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# Current Affairs



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## WEEK 1 CURRENT AFFAIRS

### 1.1 NATIONAL GREEN HYDROGEN MISSION

Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways recently said that as per the National Hydrogen Mission of the country, **Green Hydrogen/Ammonia bunkers and refuelling facilities will be established in all major ports by 2035.**

#### ABOUT THE MISSION

- It was **approved by the Union Cabinet on 4 January 2022.**
- **Aim:** To make India a **Global Hub for the production, utilization and export of Green Hydrogen** and its derivatives.
- The mission **outcomes projected by 2030 are:**
  - **Development of green hydrogen production capacity of at least 5 MMT** (Million Metric Tonnes) **per annum** with an associated renewable energy capacity addition of about 125 GW in the country;
  - Over Rs. **Eight lakh crore in total investments;**
  - Creation of over **Six lakh jobs;**
  - Cumulative **reduction in fossil fuel imports** over Rs. One lakh crore;
  - **Abatement of nearly 50 MMT of annual greenhouse gas emissions;**

### 1.2 INTERNATIONAL LABOUR DAY

International Labour Day, popularly known as International Workers' Day or May Day is observed on **May 01** every year.

#### ABOUT THE DAY

- It is **celebrated every year on 1 May** to **commemorate the struggles and sacrifices of the workers'** and labours' movement.
- It is also **known as May Day.**
- It is **celebrated in more than 80 countries,** including India, Cuba, and China
- People in different parts of the world **hold marches** on this day to **promote the rights of working-class people and to protect them from exploitation.**



#### HISTORY

- The tradition of Labour Day dates back to **19th century America.**
- **On May 1st, 1886, workers in Chicago organized a strike** to demand an eight-hour workday.
- However, **workers across the US came together to demand their rights** and to fight for better working conditions **after a bomb exploded at a labour rally in Haymarket Square in Chicago, USA.**



- In 1889, the International congress of socialist parties met in Paris and decided to celebrate Labour Day or Worker's Day on May 1.

#### LABOUR DAY IN INDIA

- The first labour day was celebrated in India on May 1, 1923, in Chennai.
- The first May Day celebrations were organized by the Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan.
- It is celebrated by many different names in the various Indian states. For example, It is known as Kamgar Din in Hindi, Karmikara Dinacharane in Kannada, and Karmika Dinotsavam in Telugu.

### 1.3 INSURANCE REGULATORY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF INDIA (IRDAI)

IRDAI (Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India) recently asked insurance companies to lay down social media guidelines for their employees.

#### ABOUT IRDA

The term "IRDA" refers to the **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority**, which functions as the regulator of India's insurance industry.

IRDA's responsibilities include **overseeing the operations of Life Insurance and General Insurance companies in the country**, to safeguard the interests of policyholders and regulate the insurance sector.

The IRDA's primary objective is to **regulate the industry and ensure the protection of policyholders**.

#### HISTORY

Until 2000, the insurance industry in India was regulated by the Government.

However, the **Malhotra Committee report of 1999** recommended the creation of a separate regulatory body for the industry.

Hence, the **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA)** was established in 2000, and it began accepting applications from insurance companies for registration.

The IRDA has set up regulations under **Section 114A of the Insurance Act, of 1938**, which cover the registration of insurance companies and safeguarding the interests of policyholders.

#### OBJECTIVES

The IRDA has a mission statement with three objectives:

- Protecting the interest and fair treatment of policyholders
- Regulating the insurance industry fairly and ensuring its financial soundness
- Regularly framing regulations to remove any ambiguity in the industry's operation.

#### FUNCTIONS

- The IRDA has the **power to grant, renew, modify, suspend, cancel, or withdraw registration certificates** of insurance companies.
- IRDA is **responsible for protecting the policyholder's interests** in various matters such as the grant of policies, settlement of claims, nomination by policyholders, insurable interest, surrender value of the policy, and other terms and conditions of the policy.
- The regulator **specifies a code of conduct, qualifications, and training for insurance agents and intermediaries**.
- The IRDA also specifies a **code of conduct for loss assessors and surveyors**.
- It **levies fees for carrying out the provisions of the Act**.
- The IRDA **undertakes inspections, calls for information, and investigations including an audit of insurance companies**, intermediaries, and other organizations associated with the insurance business.



- The regulator regulates and controls insurance rates, terms and conditions, and advantages that may be offered by the insurance providers.

## 1.4 BLUEBUGGING

Concerned over an increase in instances of cybercrime, Andhra Pradesh police recently asked the people to be wary of "bluebugging."

### WHAT IS BLUEBUGGING?

- It is a form of hacking that lets attackers access a device through its discoverable Bluetooth connection.
- Once a device or phone is bluebugged, a hacker can listen to the calls, read and send messages and steal and modify contacts.
- It started out as a threat for laptops with Bluetooth capability.
- Later hackers used the technique to target mobile phones and other devices.

### PROCESS

- Bluebugging attacks work by exploiting **Bluetooth-enabled devices**.
- The device's Bluetooth must be in discoverable mode, which is the default setting on most devices.
- The hacker then tries to pair with the device via Bluetooth.
- Once a connection is established, hackers can use brute force attacks to bypass authentication.
- They can install malware in the compromised device to gain unauthorised access to it.
- Bluebugging can happen whenever a Bluetooth enabled device is within a 10-metre radius of the hacker.
- However, according to a blog by VPN service provider NordVPN, hackers can use booster antennas to widen the attack range.

### SUSCEPTIBLE DEVICES

- Any **Bluetooth-enabled device** can be bluebugged.
- Wireless earbuds are susceptible to such hacks.
- Apps that enable users to connect to their **TWS (True Wireless Stereo)** devices or earbuds can record conversations.
- The apps of these **TWS devices can record conversations**.
- Once hacked, the attacker can make and listen to calls, read and send messages, and modify or steal your contacts.

## 1.5 REVISED NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS FOR KIDS

A decade after the **National Food Security Act (NFSA)** was enacted, the Central government has **revised the nutritional standards** of meals at schools and anganwadis.

The government serves hot cooked meal in the school premises to children aged 6 to 14 years. It is popularly known as **Mid Day Meal Scheme**.

The revised nutritional standards has **augmented the proportion of calories and protein**, while also **mandating the inclusion of micronutrients in them**.

The amendment has been done on the recommendations of an **inter-ministerial committee**.

In its draft report, the inter-ministerial committee had recommended "**urgent action**", citing the possible impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in worsening the "**silent crisis**" of undernutrition.



## ABOUT NFSA

The issue of 'food security' at the household is continuously being addressed by the Government since long, through the **Public Distribution System and the Targeted Public Distribution System**. The Act legally entitled up to **75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population to receive subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System**.

About **two thirds of the population therefore is covered under the Act** to receive highly subsidized foodgrains.

As a step towards **women empowerment**, the eldest woman of the household of age 18 years or above is **mandated to be the head of the household for the purpose of issuing of ration cards under the Act**.

## WHAT HAPPENS IN CASE OF NON SUPPLY?

In case of non-supply of the entitled quantities of foodgrains or meals to entitled persons under NFSA, such persons shall be entitled to receive such food security allowance from the concerned State Government to be paid to each person.

## Responsibilities under NFSA –

NFSA defines the **joint responsibility of the Centre and State/UT Government**.

While the Centre is responsible for **allocation of required foodgrains to States/UTs**, the **States/UTs are responsible for effective implementation of the Act**.

The work of **identification of eligible households is to be done by States/UTs**.

## PRICE OF FOODGRAINS AND BENEFICIARIES

The NFSA provides a legal right to persons belonging to “eligible households” to receive foodgrains at subsidised price– **rice at Rs 3/kg, wheat at Rs 2/kg and coarse grain at Rs 1/kg** — under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).

The term “eligible households” comprises two categories — **Priority Households, and families covered by the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)**.

**Priority households are entitled to receive 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month**, whereas **AAY households are entitled to 35 kg per month** at the same prices.

Under Schedule-I of the Act, these subsidised prices were fixed for “**a period of three years from the date of commencement of the Act**”.

However, the government has yet **not revised the subsidised prices**.

## SPECIAL FOCUS ON WOMEN & CHILDREN

- **Women:** It provides meals to pregnant women and lactating mothers during pregnancy and six months after the child birth.
  - Such women will also be entitled to receive maternity benefits of not less than **Rs. 6,000/-**.
- **Children:** Up to 14 years of age will be entitled to nutritious meals as per the prescribed nutritional standards.

## 1.6 MID DAY MEAL SCHEME

- The Mid-Day Meal Scheme was started in India on **15th August 1995** as ‘**National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE)**’.
- It was renamed as ‘**National Programme of Mid-Day Meal in Schools**’ in **October 2007**, also known as the **Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Scheme**.
- The current version of the programme, renamed **PM Poshan Shakti Nirman** or **PM Poshan** in **2021**.



- Under the scheme, **hot cooked meal per day is provided to all children (studying in Class I to VIII)** enrolled in government schools, local body schools, government-aided schools, special training centres (STC), maktabs and madrasas supported under the **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan**.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME

- To **increase the enrolment** in the schools of the children who belong to disadvantaged sections of the society.
- To **increase the attendance** of the children in government and government-aided schools.
- To **retain the children** studying in class I to VIII.
- To **give nutritional support to the children** studying in the elementary stage, especially in the drought-affected areas.
- To **address hunger and malnutrition** and **improve socialisation among castes**.

### FEATURES

- Every school should have a **hygienic cooking infrastructure** for hygienically cooked mid-day meals.
- The mid-day meals are **to be served only on the school premises** on all working days of the school.
- The **headmaster or headmistress is entitled to utilise the school funds on account of mid-day meal fund exhaustion**.
- Quality items with **AGMARK** are procured for cooking the mid-day meals in the schools.
- Food allowance is provided to the children when the cooked meals cannot be provided because of unforeseen circumstances.

Calorie Intake	Primary School	Upper Primary School
Energy	450 calories	700 calories
Protein	12 grams	20 grams

### FUNDING PATTERN, IMPLEMENTATION & CONCERNED MINISTRY

- This is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**.
  - Hence, the cost is shared between the **Centre (60%)** and **States (40%)**.
  - Sharing is 90:10 for the Northeastern states, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, while the Centre bears 100% of the costs in UTs without legislature.
- Each State/UT has to set up State Steering-cum Monitoring Committees (SSMCs) at the State, District and Block level to oversee the implementation of this scheme, including establishing a mechanism to maintain the quality and nutritional standards of the meals.
- **Concerned Ministry:** Ministry of Education

### REVISED NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS

- The amendment has been made under Schedule-II of the NFS Act, which was notified on **January 25**.
  - Schedule-II of the Act fixes nutritional standards for nine groups, starting from children aged six months to one year and those in upper primary classes (VI-VIII).



- **Three new categories have been created for undernourished children aged between six months to six years.**
- The nutritional standards for some existing categories such as lower primary classes, and upper primary classes have been revised.
  - For instance, under the previous norms, every child in lower primary classes was entitled to get 450 kilocalories (kcal) and 12 gm protein with midday meals.
- Now, the protein quantity has been hiked to 15-20 gms, while fat (18-21 gms) and carbohydrates (70 gms) are part of the mix as well.
- Standards for micronutrients have also been fixed: calcium 170 mg, zinc 2 mg; iron 3.5 mg; dietary folate 50 micrograms, Vitamin A 100 micrograms; Vitamin B6 0.43 micrograms; Vitamin B12 0.66 micrograms.

## 1.7 YELLOW FEVER

A total of 117 passengers of Indian Origin that have arrived from Sudan are currently quarantined because they were not vaccinated against **Yellow Fever**.

### ABOUT

- **Nomenclature:** Yellow fever is often associated with jaundice, hence the name yellow.
- **Endemic countries:** to WHO, Yellow fever occurs in 47 endemic countries in Africa in Central and South America. Around 90% of cases reported every year occur in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Transmission:**
  - The yellow fever virus is **transmitted by infected mosquitoes**, most commonly from the **Aedes species** – the same mosquito that spreads the **Zika, Chikungunya and Dengue virus**. **Haemagogus mosquitoes** also spread it and are mostly found in the jungle.
  - **The disease cannot be spread by contact from one person to another.**

### SYMPTOMS

- Once contracted, the yellow fever virus incubates in the body for **3 to 6 days**. **Symptoms usually present themselves in 2 phases.**
- The first, "**acute**", phase usually causes **fever, muscle pain or vomiting**. Most patients improve and their **symptoms disappear after 3 to 4 days**.
- However, a small percentage of people enter a **second, more toxic phase** within 24 hours of the initial remission. They will experience **high fever, JAUNDICE, and abdominal pain with vomiting and deteriorating kidney function**.

