants.
- ✓ They act as storm, tsunami and flood buffers by minimising the effects of storm surges, tsunamis and floods.
- ✓ They serve as important spaces for migratory birds.
- ✓ They have high aesthetic value and hold great tourism potential.
- ✓ They are important sites for fishing and shrimping.

### Threats to Wetlands:

- ✓ Over withdrawal of groundwater has led to salinisation of wetlands.
- ✓ Increasing residential, industrial and commercial facilities in urban areas are destroying wetlands near urban cities.
- ✓ Wetlands are being converted to paddy fields for increasing agriculture due to population pressure.

## Panorama

- ✓ Construction of reservoirs, canals and dams to provide for irrigation destroy the hydrology of associated wetlands.
- ✓ Industrial pollution affects the quality of water supplies and the biological diversity of wetlands.
- ✓ Climate change results into air temperature rise; shifts in precipitation; increased frequency of storms, droughts, and floods; increased atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration; and sea level rise. These all factors affect wetlands.
- ✓ Dredging and draining of water from wetlands lowers the water table and dries out the wetland.
- ✓ Invasive alien species such as water hyacinth clog waterways and compete with native vegetation. Thus affecting the biodiversity in a wetland.

## GS III - SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### N-Treat Technology by IIT-Bombay

To prevent sludge and sewage from storm water drains flowing into the sea, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has planned in-situ treatment of sewage from the drains.

With the help of Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay's N-Treat Technology

#### What is N-Treat Technology?

N-Treat is a seven-stage process for waste treatment that uses screens, gates, silt traps, curtains of coconut fibers for filtration, and disinfection using sodium hypochlorite.

It is a natural and environment friendly way for sewage treatment.

It is an in-situ or on-site method of treatment

It does not require additional space. Its setup takes place within storm water drain channels.

#### Benefits:

- ✓ Cost effective
- ✓ Does not require manual pumping
- ✓ Saves electricity
- ✓ Extensive man-power for maintenance is not required
- ✓ No extra space required for treatment

### SMS bombing

SMS Bombing is an attack where a large number of messages or OTP calls are sent to a particular number in a very short period of time.

This is done in order to harass a user or disrupt the normal working of a device.

Eg. OTP messages from food delivery platforms like Zomato, Zepto, and Licious, all within a span of a few hours.

#### How to prevent SMS Bombing?

Anti-SMS Bombers which are tools that automatically block the incoming messages from a particular sender if an OTP or same SMS occurs more than three times.

### Google Street View

Google announced the launch of its popular 'Street View' feature in India.

Was first introduced in 2017 by Google in different cities in the world.

#### What is Google Street View?

Google Street View is an immersive 360-degree view of a location captured using special cameras mounted on vehicles or on backpacks by data collectors moving around the city streets.

Street View cars have special cameras that take photographs as they drive down public streets.

Once the photographs have been taken, they go through computer processing to make them ready for use on Google Maps.

## Panorama

The image-processing technology stitches the photos to create the seamless 360-degree images that one will see on Street View.

Google is *not* actually using satellite technology to get these images.



### Technology used:

- ✓ GPS
- ✓ 360-degree view cameras

### Concerns:

- ✓ Security concerns as Street View could be used by terrorists in planning terror attacks.

### Limitations on Street View in India:

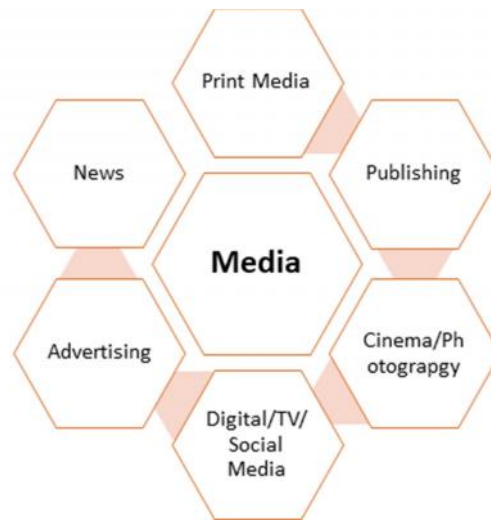
- ✓ Street View in India is not allowed for restricted areas like government properties, defence establishments and military areas.

## GS IV - ETHICS

### Media Trials

Chief Justice of India N V Ramanan recently said that rising number of media trials are proving to be hurdles towards doing justice, and kangaroo courts run by the media are causing harm to the health of the democracy.

#### What constitutes Media?



#### Media Trial

It is a phrase to describe the impact of television and newspaper coverage on a person's reputation by creating a widespread perception of guilt or innocence before, or after, a verdict in a court of law.

Eg. Aryan Khan Case, 2 G spectrum Case

#### What is a kangaroo court?

It is an unofficial court held by a group of people in order to try someone regarded, especially without good evidence, as guilty of a crime or misdemeanor.

It is used to refer to proceedings or activities where a judgment is made in a manner that is unfair, biased, and lacks legitimacy.

Eg. Khap Panchayat

#### SC on Media Trials

The Supreme Court reiterated that the media and the judiciary are institutions inhabiting separate spheres and their functions do not overlap. One cannot and must not use the other for discharge of its functions. According to SC, overstepping by media in judiciary's space is hurting the cause of justice.

Media should only engage in acts of journalism and not act as a special agency for the court.

TRP Race, Breaking news culture and public sensationalization are the main factors behind the media trials.



## Panorama

Insistence for 24 hour news culture further fuels zeal to provide entertainment about anything, which also led to frequent media trials.

Media trials cannot be a guiding factor in deciding cases.

Media runs kangaroo courts at times on issues even experienced judges find difficult to decide. Ill-informed and agenda-driven debates on issues involving justice delivery are proving to be detrimental to the health of democracy.

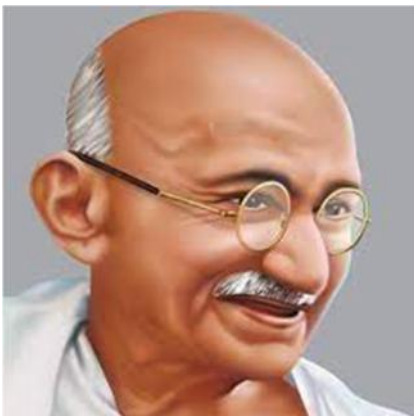
Biased views being propagated by the media are affecting the people, weakening democracy, and harming the system.

### Way Ahead

#### What is Media ethics?

Media is mandated to follow certain ethics in collecting and disseminating the information viz.,

- ✓ **Honesty and fairness;** duty to seek the views of the subject of any critical reportage in advance of publication; duty to correct factual errors; duty not to falsify pictures or to use them in a misleading fashion;
- ✓ **Duty to provide an opportunity to reply** to critical opinions as well as to critical factual reportage;
- ✓ **Appearance as well as reality of objectivity;** some codes prohibit members of the press from receiving gifts'
- ✓ **Respect for privacy**
- ✓ **Duty to distinguish between facts and opinion**
- ✓ **Duty not to discriminate or to inflame hatred** on such grounds as race, nationality, religion, or gender.
- ✓ **Duty not to use dishonest means to obtain information**
- ✓ **Duty not to endanger people**
- ✓ **General standards of decency and taste**
- ✓ **Duty not to prejudge** the guilt of an accused



**“The sole aim of journalism should be service. The newspaper press is a great power; but just as unchained torrent of water submerges the whole countryside and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy.**

**If the control is from without, it proves more poisonous than want of control. It can be profitable only when exercised from within”.**

**- Mahatma Gandhi.**

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