### PREVENTION & TREATMENT

- Yellow fever can be prevented by a vaccine that is protective for life. As single dose of yellow fever vaccine, known as 17D, provides life-long immunity against the disease.
- There is no specific treatment for yellow fever but good supportive treatment of symptoms, such as dehydration, fever and infection, improves survival rates. Associated bacterial infections can be treated with antibiotics.

## 1.8 INDIA'S PM ON SDGs

The Prime Minister of India while addressing the **first meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors** under India's **G20 Presidency** expressed concern that "**progress on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) seems to be slowing down**".



The sheer population size of India means that realising SDGs at a global scale is intrinsically tied to the success of India.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



### THE SDGs

- The SDGs/Global Goals were **adopted by the United Nations in 2015** as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.
- The SDGs framework sets **targets for 231 unique indicators across 17 SDG goals** related to economic development, social welfare, and environmental sustainability, **to be met by 2030**.
- The 17 SDGs are **integrated**; they recognise that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance **social, economic, and environmental sustainability**.
- Countries have committed **to prioritise progress for those who are the farthest behind**.
- The **creativity, technology, and financial resources** from all of society are necessary to achieve the SDGs in every context.

### INDIA'S INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE SDGs

- India follows a **holistic approach** for achieving the SDGs by implementing a comprehensive array of schemes.
- Current flagship policies and programmes of Government of India such as Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY) and Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) have substantially contributed to India's progress in this regard.
- **Namami Gange Mission** - a key policy priority towards achieving **SDG 6** was launched as a priority programme with a budget of 20,000 crores for the period 2015-2020.

### INDIA'S PROGRESS POSITIVE TRENDS

- India is **'On-Target'** to meeting **14 of the 33 SDG indicators**, including indicators for neonatal and under-five mortality, full vaccination, improved sanitation, and electricity access.



- Indicators such as **eliminating adolescent pregnancy**, reducing multidimensional poverty, and women having bank accounts have improved across a vast majority of the districts between the years 2016 and 2021.

#### CONCERNS:

- **The national ‘On-Target’ designation does not apply equally across all districts.**
- While neonatal and under-five mortality are currently both ‘On-Target’ for the country, **neonatal mortality for 286 districts and under-five mortality for 208 districts** (out of 707 districts) **are not on-target.**
- Similarly, significant progress **on access to improved sanitation excludes 129 districts** that are not on course to meet this SDG indicator.
- Despite a national policy push for clean fuel for cooking (PM Ujjwala Yojana), **more than two-thirds (479) of districts remain ‘Off-Target’.**
- **Some 415 and 278 districts** are ‘Off-Target’ for **improved water and handwashing facilities**, respectively.
- **No district in India** has yet succeeded in **eliminating the practice of girl child marriage before the legal age of 18 years.**
- Despite the overall expansion of mobile phone access in India (**93% of households**), only **56% women own a mobile phone**, with 567 districts remaining ‘Off-Target.’

#### WAY FORWARD

- India **needs to innovate a new policy path** in order to meet the aspirations of its people in the decade ahead.
- To succeed in meeting its SDG targets, especially those related to health and well-being, **basic quality infrastructure and gender equality**, a similar concerted pioneering effort on the lines of India’s Covid-19 management would be the need of the hour.
- There is considerable confidence in India becoming the third largest economy in the world over the next decade. However, **translating this growth into progress on social and human development** must be equally valued.

In successfully delivering a real-time response to the COVID-19 pandemic, India has proved that **it is possible to deliver at scale in such an ambitious and comprehensive manner**

### 1.9 ASEAN INDIA MARITIME EXERCISE (AIME)

India recently sent two frontline warships to take part in the first-ever ASEAN-India maritime exercise (AIME-2023).

#### ABOUT:

- AIME-2023 is **the first time India has been involved in exercises with the ASEAN** though there have been exercises with ASEAN nations separately.
- **Aim: Enhancing interoperability and exchange of best practices** among participating navies.
- With AIME-2023, **India becomes the 4th ASEAN dialogue partner**, after Russia, China and the US, **to hold the ASEAN+1 maritime exercise.**
- The maiden exercise will be **conducted off the coast of Singapore** and will feature harbour and at-sea events off the coast of Singapore.
- Two major Indian Navy warships-- the **INS Delhi, an indigenously built destroyer**, and **INS Satpura, a Shivalik-class, recently built modern stealth frigate**-- are part of the exercise.

#### KEY FACTS



- It is a regional **intergovernmental organization** comprising **ten Southeast Asian countries**.
- It was established in 1967 with the signing of the **Bangkok declaration**.
- **Aim:** To promote intergovernmental cooperation and facilitate **economic, political, security, military, educational, and socio-cultural integration** among its members and other Asian states.
- **Members:** Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia and Vietnam.

## 1.10 WINDFALL TAX

India recently slashed the windfall tax on domestically produced crude oil to ₹4,100 per tonne from ₹6,400 per tonne.

- **What is it?** It is a **higher tax levied by the government on specific industries when they experience unexpected** and above-average profits.
- **When is it imposed?**
  - When the government notices a **sudden increase in an industry's revenue**, they impose this tax.
  - However, these revenues **cannot be linked to anything the company actively pursued**, such as its business strategy or expansion.
  - Consequently, a Windfall Tax is imposed on an industry's profits when it experiences a **sharp increase in revenue due to unrelated external events**.

### RATIONALE BEHIND WINDFALL TAX

- **Redistribution of unexpected gains**, when high prices benefit producers at the expense of consumers;
- To **fund social welfare schemes**;
- As a **supplementary revenue stream** for the government;
- As a way for the Government to **narrow the country's widened trade deficit**;

## 1.11 ARTICLE 142 OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Supreme Court recently held its extraordinary discretion under **Article 142** of the Constitution can be used to do “**complete justice**” for **couples trapped in bitter marriages by granting them divorce by mutual consent**.

### WHAT IS ARTICLE 142?

- Article 142 provides a **unique power to the Supreme Court**, to do “**complete justice**” between the parties, **where at times law or statute may not provide a remedy**.
- In those situations, **the Court can extend itself to put a quietus to a dispute in a manner that would fit the facts of the case**.
- The necessity for incorporating such an article into the Constitution was spelt out in the Constituent Assembly.
- The framers of the Constitution felt that **this provision is of utmost significance to those people who have to suffer due to the delay in getting their necessary reliefs**.

## 1.12 INSURGENCY IN ASSAM

Recently, the **Dimas National Liberation Army (DNLA)**, an insurgent group operating mostly in Assam's **Dima Hasao district**, signed a **peace agreement with the government**.



Both Union Home Minister and Assam Chief Minister declared that this peace settlement marked the end of the tribal insurgency in Assam.

### HISTORY OF INSURGENCY IN ASSAM

In Assam the **problem began in 1979**, when the indigenous people of Assam demanded that illegal immigrants who had emigrated from Bangladesh to Assam be detected and deported. The movement led by **All Assam Students Union** began **non-violently** with satyagraha, boycotts, picketing and courting arrest.

The Election in 1983 was opposed by the movement's leaders. The election led to widespread violence. The movement finally ended after an agreement with the central government on August 15, 1985. (**Assam Accord**)

Under the provisions of this accord, anyone who entered the state illegally between January 1966 and March 1971 was allowed to remain but was disenfranchised for 10 years, while those who entered after 1971 face expulsion.

### Various insurgent groups in ASSAM

- **ULFA:**
  - The **United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA)**, an insurgent group, was formed in 1979 and marked the beginning of insurgency in Assam. The main aim of ULFA was to **“liberate Assam through armed struggle from the exploitative attitude of the central government towards Assam and establish a sovereign independent Assam.”**
  - The group **remained dormant** during the Assam movement; however, it supported the Assam movement. The Assam movement was against the illegal migrants. ULFA also raised the similar issue, which gained popularity and acceptability of the common population.
- **BODOLAND: Bodos, the largest plains tribe of Assam** started an armed struggle for a **separate state** in the mid-1980s. This armed struggle led to ethnic cleansing of the non-bodos along the north bank of Brahmaputra.

Bodoland Movement for an independent state of Bodoland started on March 2, 1987 under the leadership of **Upendranath Brahma** of the **All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU)**.



### The Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) (2003) :

BTC has **legislative, administrative, executive and financial powers over 40 policy areas** in the Bodoland Territorial Areas Districts comprising four districts (Kokrajhar, Baksa, Chirang and Udalguri) of Assam.

- **National Democratic Front of Bodoland:**

Formed in 1994 after the group rejected the Bodo Peace Accord.

NDFB (Songjit faction) had turned up the fire in Assam in the year 2014, December by attacking districts of Sonitpur and Kokrajhar, killing nearly 78 and leaving many seriously injured.

It appears that this carnage started in retaliation to the death of three NDFB (S) cadres during a counter-insurgency operation conducted by the Mahar Regiment on December 21 against the outfit's camp in the Chirang District along the Assam-Bhutan border.

**Peace deal with NDFB Cadres signed in 2020.**



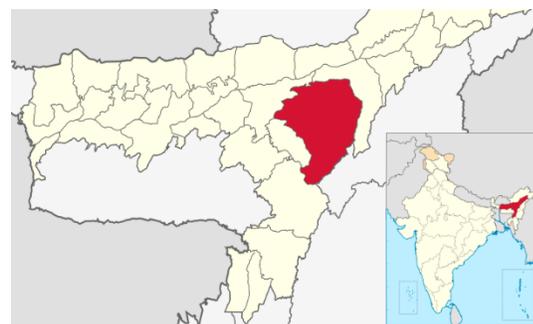
<https://www.google.com/amp/s/indianexpress.com/article/north-east-india/assam/bodo-peace-accord-signed-1600-ndfb-cadres-surrender-6243400/lite/>

### **KARBI ANGLONG:**

Government has created Autonomous hill districts of Assam in the Mikir hills region of Assam. A separate state of Karbi Anglong (Homeland) is being demanded by people of Karbi tribe.

Since 2013, Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council is established.

Karbi Anglong district is the largest amongst the 33 administrative districts of Assam. In 2006-Indian government named Karbi Anglong one of the country's 250 most backward districts



### **INSURGENT GROUPS IN KARBI ANGLONG REGION:**

- People's Democratic Council of Karbi Longri (PDCK),
- Karbi Longri NC Hills Liberation Front (KLNLF),
- Karbi People's Liberation Tiger (KPLT),
- Kuki Liberation Front (KLF) and
- United Peoples Liberation Army (UPLA).

**Gol signed a Peace deal with the above insurgent groups in September 2021.**

(<https://www.google.com/amp/s/theprint.in/india/govt-signs-karbi-peace-accord-with-5-insurgent-groups-in-assam/728114/%3famp>)

### **KAMTAPUR**

- They do not have an autonomous council like Bodos.
- Kamtapur = some districts of West Bengal + districts of Assam.
- Areas demanded under Kamatapur also overlap the areas which were demanded under the statehood of Gorkhaland in West Bengal.

**Kamatapur Liberation Organization** is the insurgent group responsible for carrying out violent activities.

([https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kamatapur\\_Liberation\\_Organisation](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kamatapur_Liberation_Organisation))

## **1.13 SMART CITIES MISSION**

The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry has extended the deadline of its Smart Cities Mission from June this year to June 2024.

The deadline has been extended to enable all 100 smart cities to not only complete their projects but also document and disseminate the learnings from the mission.

### **ABOUT SMART CITY MISSION**

The Smart Cities Mission is an innovative and new initiative by the Government of India to **drive economic growth and improve the quality of life of people** by enabling local development and harnessing technology as a means to create smart outcomes for citizens.

'Smart city' is a **city equipped with basic infrastructure to give a decent quality of life, a clean and sustainable environment through application of some smart solutions.**



It includes basic infrastructure like adequate **water supply, electricity supply, sustainable sanitation and solid waste management, efficient urban mobility, affordable housing and ensuring robust IT connectivity and e-governance.**

In the approach to the Smart Cities Mission, the objective is to **promote cities that provide core infrastructure** and give a decent quality of life to its citizens, a clean and sustainable environment and application of 'Smart' Solutions.

### COMPONENTS OF CORE INFRASTRUCTURE

- Adequate water supply,
- Assured electricity supply,
- Sanitation, including solid waste management,
- Efficient urban mobility and public transport,
- Affordable housing, especially for the poor,
- Robust IT connectivity and digitalization,
- Good governance, especially e-Governance and citizen participation,
- Sustainable environment,
- Safety and security of citizens, particularly women, children and the elderly, and
- Health and education.

### FINANCING OF SMART CITIES

The Smart City Mission will be operated as a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)** and the Central Government proposes to give financial support to the Mission to the extent of **Rs. 48,000 crores over five years** i.e. on an average **Rs. 100 crore per city per year.**

**An equal amount**, on a matching basis, will have to be **contributed by the State/ULB**; therefore, nearly Rupees one lakh crore of Government/ULB funds will be available for Smart Cities development.

### STATUS OF THE PROJECTS

As on April 30, 2023, the cities had completed 5,700 projects or 72% of the total number of projects and 60% of the total value of the projects.

Now, with two months to go, 50 out of the 100 cities have completed 75% of the projects and would be able to complete the remaining works by June.

Under the mission, 66 of the cities are small, with less than 1 million population and are implementing two-thirds of the projects.



## 1.14 THE HUNGER PARADOX IN INDIA: SELF SUFFICIENCY IN PRODUCTION DOES NOT MEAN FOOD SECURITY

To achieve the **goal of zero hunger**, India should consider a **strategic initiative** aimed at eliminating food insecurity in India and ensuring affordable access, with a special and immediate focus on India's youngest children.



## VARIOUS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- At six months of age, **33 percent of the daily calorie** intake is expected to come from food. It is presumed that the child obtains the remaining calories through “**on-demand**” **breastfeeding**.
- The fifth National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) data highlighted **the problem of "Zero-Food" among infants and children in India. For example,**
  - Among mothers with a child between ages 6-23 months, **18 per cent** reported that their child did not eat any food referred to as “**zero-food**” in the **24 hours preceding the survey**.
  - More than **80 per cent** had not consumed any protein-rich foods for an entire day (“**zero-protein**”).
  - Close to **40 per cent** did not eat any grains (roti, rice, etc) for an entire day, and **six out of 10 children do not consume milk** or dairy of any form every day (“**zero-milk**”).

## WHY IS INDIA STRUGGLING?

- **Improper assessment method:** India has relied on measures of anthropometric failure such as the percentage of children short for their age (stunting) or weighing less given their height (wasting), compared to a reference population.
  - There is multifactorial nature of causes of stunting and wasting and these measures are at best proxies suggesting overall deficiencies **without providing any specific nature of the deficiencies in children**.
- **Single ministry can't handle:** It is challenging for any single ministry or department to take responsibility for designing, implementing and monitoring policies.
- **Intergenerational linkage is a problem:** Stunting prevalence poses a challenge as a policy indicator for formulating new policies and assessing the success of existing initiatives because of the well-established intergenerational relationships between child stunting and parental height.
- **Food is not reaching to the needy:** India has recently become the world's leading country in milk production and has seen notable success in various production metrics for food items.

## INDIA'S EFFORTS

- **Mission Poshan 2.0**, the overarching flagship programme **dedicated to maternal and child nutrition**, has evolved in the right direction by targeting SDG 2.
- **The National Food Security Act 2013**, including flagship supplementary nutrition programme service.
- Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana.

## MEASURES INDIA SHOULD TAKE

- A national effort to establish **routine dietary and nutritional assessments** for the entire population is the need of the hour.
- **Appropriate food-based metrics** should be developed to effectively monitor and assess the performance of Poshan 2.0. The zero-food metric provides a good start.
  - The success of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) offers valuable insights for Poshan 2.0, in its strategic use of **directly trackable metrics**, as well as a **strong political commitment** at the highest levels.



- Measuring the **availability, accessibility and affordability** of nutritious food, especially for disadvantaged and vulnerable populations such as young children, women should be the foundation for any **evidence-based policy to end hunger and improve nutritional security**.

## 1.15 MISSION KARMAYOGI

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) **Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh** recently said that "**Mission Karmayogi**", launched by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, had institutionalised the process of capacity building, particularly for the benefit of civil servants, with the aim to shape the Century India of 2047.

### ABOUT MISSION KARMAYOGI

- Mission Karmayogi or **National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB)**.
- Mission Karmayogi **aims to prepare Civil Servants for the future** by making them more creative, constructive & innovative through transparency and technology.
- This unique programme will help to lay the foundation for civil servants in the country.
- There will be more focus on 'on-site learning' in complementing "off-site learning".

### OBJECTIVES

- The stated aim of Mission Karmayogi is to provide a mechanism to continuously build capacity, update the talent pool, and provide equal opportunities for personal and professional growth and esteem of government officials at all levels.
- Karmayogi seeks to shift the focus from rule-specific to role-specific.
- The Mission will help training the officers to meet the challenges of the society.
- It aims at building future-ready civil service with the right attitude, skills & knowledge, aligned to the vision of New India.
- The endeavour is also to end the culture of working in the silos and to overcome the multiplicity of training curriculum because of the institutions spread all over the country.
- It will improve the Human Resource management practices in the Government and will use scale & state of the art infrastructure to augment the capacity of Civil Servants.

### EXECUTING BODIES

- It will be steered by four new bodies.
- The new entities will be a Prime Minister's Public Human Resources Council, a Capacity Building Commission, a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) that will own and operate the digital assets and technological platform for online training, and a Coordination Unit, which will be headed by the Cabinet Secretary.



## WEEK 2 CURRENT AFFAIRS

### 2.1 WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX

India's ranking in the recently released **2023 World Press Freedom Index** has **slipped to 161 out of 180 countries. (2022 ranking: 150 out of 180)**

**Released by: Reporters Without Borders / Reporters sans frontières (RSF)**, A non - profit organisation **Headquartered in Paris, France.**

#### WHAT DOES THE INDEX HIGHLIGHT?

Index highlights **degree of freedom** that journalists, news organisations and netizens have in each country, and **government's efforts to respect such freedom.**

#### HOW IS THE RANKING DONE?

Rankings are based on score ranging from 0 to 100, with 100 being the best possible score (highest possible level of press freedom) and 0 the worst.

#### WHAT ARE THE PARAMETERS FOR EVALUATION?

Evaluation criteria include **5 indicators:**

- ❖ Political context,
- ❖ Legal framework
- ❖ Economic context.
- ❖ Sociocultural context and
- ❖ Safety.

#### THE 2023 REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- **India is ranked 161** out of 180 countries. Press freedom in India has **gone from “problematic” to “very bad”**, with the country **slipping 11 ranks** since the 2022 report.
- **Except for Bangladesh (163), Myanmar (173) and China (179), all other neighbours have a better rank than India** -- Bhutan (90), Nepal (95), Sri Lanka (135), Pakistan (150), Afghanistan (152).
- India was positioned **169 in political indicators** while it was 144 in legislative, 155 in economic, 143 in social indicators and **172 in the safety of journalists.**
- **Norway is ranked first** for the seventh consecutive year.

#### ABOUT REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS

- It is an **international NGO** whose self-proclaimed **aim is to defend and promote media freedom.**
- **Headquarters: Paris, France.**
- It has **consultative status with the United Nations.**
- RSF defines press freedom as “the ability of journalists as individuals and collectives to select, produce, and disseminate news in the public interest independent of political, economic, legal and social interference and in the absence of threats to their physical and mental safety.”



## 2.2 CENTRAL COUNTERPARTY CLEARING HOUSE (CCP)

The European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA), the European Union (EU's) financial markets regulator has derecognised six Indian central counterparties (CCPs) from April 30, 2023. IN Dec. 2022, the **European Union's** financial markets regulator **European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA)** said **it will withdraw recognition** of six Indian clearing bodies or central counterparties (CCPs).

These six CCPs are

- Clearing Corporation of India (CCIL),
- Indian Clearing Corporation Ltd (ICCL),
- NSE Clearing Ltd (NSCCL),
- Multi Commodity Exchange Clearing (MCXCCL),
- India International Clearing Corporation (IFSC) Ltd (IICC) and
- NSE IFSC Clearing Corporation Ltd (NICCL).

### WHAT ARE CCPs?

- **A central counterparty clearing house (CCP) is an entity that helps facilitate trading in various foreign derivatives and equities markets.**
- Typically operated by the major banks in each country, CCPs **strive to introduce efficiency and stability into various financial markets.**
- It reduces counterparty, operational, settlement, market, legal, and default risk for traders.
- A CCP acts as a counterparty to both sellers and buyers, collecting money from each, which allows it to guarantee the terms of a trade.
- **CCPs perform two main functions as the intermediary in a market transaction**
  - **clearing and settlement and**
  - **guarantee the terms of a trade.**
- A CCP is **authorised by the RBI** to operate in India under **Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.**

### REASONS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF RECOGNITION

- The decision to derecognise Indian CCPs came due to **'no cooperation arrangements' between the ESMA and Indian regulators — the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA).**
- The EU regulator said it will **defer the application of the withdrawal decisions until April 30, 2023** to mitigate the adverse impact of the move on EU market participants.
- The **ESMA wants to supervise these CCPs**, which the Indian regulators are not in favour of as they feel that these entities have robust risk management and there is no need for a foreign regulator to inspect them.

### IMPACT OF THE MOVE

- **On the TC-CCPs:** With the withdrawal of recognition, these TC-CCPs will **no longer be able to provide services** to clearing members and trading venues established in the EU.
- **On the lenders (European banks):** They will have to set aside additional capital to trade in the domestic market.



- **On the Indian economy:** Of the total foreign portfolio investors (FPI) registered in India, **close to 20% are from Europe**. However, the SEBI has said that the derecognition is unlikely to have any impact.

## 2.3 PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT, 2012

The Bombay High Court recently said that the POCSO Act was enacted not to punish minors in a consensual relationship and to brand them as criminals.

### THE POCSO ACT

The Act has completed 10 years into force.

**Formulation:** It is the first comprehensive law in India dealing **specifically with sexual abuse of children**, enacted in **2012** and is administered by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)**.

**Objectives:** The Act was designed to **protect children aged less than 18 from sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography offences** and provide for establishment of **Special Courts** for trial of such offences and related matters and incidents.

### FEATURES

- **Gender-neutral law:** The POCSO Act establishes a gender-neutral tone for the legal framework available to child sexual abuse victims by defining a child as **“any person”** under the age of 18.
- **No time limit for reporting abuse:** A victim can report an offence at any time, even a number of years after the abuse has been committed.
- **Mandatory reporting:** The Act also makes it the legal duty of a person aware of the offence to report the sexual abuse. In case s/he fails to do so, the person can be punished with six months' imprisonment or a fine.
- **Safeguards to victims:** The Act, in addition to providing **punishment** for sexual offences against children, gave certain **safeguards** to make children's interaction with the criminal justice system 'child-friendly'.
  - **For instance**, the Act specifically laid down that the child victim should not see the accused at the time of testifying and that the trial be held in camera.
  - Further, it specifically provided that the **evidence** of a child shall be **recorded within a period of 30 days** of the Special Court taking cognisance of the offence and reasons for delay, if any, be recorded.
  - It also required that the **Special Court** complete the trial, as far as possible, **within a period of one year** from the date of cognisance.

### THE AMENDMENT

- The Act was amended for the first time in **2019** for enhancing the punishments for **specific offences** in order to deter abusers and ensure a dignified childhood.
- This amendment enhanced the punishment to include **death penalty** for **aggravated penetrative sexual assault** of the child.
- It also provides for levy of fines and **imprisonment up to 20 years** to curb child pornography.
- The **new definition of child pornography** reads, “Any visual depiction of sexually explicit conduct involving a child which include photographs, video, digital or computer-generated image indistinguishable from an actual child and an image created, adapted or modified but appear to depict a child.”



## ROADBLOCKS IN IMPLEMENTATION

- **Such abuse is on the rise:** According to a recent survey, one in every two children is a victim of sexual abuse in India.
- **Limited POCSO courts:** The POCSO courts have not been designated in all districts. As of 2022, only 408 POCSO courts have been set up in 28 States as part of the Government's Fast Track Special Court's Scheme.
  - There is also a **lack of Special Public Prosecutors** appointed specifically to handle POCSO cases.
- **Excessive delays:** The slow pace of designation of Special Courts, delay in investigation and filing of charge sheets, non-appointment of support persons for child victims in most case leads to tardy implementation of the Act.
  - **Uttar Pradesh** has the highest pendency with more than three-fourths (77.77%) of the total POCSO cases filed between November 2012 and February 2021 pending.
- **Poor disposal rate:** On an average, it takes 509.78 days for a POCSO case to be disposed of whereas it has been stipulated under the Act that such cases need to be disposed of within a year.
  - **Chandigarh and West Bengal** are the only states where the average time taken for convictions is within one year.
- **High acquittal rate:** 44% of trials under POCSO end in acquittals while only 14.03% end in convictions, i.e., for every one conviction in a POCSO case, there are three acquittals.
  - This goes contrary to the data published by the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) in 2021 wherein 96% of the cases filed under the POCSO Act, 2012, the accused was a person known to the child victim.
- **Absence of support persons:** The Supreme Court had noted that in 96% of cases, a support person was not provided to the victim.
- **Lack of awareness:** The general knowledge of the POCSO Act remains severely inadequate in India.
- **New challenges:** Incidents of child abuse have also risen exponentially since the Covid-19 pandemic, with the emergence of new forms of cybercrime.



## 2.4 DEFENCE MINISTER VISITS MALDIVES

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE VISIT

- **Launched construction of a harbour for the Coast Guard of the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF)**
  - The foundation stone for the Coast Guard 'Ekatha Harbour' was laid by Defence Minister and his Maldivian counterpart.
  - The foundation stone was laid at Sifavaru in Uthuru Thila Falhu (UTF) atoll, where India is assisting in construction of a naval dockyard.
    - The UTF Harbour Project is among the biggest Indian grant-in-aid projects in Maldives.
    - The coast guard facility is expected to end the practice of the Maldives sending its vessels abroad for maintenance.



- **Handed over a Fast Patrol Vessel and a Landing Craft Assault ship to the MNDF**
  - During this visit, Indian Defence Minister handed over a Fast Patrol Vessel and a Landing Craft Assault ship to the Maldives National Defence Forces (MNDF).
  - The Fast Patrol Vessel, capable of coastal and offshore surveillance at high speeds, was commissioned as MNDF Coast Guard ship Huravee.
- **Highlighted India's strong defence cooperation with Maldives**
  - Indian Defence Minister asserted that the ties emanate from the twin policies of 'Neighbourhood First' and '**SAGAR**' (Security and Growth for All in the Region).

## INDIA'S INTEREST IN MALDIVES

- **Strategic Importance**
  - Maldives is barely 70 nautical miles away from Minicoy and 300 nautical miles away from India's West coast.
  - It is situated at the hub of commercial sea-lanes running through Indian Ocean (particularly the 8° N and 1 ½° N channels).
- **Geo-political interest**
  - Securing sea lanes of communication;
  - Fighting piracy and sea-based terrorism;
  - Making Indian Ocean a conflict free zone and restoring its status as sea of tranquil;
  - Exploring blue economy and Enhancing trade
- **China Angle**
  - China's strategic footprint in India's neighbourhood has increased.
  - The Maldives has emerged as an important 'pearl' in China's "String of Pearls" construct in South Asia.
- **Internal security angle: Radicalisation**
  - In the past, the number of Maldivians drawn towards terrorist groups like the Islamic State (IS) had increased.
  - Political instability and socio-economic uncertainty are further fuelling the rise of Islamist radicalism in the island nation.
  - This gives rise to the possibility of remote Maldivian islands being used as a launch pad for terror attacks against India and Indian interests.

## CHALLENGES IN RELATIONSHIP

- **India out campaign**
  - The campaign is backed by the country's Opposition leader Abdulla Yameen.
  - It aims to fuel more hatred by creating scepticism for India's investments in Maldives, the defence partnerships between the two, and India's net-security provisions.
  - It accuses the government of Maldives of allowing Indian boots on the ground, and thereby compromising the sovereignty of the island nation.
- **Radicalisation in Maldives**
  - The Maldives has become the **country with the highest rate of foreign fighters per capita** in the world.



- This has been revealed by a 2020 report by the European Foundation for South Asian Studies.
- **Presence of China**
  - China is increasing its presence in Indian Ocean region.

## 2.5 WORLD BANK GROUP

Indian origin **Ajay Banga** was confirmed as the next President of World Bank.

### ABOUT WORLD BANK GROUP

- The WB is an **international financial institution** that provides loans and grants to the governments of low and middle-income/developing countries for the **purpose of pursuing capital projects**.
- It was established along with the IMF at the **1944 Bretton Woods Conference**.
- The WB is the collective name for the **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and International Development Association (IDA)**, two of five international organisations owned by the **WB Group**.

### THE WORLD BANK GROUP

- **IBRD**: It provides loans, credits and grants.
- **IDA**: It provides low or no-interest loans to low-income countries.
- **International Finance Corporation (IFC)**: It provides investment, advice and asset management to private companies and governments.
- **Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA)**: It insures lenders and investors against political risk such as war.
- **International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)**: It settles investment-disputes between investors and countries.

### LEADERSHIP OF WB

- The President of the WB, who is the President of the entire WB Group, is responsible for chairing meetings of the boards of directors and for overall management of the Bank.
- Traditionally, the President of the Bank has always been a U.S. citizen nominated by the US, the largest shareholder in the bank.
- The nominee is subject to confirmation by the board of executive directors to serve a five-year, renewable term.
- The boards of directors consist of the WB Group President and 25 executive directors. The President is the presiding officer and ordinarily has no vote except to break a tie.
- The executive directors as individuals cannot exercise any power or commit or represent the Bank unless the boards specifically authorised them to do so.

## 2.6 US FEDERAL RESERVE HIKES INTEREST RATE

The US Federal Reserve has raised interest rates by **25 basis points** to check inflation.

**US Federal Reserve** is the **CENTRAL BANK** of USA

### NEWS FROM NOVEMBER:

The **US Federal Reserve** announced its **fourth consecutive 75 basis point interest rate hike**, which brought the **benchmark federal funds rate** to the range of **3.75% to 4%**.

The Fed also delivered a sharp tone in favour of **over-tightening in a bid to contain inflation**.



## WHY WERE THE RATES HIKED?

- **Inflation** in the US remains elevated, reflecting supply and demand imbalances related to the pandemic, higher food and energy prices, and broader price pressures.
- However, the **Central Bank of US** only has the tools to **control the demand side** — which it is using to bring **inflation in line with its mandate of 2%**.  
(**Raising interest rates** is a monetary policy instrument that typically **helps suppress demand in the economy**, thereby helping the inflation rate decline.)
- The Fed has said the battle against inflation would require borrowing costs to rise further.

## IMPACT ON INDIA

- **On Indian Market**
  - Fed's continuous rate hikes does not **augur well** for emerging markets including India.
  - An increase in US interest rates **results in an outflow of funds to US markets**, putting Indian stock markets and currencies under pressure.
  - Equity markets are likely to see **increased volatility** in the next few months.
- **On Indian Rupee**
  - The outflow of funds from Indian markets will have an **impact on the exchange rate of Indian rupee against the dollar. The Indian rupee has been losing value against the dollar since early 2022.**
  - A weaker rupee should **help Indian exporters at some-level**. Nonetheless, the chances of a recession in the rich world, including the US, have gone up and that will hurt them more.

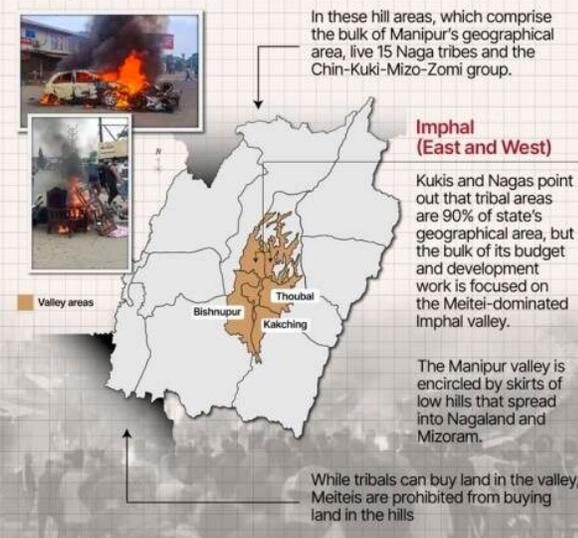
## 2.7 VIOLENCE IN MANIPUR

### THE BACKGROUND

- **Manipur was boiling since February 2023**
  - Manipur has been restive since February when the state government launched an eviction drive seen as targeting a specific tribal group.
  - The drive led to protests but not on the scale of the one seen recently.
- **High Court's order as a trigger point**
  - The recent protests were triggered by the **Manipur High Court's direction to the State to pursue a 10-year-old recommendation to grant Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to the non-tribal Meitei community.**
  - The Court's order has brought the historical tensions between the valley-dwelling Meitei community and the state's hill tribes to a boil.

### Manipur's ethnic faultlines: Kuki-Meitei divide & recent unrest

There are 16 districts in Manipur, but the state is commonly thought of as divided into 'valley' and 'hill' districts.





- **Violence started**

- A 'tribal solidarity march' was organised by the All Tribal Students' Union of Manipur (ATSUM) against the order of the High Court.
- Violent clashes broke out at various places in Manipur during the course of this march.

### MAJOR COMMUNITIES OF MANIPUR

- The State is like a football stadium with the Imphal Valley representing the playfield at the centre and the surrounding hills the galleries.
- The valley, which comprises about 10% of Manipur's landmass, is dominated by the non-tribal Meitei.
  - This area yields 40 of the State's 60 MLAs.
- The hills comprising 90% of the geographical area are inhabited by more than 35% recognised tribes.
  - This area sends only 20 MLAs to the Assembly.

### WHY DOES MEITI WANT ST STATUS?

- There has been an organised push in support of this demand since 2012, led by the Scheduled Tribes Demand Committee of Manipur (STDCM).
- **Recognised as tribe before merger with India**
  - In their plea before the High Court, it was argued that the Meitei community was recognised as a tribe before the merger of the princely state of Manipur with the Union of India in 1949. It lost its identity as a tribe after the merger.
- **Need to preserve tradition and culture**
  - The demand for ST status arose from the need to preserve the community, and save the ancestral land, tradition, culture and language of the Meiteis.
  - As per the arguments forwarded by the community in the court:
    - The community has been victimised without any constitutional safeguards to date.
    - The Meitein/Meetei have been gradually marginalised in their ancestral land.
    - Their population which was 59% of the total population of Manipur in 1951 has now been reduced to 44% as per 2011 Census data.

### WHY ARE OTHER TRIBAL GROUPS AGAINST ST STATUS FOR MEITIS?

- The tribal groups say the **Meiteis have a demographic and political advantage** besides being more advanced than them academically and in other aspects.
  - The Meiteis are a dominant group controlling the state and its apparatuses.
  - Hence, the claim that Meiteis need ST status to protect their culture and identity is self-defeating.
- They feel the ST status to the Meiteis **would lead to loss of job opportunities and allow them to acquire land in the hills** and push the tribals out.
- The Manipuri language of the Meiteis is included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.
- Sections of the Meitei community — which is predominantly Hindu — are **already classified under Scheduled Castes (SC) or Other Backward Classes (OBC)**.

### ARE THERE ANY OTHER CONFLICT LINES?



- Unrest has been brewing among the hill tribes of the state for a number of reasons.
- Pro-government groups in Manipur claim that some tribal groups with vested interests are trying to scuttle Chief Minister's crusade against drugs.
- The anti-drug drive began with destroying poppy fields and the theory that illegal settlers from Myanmar are behind clearing forests and government lands to grow opium and cannabis.
  - These settlers are ethnically related to the Kuki-Zomi people of Manipur.
- The first violent protest in March was against the eviction of the residents of a Kuki village.
  - Kuki groups have claimed that the survey and eviction is a violation of Article 371C, which confers some administrative autonomy to the tribal-dominated hill areas of Manipur.

## 2.8 ARTICLE 355 OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Central Government recently promulgated **Article 355 in Manipur** to take charge of the security of the state.

### ABOUT:

- It is a **part of emergency provisions** contained in **Part XVIII of the Constitution of India, from Article 352 to 360.**
- It **empowers the central government to take all necessary steps to protect a state against internal disturbances and external aggression.**
- This article empowers the Centre to take necessary steps **to protect a state from any kind of threat, be it internal or external.**
- The provision is designed to **ensure that the government can act swiftly and decisively in the event of any disturbance** or threat to the peace and security of the country.

### EXACT TEXT OF ARTICLE 355

The exact definition of Article 355 in the Constitution of India is, **“It shall be the duty of the Union to protect every State against external aggression and internal disturbance and to ensure that the government of every State is carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.”**

## 2.9 WASHINGTON DECLARATION

The President of South Korea and the US President recently signed the Washington Declaration on the anniversary of 70 years of their bilateral relationship.

### PROVISIONS OF THE DECLARATION

- **The agreement outlines cooperation towards deterrence**
  - As per the agreement:
    - an American nuclear ballistic submarine would be deployed in the Korean peninsula;
    - a nuclear consultative group would be formed to formulate principles of joint response tactics;
    - South Korea would receive Intel from the U.S. regarding nuclear advancements; and
    - the U.S. will strengthen South Korea's nuclear deterrence capabilities through joint military training programs and an annual intergovernmental simulation.
- **It reaffirmed the non-proliferation Treaty**





- South Korea would not venture into the creation of its own independent nuclear capabilities.
- It would instead focus on deterrence measures through an alliance-based approach.

### SIGNIFICANCE

- **Advocates for nuclear deterrence policy in the region**
  - The Washington Declaration advocates for nuclear deterrence policy in the region, aiming to balance power dynamics against North Korea.
- **Prohibits South Korea to develop its own nuclear capabilities**
  - The declaration does not allow South Korea to develop their own nuclear arsenal as it would hinder the prolonged efforts of controlling nuclear production in the world.
- **Aligns with the larger goal of non-proliferation**
  - The assurance that the U.S. and its nuclear weapons would protect its allies by being responsible for maintaining stability in the region aligns with the larger goal of non-proliferation.

### CHALLENGES

- **Physical deployment of the arsenal is a direct threat**
  - While the aim is to defuse the threat, physical deployment of the arsenal can be deemed as a direct threat by opposing actors.
  - Security experts fear that it can be used as leverage to act aggressively.
- **South Koreans prefer their own deterrence**
  - The South Korean public are sceptic about U.S. support. With an aggressive North Korea in the neighbourhood, they would prefer their own deterrence.
- **Interests of the larger power (U.S.) takes precedence**
  - The agreement mandates the U.S. President as the only sole authority to use the nuclear arsenal of the U.S. in the event of a nuclear confrontation.
  - While the existence of the agreement is based on the security needs of South Korea, the policy reflects big power politics where the interests of the larger power (U.S.) take precedence.

## 2.10 SCO FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING

Recently, the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)** took place in **Goa**.

**India is holding the chairmanship of the SCO for the year 2023.**

### ABOUT SCO:

SCO is a **permanent intergovernmental international organisation**, created in June 2001 in Shanghai (China).

**Founding members** included Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. In **2017, India & Pakistan joined**. In **2021, Iran joined**. (formal induction in 2023)

This organization represents approximately 42% of the world's population, 22% of its land area and 20% of global GDP.



### ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF SCO

- The Heads of State Council (HSC) is the supreme decision-making body in the SCO, it meets once a year.
- The Council of Heads of Government is the second-highest council in the organisation.
- The Council of Foreign Ministers hold regular meetings, where they discuss the current international situation.
- Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), based in Tashkent, is established to combat terrorism, separatism and extremism.
- **Official working languages:** Chinese, Russian
- **SCO Secretariat:** Beijing, China

### SIGNIFICANCE OF SCO FOR INDIA

- India's security, geopolitical, strategic and economic interests are closely intertwined with developments in the region
- The **Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS)** of SCO specifically deals with issues relating to security and defence.
- The Central Asian region is **richly endowed with natural resources** and vital minerals
- SCO provides a platform for **India's efforts to connect with Central Asia**.
- **Stable Afghanistan** is in India's interest. SCO is a platform which can play an important role in Afghanistan.



## 2.11 PROJECT DANTAK

The Prime Minister recently praised the initiative by **Border Roads Organisation Project Dantak** to commemorate the 64th Raising Day.

### ABOUT:

- Project Dantak is an **overseas project of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO)** under the Ministry of Defence of India.
- It was **established on 24 April 1961** as a result of an **agreement between Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, the third king of Bhutan** and then Prime Minister of India **Jawaharlal Nehru**.
- It is primarily focused on **developing infrastructure and providing connectivity in remote areas of Bhutan**.
- It was tasked **to construct the pioneering motorable roads in Bhutan**.

### KEY PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN

- It **completed the road connecting Samdrup Jongkhar to Trashigang in 1968**. In the same year, Thimphu was connected to Phuentsholing by Dantak.
- Some other **notable projects** executed by the project include the **construction of Paro Airport, Yonphula Airfield, Thimphu – Trashigang Highway, Telecommunication & Hydro Power Infrastructure, Sherubtse College, Kanglung and India House Estate**.
- The **project recruits local workers from Bhutan as well as Indian workers from adjoining districts** along the India-Bhutan border.

## 2.12 SC RULES IN FAVOUR OF DELHI GOVERNMENT

A five-judge **constitutional bench** of the Supreme Court held that the **Delhi Govt will have legislative and executive control over administrative services in the National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD)** except with regard to public order, police and land.

### BACKGROUND:

- A five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court was hearing the dispute between the Delhi government and the Central government.
- The dispute was over matters pertaining to **control over the transfers and the overall functioning of administrative services in the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi**.
- The administrative services include appointments and transfers, in the national capital.

### ROOT CAUSE OF THE DISPUTE

- **Article 239 AA** was inserted in the Constitution by the **69th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1991**.
  - Based on the recommendations of **S Balakrishnan Committee**, it gave special status to Delhi.
- It says that the **National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi will have an Administrator and a Legislative Assembly**.
  - The Legislative Assembly “shall have power to make laws for the whole or any part of the NCT w.r.t. any of the matters in the State List or Concurrent List in so far as any such matter is applicable to Union territories”.
  - However, the legislative assembly of Delhi cannot legislate on the following three subjects – **Police, Public Order, and Land**.



- However, in the past few years, governance in the NCT has often been a subject of conflict between the Delhi government and the L-G.

### CONTROL OVER ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

- In 2019, a two-judge bench of the SC delivered a **split verdict** on the aspect of who controls administrative services in Delhi.
- The two-judge bench had **recommended that a three-judge bench be set up to decide the issue of control of administrative services.**
- Further, in May 2022, a three-judge Bench had referred this case to a larger Bench on the Central government's plea.
- The three-judge Bench had decided that the question of control over administrative services required "**further examination**".

### ARGUMENTS OF THE CENTER AND STATE GOVT.

- The Central Government has consistently maintained that because Delhi is the national capital and the face of the country, it must have control over administrative services, which include appointments and transfers.
- On the other hand, the Delhi government has argued that in the interest of federalism, the elected representatives must have power over transfers and postings.
  - The Delhi government had also contended that the recent amendments to the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act, 2021, **violate the doctrine of basic structure of the Constitution.**

### THE LEGAL ISSUES BEFORE SC

- There were **two legal issues** before the court –
  - The first arises from a reference made by a two-judge Bench in February 2019.
    - While deciding on the distribution of powers between the Delhi government and Centre, left the question of who will have control over the administrative services for consideration by a larger Bench.
  - Second issue is the **Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act 2021**, passed by the Parliament.
    - The Act provided that the term "government" referred to in any law made by the Legislative Assembly of Delhi will imply the Lieutenant Governor (L-G).
    - However, the Delhi government has challenged the constitutional validity of the Act.

### THE JUDGEMENT

- The Court held that the legislature has control over bureaucrats in administration of services, except in areas outside the legislative powers of the National Capital Territory (NCT).
- According to the Supreme Court, the Delhi government, much like other States, represents the representative form of government and **any further expansion of the Union's power will be contrary to the Constitutional scheme.**
- The Court pointed out that if officers stop reporting to ministers or do not follow their instructions, the principle of collective responsibility will be affected.
- **Limitations** –



- However, the Court added that **control over services would not extend to entries related to public order, police and land.**
- Also, the decision on which IAS officer gets posted to the national capital — and for how long — will continue to be the Centre’s prerogative.
- Also, the **Central government will continue to, appoint the Chief Secretary of Delhi,** with consultations with the Chief Minister which, as per tradition, is more or less a formality.

## 2.13 POSHAN BHI PADHAI BHI SCHEME

The Union **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)** recently launched the Centre’s flagship programme ‘**Poshan Bhi, Padhai Bhi**’, which will focus on **Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)** at anganwadis across the country.

ECCE is an important component of **Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0** (Mission Poshan 2.0) and envisaged under the **National Education Policy 2020**.

### ANGANWADI ECOSYSTEM IN INDIA

- Considering global evidence that **85% of brain development is achieved by the age of 6 years**, the Anganwadi eco-system becomes a critical access point for building the children’s base.
- Close to **9 lakh** operational Anganwadi centres across the country are providing **supplementary nutrition and early care and education** to around 8 crore beneficiary children (under the age of 6 years).
  - This makes it the largest public provisioning of such services in the world.
- MoWCD has allocated **Rs 600 crore for the training** of anganwadi workers to implement the ECCE.
  - The National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (**NIPCCD**) has been roped in for the training of Anganwadi workers.

### MISSION SAKSHAM ANGANWADI & POSHAN 2.0

- It is an **Integrated Nutrition Support Programme** approved for implementation during the 15th Finance Commission period **2021-22 to 2025-26**.
- It seeks to **address the challenges of malnutrition** in children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers through -
  - A strategic shift in nutrition content and delivery and
  - Creation of a **convergent eco-system** to develop and promote practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity.
- The existing components (of the on-going nutrition programme) have been re-organised (to improve implementation) under Poshan 2.0 into the primary verticals given below:
  - **Nutrition Support through Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP)** for children (06 months to 6 years), pregnant women and lactating mothers (PWLM); and for Adolescent Girls (14 to 18 years) in Aspirational Districts and North Eastern Region (NER);
  - ECCE [3-6 years] and early stimulation for (0-3 years);
  - Anganwadi Infrastructure including modern, upgraded Saksham Anganwadi; and



- **Poshan Abhiyan:** Launched in 2018, its focus is to lay emphasis on nutritional status of adolescent girls, pregnant women, lactating mothers and children from 0-6 years age.

### WHAT IS THERE IN POSHAN BHI PADHAI BHI?

- It is a pathbreaking ECCE program **to ensure that India has the world's largest, universal, high-quality pre-school network**, as suggested by the NEP 2020.
- The aim is not only to make anganwadi centres **nutrition hubs** but also **education-imparting centres** - providing at least two hours of high-quality preschool instruction on a daily basis.
- Under this, the government will target children's development in every domain mentioned in the **National Curriculum Framework**, viz., physical and motor development, cognitive development, socio-emotional-ethical development, etc.
- It will also ensure the **use of developmentally appropriate pedagogies** and emphasising the links with primary education as well as early childhood health and nutrition services.
- It will help build a **Jan Andolan**, to involve communities in strengthening the foundations of the country's future generations.

## 2.14 SAHEL REGION

The ongoing fighting in Sudan is forcing thousands to flee. The humanitarian emergency is spreading, creating a dangerous security situation in the Sahel region.

### ABOUT

- The Sahel is the ecoclimatic and biogeographic realm of transition in Africa between the Sahara to the north and the Sudanian savanna to the south.
- Having a semi-arid climate, it stretches across the south-central latitudes of Northern Africa between the Atlantic Ocean and the Red Sea.
- The Sahel part of Africa includes from west to east parts of northern Senegal, southern Mauritania, central Mali, northern Burkina Faso, the extreme south of Algeria, Niger, the extreme north of Nigeria, the extreme north of Cameroon and Central African Republic, central Chad, central and southern Sudan, the extreme north of South Sudan, Eritrea, and the extreme north of Ethiopia.



## 2.15 INDIAN SPACE POLICY, 2023

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) released the Indian Space Policy 2023, which envisages "encouraging, enabling and developing a flourishing commercial presence in space." However, a few issues remain and India must address them to fully extract the benefits in the Second Space Age.

### SPACE AGES IN INDIA

- **First Space Age**
  - India's space industry and space economy **were defined by ISRO until early 1990s.**
  - **Private sector involvement** was limited to **building to ISRO designs and specifications.**



- **Second Space Age:** The Second Space Age began with the **licensing of private TV channels, the explosive growth of the Internet, mobile telephony, and the emergence of the smartphone.**

### INDIA'S SPACE ECONOMY

- Today, while ISRO's budget is approximately \$1.6 billion, India's space economy is over \$9.6 billion.
- Broadband, OTT and 5G promise a double-digit annual growth in satellite-based services.
- With an enabling environment, the **Indian space industry could grow to \$60 billion by 2030, directly creating more than two lakh jobs.**

### PREVIOUS POLICIES

- **First satellite communication policy**
  - The policy was **introduced in 1997**, with guidelines for **foreign direct investment (FDI) in the satellite industry.**
  - However, even after further liberalising, **this policy never generated much enthusiasm.**
  - Today, more than half the transponders beaming TV signals into Indian homes are **hosted on foreign satellites.**
  - As a result, there is an **annual outflow of over half a billion dollars.**
- **Remote sensing data policy**
  - It was introduced in 2001, amended in 2011, 2016, and was replaced by a **National Geospatial Policy** that has been further liberalised in 2022.
  - Yet, **Indian users including the security and defence agencies** spend nearly a billion dollars annually **to procure earth observation data and imagery from foreign sources.**
- **Space Activities Bill**
  - To streamline affairs and speed up the process, a **draft Space Activities Bill was brought out in 2017**, which **went through a long consultative process.**
  - It lapsed in 2019 with the outgoing Lok Sabha.
  - The government was expected to introduce a new Bill by 2021, but it appears to have contented itself with the new policy statement.

### HOW IS SPACE POLICY OF 2023 DIFFERENT FROM EARLIER POLICIES?

- It is an acceptance to the fact that **the private sector is a critical stakeholder** in the entire value chain of the space economy.
- **Focusing on civilian and peaceful applications:** There is only one reference to 'security' in the document makes it clear that the **focus is on civilian and peaceful applications.**
- **Different mechanism for security purpose:** Security agencies can task non-governmental entities (NGEs) for procuring tailor-made solutions to address specific requirements.
- **Different roles for departments and agencies**



- The policy lays out a strategy and **which assigns the roles of the Department of Space, ISRO, the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACE) set up in 2020.**
- **The New Space India Limited (NSIL)**, a public sector unit set up in 2019 under the Department of Space as the commercial arm of ISRO **to replace the now defunct Antrix.**
- **Directs ISRO's focus only on R&D**
  - ISRO will transition out of the existing practice of being present in the manufacturing of operational space systems.
  - **ISRO shall focus on R&D in advanced technology**, proving newer systems and realisation of space objects for meeting national prerogatives.
  - Another ISRO's task is to **“share technologies, products, processes, and best practices with NGEs and/or Government companies.**
  - ISRO will now use its biggest asset, its qualified and talented manpower, to concentrate on cutting edge research and development and long-term projects such as Chandrayaan and Gaganyaan.
- **Role of NSIL:** As ISRO's commercial arm, NSIL will become the interface for interacting with the industry, undertake commercial negotiations and provide hand-holding support to ensure smooth and efficient transfer of technologies.
- **Induction of NGEs**
  - Now the NGEs are allowed to undertake end-to-end activities in the space sector through establishment and operation of space objects, ground-based assets and related services, such as communication, remote sensing, navigation, etc.
  - Satellites **could be self-owned, procured or leased**; communication services could be over India or outside; and remote sensing data could be disseminated in India or abroad.
  - NGEs **can design and operate launch vehicles** for space transportation and establish their own infrastructure.
  - NGEs can now make filings with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and engage in commercial recovery of asteroid resources.
- **Specified role of IN-SPACE**
  - The activities of the NGEs will be **in keeping with guidelines and regulation to be issued by IN-SPACE.**
  - It is expected to act as the **single window agency for authorising space activities “by government entities and NGEs”**, in keeping with safety, security, international obligations and overall national interests.
  - Finally, **IN-SPACE is expected to create a “stable and predictable regulatory framework” that will ensure a level playing field for the NGEs.**
  - It will act as a promoter by setting up industry clusters and as the regulator, issue guidelines on liability issues.

## GAPS

- The new policy **does not provide a time frame for the necessary steps ahead.**
- Neither is there an indicative timeline for ISRO's transitioning out of its current practices nor is there a schedule for IN-SPACE to create the regulatory framework.



### HOW CAN THE GAPS BE FILLED?

- **Clear Rules and Regulations:** The policy framework will need clear rules and regulations pertaining to FDI and licensing, government procurement to sustain the new space start-ups.
- **Fixing the liability:** There should be a provision of liability **in case of violations and an appellate framework for dispute settlement.**
- **Formation of a statutory regulator**
  - IN-SPACE is expected to authorise space activities for all, both government and non-government entities.
  - Currently, its position is ambiguous as it functions under the purview of the Department of Space. The Secretary (Space) is also Chairman of ISRO, the government entity to be regulated by IN-SPACE.
  - To make It more efficient the government should anticipate forming a statutory body for IN-SPACE on the lines of **Reserve Bank of India, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).**

ENSURE IAS



## WEEK 3

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

### 3.1 INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR MIGRATION

Amy Pope elected next Director General of the International Organization for Migration



#### ABOUT INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR MIGRATION

- **What it is?** Established in 1951, IOM is the leading intergovernmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners.
- **History:** It was born in 1951 out of the chaos and displacement of Western Europe following the Second World War.
- **Status:** IOM was granted Permanent Observer status to the UN General Assembly in 1992, and a cooperation agreement between IOM and the UN was signed in 1996.
- **Members:** With 175 member states, a further 8 states holding observer status and offices in over 100 countries, **IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all.** It does so by providing services and advice to governments and migrants. **India is a member of IOM.**

#### AREAS OF WORK

- Migration and development
- Facilitating migration
- Regulating migration
- Forced migration.

### 3.2 NATIONAL AYUSH MISSION

Ministry of Ayush is organising a two days National Ayush Mission Conclave in New Delhi.

#### ABOUT NATIONAL AYUSH MISSION

- It aims to enhance the **availability, accessibility, and quality of Ayush healthcare services** across the country through **Ayush Health Wellness centers (AHWCs)** as part of Ayushman Bharat scheme.
- **Mandatory Components:**
  - AYUSH Services
  - AYUSH Educational Institutions
  - Quality Control of ASU &H (Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani & Homeopathy) Drugs
  - Medicinal Plants





- Union Cabinet has approved the operationalization of **12,500 Ayush HWCs** by upgrading existing Ayush Dispensaries / Health Sub-centre through State/UT Governments in **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** in a phased manner.

### RESOURCE ALLOCATION

- **For AYUSH Services, Educational Institutions and Quality Control of ASU&H Drugs:-**
  - For special Category states- **Grant-in-aid** component will be **90% from Govt. of India** and remaining **10% is proposed to be the State** contribution.
  - For other States/UTs the sharing pattern will be **75%:25%**.
- **For Medicinal Plants:**
  - This component will be financed **100% by Central Government in North Eastern State** and hilly State.
  - In other states, it will be shared in the ratio of **90:10 between Centre and States**.
- It was launched in **2014** under **Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.

### 3.3 PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES

A **breach of privilege** notice against a Rajya Sabha member was recently referred to the Committee of Privileges for investigation by the Rajya Sabha Chairman

#### WHAT IS BREACH OF PRIVILEGE?

- A breach of privilege is a **violation of any of the privileges of MPs/Parliament**.
- Among other things, **any action 'casting reflections' on MPs, parliament or its committees**; could be considered breach of privilege.
- This may include **publishing of news items, editorials or statements made in newspaper/magazine/TV interviews or in public speeches**.

#### WHAT ARE PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES?

- Parliamentary privilege **refers to rights and immunities enjoyed by Parliament as an institution and MPs in their individual capacity**, without which they cannot discharge their functions as entrusted upon them by the Constitution.
- **Are these parliamentary privileges defined under law?**
  - **According to the Constitution**, the **powers, privileges** and immunities of Parliament and MP's **are to be defined by Parliament**.
  - **No law has so far been enacted** in this respect. In the absence of any such law, it **continues to be governed by British Parliamentary conventions**.
- This committee consists of **15 members in Lok Sabha (10 in case of Rajya Sabha)** nominated by the **Speaker (Chairman in case of Rajya Sabha)**.
- In the **Rajya Sabha**, the **deputy chairperson heads the committee of privileges**.

#### POWERS & FUNCTIONS

- The committee **examines every question involving a breach of privilege of the House or of the members** or of any Committee thereof **referred to it by the Speaker/Chairman**.
- It also **determines with reference to the facts of each case whether a breach of privilege is involved** and makes suitable recommendations in its report.



- It also **states the procedure to be followed by House** in giving effect to its recommendations.
- When a question of privilege is referred to the Committee by the House, the **report of the Committee is presented to the House by the Chairman.**
- Where a question of privilege is referred to the Committee by the Speaker, the **report of the Committee is presented to the Speaker who may pass final orders** thereon or direct that it be laid on the Table of the House.
- The **Speaker/Chairman may refer to the Committee any petition** regarding the disqualification of a member **on the ground of defection for making a preliminary inquiry** and submitting a report to him.
- The **procedure to be followed by the Committee in these cases** is so far as may be the **same as in applicable to questions of breach of privilege.**

### 3.4 NUTRIENT BASED SUBSIDY

- The Central government approved Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) rates for Nitrogen (N), Phosphorous (P), Potash (K) and Sulphur (S) for the 2023 Kharif Season.
- The Cabinet also approved revision of the NBS rates for Rabi Season 2022-23 (January-March, 2023).

#### THE STATISTICS INVOLVED

- The Union government has approved a subsidy of **Rs 38,000 crore** for **phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilisers** for the **kharif 2023 season** (April-September) under the nutrient-based subsidy (NBS) mechanism.
  - The subsidy rates for the two fertilisers, which are mostly imported, have been fixed after taking into consideration the fall in international prices.
  - The subsidy on P&K for the current kharif season is much lower than about Rs 61,000 crore spent during last kharif season.
- Along with this, the government will spend another **Rs 70,000 crore** on subsidy for urea which is the most commonly used fertiliser. In total, the government will spend **Rs 1.08 lakh crore** towards fertiliser subsidy in the summer season.
  - In India, cultivation takes place on **1,400 lakh hectares** of land across the country.
  - The fertilizer **subsidy for one hectare is about Rs 8,909** subsidy.
  - For the **12 crore farmers in the country**, each farmer gets **Rs 21,223 as a subsidy** for fertilizers.

**CABINET DECISION**  
17 MAY 2023

**Nutrient Based Subsidy For Fertilizers**

Cabinet approves revision in Nutrient Based Subsidy rates for RABI Season, 2022-23 and KHARIF Season, 2023

- Subsidy of **Rs. 38,000 crores** for the Kharif 2023

**Benefits**

- Availability of fertilizers to farmers at subsidized, affordable & reasonable prices.
- Rationalization of subsidy in view of recent trends in the international prices of fertilizers & inputs.
- Subsidy would be provided to the fertilizer companies as per approved and notified rates.

#### WHAT IS NUTRIENT BASED SUBSIDY?

- Nutrient Based Subsidy Programme for **fertilizers** was initiated in 2010 by the Union Government.
- Under the scheme, a fixed rate of subsidy (in Rs per kg basis) is announced for nutrients namely **Nitrogen (N), Phosphate (P), Potash (K) and Sulphur (S)** by the government on an annual basis.



- It aims at ensuring –
  - Balanced use of fertilizers,
  - Improving agricultural productivity,
  - Promoting the growth of the indigenous fertilizers industry and
  - Reducing the burden of Subsidy.

### MACRO & MICRO NUTRIENTS

- **Macronutrients:** Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), Potash (K), Calcium, Sulfur (S), and Magnesium are known as macro-nutrients (required in comparatively larger amounts).
- **Micro Nutrients:** Iron (Fe), Zinc (Zn), Copper, Boron, Manganese Molybdenum, Chloride, and others are the micronutrients (required in a smaller quantity) for the growth and development of crop plants.
- Among the various types, **NPK** (nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium) fertilizers are the most common ones, and **Urea** stands as the most highly consumed fertilizer in India.
- **India is the second-largest consumer of fertilizers globally, with an annual consumption of more than 55.0 million metric ton.**

### ABOUT FERTILIZER SUBSIDY

- Farmers buy **fertilisers at MRPs (maximum retail price)** below their normal supply-and-demand-based market rates or what it costs to produce/import them.
- The **MRP of neem-coated urea**, for instance, is fixed by the government at **Rs 5,922.22 per tonne**, whereas its average cost-plus price payable to domestic manufacturers and importers comes to around **Rs 17,000 and Rs 23,000 per tonne**, respectively.
- The difference, which varies according to plant-wise production cost and import price, is footed by the Centre as subsidy.
- The MRPs of non-urea fertilisers are decontrolled or fixed by the companies. However, the Centre pays a flat per-tonne subsidy on these nutrients to ensure reasonable prices.

### HOW IS THE SUBSIDY PAID?

- The **subsidy goes to fertiliser companies**, although its ultimate beneficiary is the farmer who pays MRPs less than the market-determined rates.
- Under the **Direct-Benefit Transfer (DBT) system**, subsidy payment to the companies would happen only after actual sales to farmers by retailers.
- Each retailer now has a point-of-sale (PoS) machine linked to the Department of Fertilisers' **e-Urvarak DBT portal**.
- Anybody buying subsidised fertilisers is required to furnish his/her Aadhaar unique identity or Kisan Credit Card number.
- Only upon the sale getting registered on the e-Urvarak platform can a company claim subsidy.

### ABOUT KHARIF SEASON

- The crops that are sown in the rainy season are called Kharif crops and it is also known as the summer or monsoon crop in India.
- Kharif crops are usually sown with the beginning of the first rains in July, during the **south-west monsoon season**.



- The sowing time may vary in the different states of India as it depends on the arrival of monsoon.
  - For example, in southern states like Kerala, the seeds are usually sown towards the end of May and in northern states like Punjab, Haryana the seeds are sown in the month of June.
- These crops are dependent on the quantity of rainwater as well as its timing.
- Harvesting takes place in the months of **September or October**.

### KHARIF CROPS

- **Cereal crops** –
  - Rice, Bajra, Jowar, Maize (corn), Millet and Soybean
- **Fruit crops** –
  - Muskmelon, Sugarcane, Watermelon, Orange
- **Seed/Grain crops** –
  - Arhar (tur), Black gram (urad), Cotton, Cowpea, Green gram (moong), Groundnut, Guar, Moth bean, Mung bean, Sesame, Urad bean
- **Vegetable crops** –
  - Bitter gourd (karela), Bottle gourd, Brinjal, Chilli, Ladyfingers, Sponge Gourd, Tinda, Tomato, Turmeric, French beans

### RABI SEASON

- The crops that are sown in the winter season are called Rabi crops and it is also known as the winter crop in India and Pakistan.
- Rabi crops are usually sown in **October or November**.
- Rabi crops are cultivated in the **dry season** so timely irrigation is required to grow these crops.
- Harvesting takes place in the months of **March or April**.

### RABI CROPS

- **Cereal crops** –
  - Barley, Gram, Rapeseed, Mustard, Oat, Wheat and Bajra
- **Fruit crops** –
  - Almond, Banana, Ber, Dates, Grapes, Guava, Kinnow, Lemon/Citrus, Mangoes, Mulberries, Orange
- **Legumes/lentils (dal) crops** –
  - Chickpea, Lobias, Masoor, Mung bean, Pigeon pea, Toria, Urad bean
- **Seed/grain crops** –
  - Alfalfa, Coriander, Cumin, Fenugreek, Linseed mustard, Isabgol, Sunflower, Bengal gram, Red gram



### 3.5 PRODUCTION LINKED INCENTIVE (PLI) SCHEME

The Union Cabinet cleared a **revised production linked incentive (PLI) scheme for IT hardware** with an outlay of **Rs 17,000 crore**, more than doubling the budget for the scheme that was first cleared in 2021.

The IT hardware industry is targeted to reach a **production of \$24 billion by 2025-26**, with **exports anticipated** to be in the range of **\$12-17 billion** during the same period.

#### THE SCHEME

- A cornerstone of the Government's push for achieving an **Atma Nirbhar Bharat**, the objective of the PLI Schemes is to
  - **Make domestic manufacturing globally competitive**
  - Create **global Champions** in manufacturing and
  - Generate employment opportunities for the country's youth.
- The strategy behind the scheme is **to offer companies incentives on incremental sales** from products manufactured in India, over the base year.
- The first three PLI Schemes were approved earlier in March, 2020 and these were followed by another 10 New PLI Schemes in November, 2020.

TRANSFORMING INDIA INTO A MANUFACTURING HUB	
CABINET APPROVES PRODUCTION LINKED INCENTIVE SCHEME FOR 10 SECTORS WITH AN OUTLAY OF NEARLY RS 2 LAIKH CRORE	
Sectors	Approved financial outlay for 5 years
Advance Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery	Rs 18,100 crore
Electronic/Technology products	Rs 5,000 crore
Automobiles & Auto components	Rs 57,042 crore
Pharmaceutical drugs	Rs 15,000 crore
Telecom & Networking Products	Rs 12,195 crore
Textile products	Rs 10,683 crore
Food products	Rs 10,900 crore
High-efficiency solar PV modules	Rs 4,500 crore
White goods (ACs & LED)	Rs 6,238 crore
Specialty Steel	Rs 6,322 crore
<b>Total - Rs 1,45,980 crore</b>	
Already notified sectors	
Mobile manufacturing and specified electronic components	Rs 40,951 crore
Critical Key Starting materials/Drug Intermediaries & Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients	Rs 6,940 crore
Manufacturing of medical devices	Rs 3,420 crore
<b>Total - Rs 1,97,291 crore</b>	

The scheme will make Indian manufacturers globally competitive, attract investment in areas of competency & cutting-edge technology while ensuring efficiencies, pushing exports and making India a key part of the global supply chain.

#### PURPOSE OF PLI SCHEME

- **Boost domestic manufacturing in sunrise and strategic sectors,**
- Curb cheaper imports and reduce import bills,
- Improve cost competitiveness of domestically manufactured goods, and
- Enhance domestic capacity and exports.

#### PLI FOR HARDWARE 1.0

- It was first announced in February **2021** with an initial outlay of around **Rs 7,300 crore** over a period of four years.
- Domestic players investing Rs 20 crore and clocking sales of Rs 50 crore in the 1st year, Rs 100 crore in the 2nd, Rs 200 crore in the 3rd, and Rs 300 crore in the final year, **would pocket incentives of 1-4% on incremental sales over 2019-20.**
- **The first version of the scheme was a laggard** with only two companies - Dell and Bhagwati - managing to meet first year's (FY22) targets, and the industry calling for a renewed scheme with an increased budgetary outlay.

#### PLI FOR HARDWARE 2.0



- **According to the MeitY**, the PLI 2.0 (outlay - Rs 17,000 crore) could attract big global IT hardware manufacturers to shift their production base to India and give a boost to local production of laptops, servers, personal computers, etc.
- It will be **implemented from July 1**, with a cap on maximum incentives available to participating companies.
- **The tenure** of the new scheme has been fixed for six years and the Centre is expecting an investment of over Rs 2,430 crore as part of it.
- **The expected incremental production value** could touch Rs 3.35 lakh crore, and the scheme could generate **75,000 direct jobs** [could touch 2 lakhs when accounted for indirect jobs].
- The **average incentive** over six years will be **about 5%** compared with the 2% over four years offered earlier.
- This scheme will play a key role in catalysing India's Techade and in **achieving the \$1 trillion digital economy goal - including \$300 billion of electronics manufacturing by 2025-26.**

### 3.6 JAL JEEVAN MISSION

#### MISSION OBJECTIVES

To ensure HarGharJal (piped water supply) to all rural households by 2024 under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

- As on date, 5 States (Goa, Telangana, Haryana, Gujarat and Punjab) and 3 UTs (Puducherry, D&D and D&NH and A&N Islands), have reported 100% coverage. Himachal Pradesh at 98.35%, followed by Bihar at 96.05%, are also poised to achieve saturation in the near future.
  - Working on the motto of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas aur Sabka Prayas, Jal Jeevan Mission is **marching towards achieving the SDG 6, i.e., safe and affordable water to all**, through provision of safe water through taps to all households, schools, anganwadis and other public institutions, in rural areas.
- 
- **Executing agency:** Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation under the Jal Shakti Mantralaya.
  - **Strategy:**
    - This Mission will focus on **integrated demand and supply side** management of water at the local level, including creation of local infrastructure for source sustainability like rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge and management of household wastewater for reuse in agriculture.
    - The Mission will converge with other Central and State Government Schemes to achieve its objectives of sustainable water supply management across the country.
  - **Funding Pattern:** The fund sharing pattern is in the proportion of:
    - 50:50 between Centre and States,
    - 90:10 for Himalayan and North-Eastern States.
    - In case of UTs, 100% funding is provided by the Central government.



### 3.7 GLOBAL REPORT ON INTERNAL REPLACEMENT

The number of **internally displaced people (IDPs)** around the world reached **71 million** as of the end of 2022, according to the recently published Global Report on Internal Replacement 2023.

#### WHAT IS INTERNAL REPLACEMENT?

Internal displacement refers to **people forced to move inside their own borders** and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre's report didn't take into account those who left for different countries.

#### WHO RELEASES IT?

It is released by the **Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)**.

#### THE 2023 REPORT

- The number of **internally displaced people (IDPs)** around the world reached **71.1 million as of the end of 2022**, an increase of **20 per cent** from the previous year.
- **Conflict and violence triggered 28.3 million** internal displacements worldwide.
- The **conflict in Ukraine triggered nearly 17 million** displacements.
- **32.6 million people were displaced due to disasters**, an increase of **40 per cent** from 2021 largely the **result of the effects of La Niña** which continued on a third consecutive year.
- **Of the total disaster displacement, 98 per cent** were triggered **by weather-related events** like floods and storms.
- **India recorded the fourth largest disaster displacement**, with 2.5 million displacements.
- **Pakistan had the highest number of disaster displacements in the world in 2022**, at 8.16 million.

### 3.8 DEMAND FOR A KUKI HOMELAND

Recently, Manipur's 10 Kuki-Zomi MLAs **demand a separate administration under the Constitution**. This demand was made days after clashes between Manipur's Kuki-Zomi tribes and the majority Meitei community that left more than 70 people dead.

#### HISTORY:

- The demand for a separate Kukiland dates back to the late 1980s, when the first and largest of the **Kuki-Zomi insurgent groups**, the **Kuki National Organisation (KNO)**, came into being. The demand has **surfaced periodically** ever since.
- In 2012, it became increasingly clear that the demand for a separate Telangana state would be accepted. At that time, an organisation called the Kuki State Demand Committee (KSDC) announced a movement for Kukiland.

#### THE DEMAND

- The KSDC claimed 12,958 sq km, more than 60% of Manipur's 22,000 sq km area, for Kukis and Kukiland.
- The territory of Kukiland included:
  - the Sadar Hills (which surround the Imphal valley on three sides),
  - the Kuki-dominated Churachandpur district, Chandel, which has a mix of Kuki and Naga populations, and
  - parts of Naga-dominated Tamenglong and Ukhrul.
- Unlike the Naga demand for a separate country, Kukis are only **seeking a separate state within the Indian Union**.



## REASONS

### ● Historical

- The KSDC and sections of the Kuki-Zomi community have maintained that the tribal areas are yet to be a part of the Indian Union.
- They have contended that after the defeat of the king of Manipur in the 1891 Anglo-Manipur war, the kingdom became a British protectorate.
- However, the lands of the Kuki-Zomi were not part of the agreement.

### ● Identity and Cultural Preservation

- Manipur has a diverse ethnic population with Meitis controlling the Valley, Nagas on the surrounding hills and Kukis interspersed in between.
- The Kuki community has a distinct cultural identity, language, and history.
  - The Kukis are Manipur's third major ethnic group, after the majority Meitei Hindus and the Naga tribes.
- Hence, the community is demanding a separate state to preserve their identity and culture.

### ● The idea of the Zale'n-gam, or 'land of freedom'

- As per the Kuki-Zomi people, the Kuki Zale'n-gam sprawled across a large part of India's Northeast and contiguous areas in present day Myanmar.
- Under the Treaty of 1834, the British handed over a significant chunk of this land to Burma to appease the Ava or Burmese king.
- According to the KNO, the Zale'n-gam included the area up to the Chindwin River in Myanmar.
  - It covered the bordering regions of India, the areas around the Nantalit river in northern Myanmar, and stretched to the Chin state in the south.
- In India, the Kuki homeland included:
  - the hill districts of **Manipur**, including the Naga areas, Kanjang, Akhen, Phek, and parts of Dimapur in **Nagaland**,
  - Karbi-Anglong, North Cachar Hills, and Halflong in **Assam**, and **Tripura**, as well as parts of the **Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh**.
- Over the years though, **this imagination of the homeland has shrunk to that of a state created out of the hill areas of Manipur, including those dominated by the Naga tribes**.

### ● Identity and Cultural Preservation

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- Hence, the community is demanding a separate state to preserve their identity.

### ● Clash with Naga group

- The community has alleged that Naga insurgent groups have been attempting to grab Kuki lands for decades.



- During the Naga-Kuki clashes of 1993 more than 1,000 Kukis were killed, and many times that number were displaced.
- **Socio-economic development**
  - Some Kuki groups believe that a separate state would provide them with political power and control over their own resources which are largely controlled by the Meiteis.
  - This would allow them to achieve socio-economic development.
- **Administrative Autonomy:**
  - Kuki organizations argue that a separate state would enable them to make decisions on matters such as governance, law and order etc., based on their specific needs and aspirations.
- **Recent violence in Manipur**
  - Days after the tribal Kuki community clashed with the Meiteis on May 3, the demand for separate Kuki State has resurfaced.
    - A ‘tribal solidarity march’ was organised against the Manipur High Court’s direction to the State to take steps towards granting ST status to the non-tribal Meitei community.
    - Violent clashes broke out at various places in Manipur during the course of this march.
    - At least 71 people were killed and thousands were displaced in the violence.
    - The clashes prompted the state government to issue shoot-at-sight orders, enforce a curfew and ban internet services.
  - All the 10 Kuki MLAs (out of 60) in Manipur, including two state ministers, have raised the demand for a separate administration and separation from the state.
    - These MLAs alleged that the violence that started on May 3 was perpetrated by majority Meiteis.
    - It is tacitly supported by the existing government of Manipur

### 3.9 MINIMUM IMPORT PRICE

The Central Government recently introduced the **Minimum Import Price (MIP)** for apples in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).

**What is MIP?**

MIP is a **temporary measure to provide protection** to domestic farmers **from predatory pricing of imports. Below this price, import of the commodity is not allowed.**

**Which body frames rules wrt import/export?**

**Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)** is an arm of the commerce ministry which **frames rules related to exports and imports.**

- **MIP for Apples:**
  - It aims to protect their interests by **preventing tax-free imports of apples from other countries**, ensuring a level playing field for the local apple industry.
  - According to the policy, **any apple costing less than Rs 50 per kg cannot be imported.**
- **Benefits:**



- It will help **stabilize apple prices in the local market** by reducing the oversupply of cheap imported apples.
- This stability will **enable local farmers to fetch better prices for their produce**.

### 3.10 LATE ONSET OF MONSOON: A WORRY OR NOT?

The **Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)** has predicted that the arrival of monsoon over the Kerala coast **will likely be delayed by a few days**.

Instead of its **normal date of June 1**, the monsoon is **expected to arrive by June 4**.

The IMD said its forecast had an **error margin of four days**, so a **further delay was possible**.

#### IMD'S PREDICTION

- The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted that the arrival of monsoon over the Kerala coast will likely be delayed by a few days.
  - The crucial southwest monsoon starts its journey into the Indian subcontinent from the Kerala coast typically around **1 June**.
  - The southwest monsoon is **responsible for bringing more than 75 per cent of India's annual rainfall**.
- The IMD has predicted that **rains in the June-September season will be 94% of the long-period average (LPA)**.
  - The LPA is the average rainfall recorded over the country for the period ranging from 1961 to 2010, which is **88 centimetres**.

#### WHY THE DELAY ISN'T A CONCERN?

- The onset of monsoon over the Kerala coast is **just a marker of the official beginning** of the four-month monsoon season.
- An **early or delayed onset over Kerala does not in any way dictate monsoon performance** over the rest of the season.
- In fact, the onset over the Kerala coast is not even the start of the monsoon rains over India. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands start getting the rains at least two weeks before Kerala does.
- The normal arrival dates at different locations in the country are known, but the progression of monsoon does not always follow those dates.
- Late arrival over Kerala sometimes delays the arrival at some other locations as well, but not always.

### 3.11 G20'S DISASTER MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE

- The G20 under India's Presidency has endorsed a **new working group on disaster risk reduction**.
- This makes it well-positioned to **prioritise disaster risk financing to achieve the targets set by the Sendai Framework for 2030**.

#### GLOBAL REPORTS ON DISASTERS

- **Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) Report 2022**
  - India has witnessed a **climate change-induced natural disaster almost every day in 2022**.



- Some examples are **Floods in Uttar Pradesh and Amarnath, Manipur Landslides, Cyclone Asani, Uttarakhand Avalanche, etc.**
- As a result, 2,755 lives were lost, almost 1.8 million hectare of crop area was affected, 416,667 houses were destroyed and killed close to 70,000 livestock.
- **The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s Sixth Assessment Report:** It highlights that a **significant number of people live in areas that are highly vulnerable to climate change**, especially South Asia.
- **The 2021-22 Human Development Report:** The report shows that disasters not only worsen poverty and thwart development, but also generate social polarisation across nations and communities.

#### STEPS TO BE TAKEN BY THE COUNTRIES

- States need to **enhance their capacity to understand risks and integrate them into government planning and budget processes.**
- The **insurance industry** needs better regulation, legislation, and supervision.
- **Partnerships with the private sector** need to be enabled to transfer sovereign risk to the capital markets, and the financing for response, recovery.
- **Reconstruction needs to be improved** by using preventive measures.

#### CHALLENGES TO DISASTER MANAGEMENT

- **The lack of competent financial risk management** and insurance has provided a fertile breeding ground for these risks to proliferate and intensify.
- Significant **difficulty in collecting and analysing data** on hazards and exposures.
- The necessity of **strengthening technical and institutional capacity for risk assessment and modelling.**
- Achieving **comprehensive coverage of disaster risks.**
- There is also a **scarcity of investment in a development-oriented approach** that unites all parties into a transparent framework of action at the national level.

#### HOW CAN THESE CHALLENGES BE OVERCOME UNDER INDIA'S G20 PRESIDENCY?

- India has extensive experience dealing with natural disasters and **can lead in promoting awareness of the financial impacts of disasters.**
- It can also lead the way in **establishing a regulatory framework** to enhance the financial capacity of insurance companies to cover disaster losses.
- By emphasising the importance of disaster risk financing, **the G20 can help governments worldwide to manage risk more effectively** and ensure sustainable development.
- The G20's new **Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group (DRRWG)** has recognised the importance of prioritising disaster risk financing.

#### OBJECTIVES OF DISASTER RISK REDUCTION WORKING GROUP

- The DRRWG will **strive to address all the key components of a comprehensive financial management strategy for disaster risks.** This will be the focus of their second meeting in Mumbai in the last week of May.
- The DRRWG will offer an **extensive overview of disaster risk assessment** and financing practices across a wide range of economies.



- It can also support the **harmonisation of definitions and methodologies for data collection and analysis** to improve access to international (re)insurance markets.
- DRRWG will **offer affordable and comprehensive insurance coverage** of disaster risks, financial assistance and compensation for affected individuals and businesses, and risk transfer mechanisms, including catastrophe bonds and insurance, for management of fiscal risks.
- It will help issuers, investors, and other stakeholders to **identify and classify disaster-resilient investments, assets, and entities** in a more effective and evidence-based manner.
- The DRRWG **could channel more capital towards disaster risk reduction investments, while also creating new opportunities for innovation** in sectors less commonly associated with disaster resilience, such as health, social protection, and natural capital.

### SENDAI FRAMEWORK 2015

- **The Sendai Framework works hand in hand with the other 2030 Agenda agreements**, including The Paris Agreement on Climate Change, The Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the New Urban Agenda, and ultimately the SDGs.
- It was **endorsed by the UN General Assembly following the 2015 Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR)**.
- It advocates for the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods, and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries.
- **State has the primary role to reduce disaster risk** but that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders including **local government, the private sector, and other stakeholders**.

## 3.12 SIKKIM STATEHOOD DAY

President, Vice President greet people of Sikkim on their Statehood day.

### ABOUT THE DAY:

- Sikkim commemorates its statehood day annually **on May 16** to acknowledge its integration with India and its emergence as the **22nd state in the country in 1975**.
- The state of Sikkim was formed by the **36th Amendment of the Constitution** of India in 1975.

### THE HISTORICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF SIKKIM

- In the **17th century, the Namgyal dynasty** formed the Kingdom of Sikkim. The kingdom was made a **protectorate of the British Empire in 1890** but the **dynasty continued to function under the Chogyal** (Buddhist priest-kings).
- After India's independence, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru agreed to continue the kingdom's unique protectorate status. India oversaw Sikkim's external relations, defence, diplomacy, and communications but otherwise preserved its administrative independence.
- In order to **enable constitutional rule** under the Namgyal rule, a **state council was established in 1953**.

### THE UPRISING & ITS AFTERMATH

- After around two decades a **people's agitation against the monarchy in 1973** was led by former Sikkim Council member **Kazi Lhendup Dorji**.



- After riots broke out in front of the Chogyal's palace in **1973**, the Chogyal formally requested security from India and this led to **the kingdom signing a contract with India**.
- In 1974 a new constitution was adopted in the state, which restricted Chogyal to a titular post. In 1974, The Indian government changed **Sikkim's status to "associated state"** and gave it one seat each in **the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha**.
- In **1975**, The Sikkim Prime Minister requested that Sikkim become a state of India in a petition to the Indian Parliament thus Sikkim became a state in India, and the **monarchy was abolished on May 16**.

### 3.13 PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WORKPLACE ACT, 2013 (PoSH ACT)

- The SC found "serious lapses" and "uncertainty" in the implementation of the PoSH Act 2013 and issued directions to the Union, States, and UTs to verify if all government bodies had formed the Internal Complaint Committees (ICCs).
- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act/PoSH Act, which came into force in 2013 **applies to all public and private sector organisations throughout India**.

#### THE GENESIS

- **SC 1997 guidelines/Vishakha Guidelines:** While hearing pleas filed against the crime, the SC noted the **absence of any law** that guarantee against "sexual harassment at workplaces".
  - The apex court laid down a set of guidelines **to fill the statutory vacuum** till a law could be enacted.
- **The Court drew its guidelines from:**
  - **Article 15** (protection against discrimination on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, and place of birth) of the Indian constitution.
  - **International Conventions and norms** such as the General Recommendations of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which India ratified in 1993.
- **The PoSH Bill:** It was introduced by the **Women and Child Development Ministry** in 2007. It went through several amendments and came into force on **December 9, 2013**, after being enacted by the Parliament.

#### KEY PROVISIONS

- **Defines sexual harassment:** To include **unwelcome acts** such as physical, verbal/non-verbal conduct - a demand or request for sexual favours, making sexually coloured remarks, showing pornography, etc.
- **Lists down five circumstances that would constitute sexual harassment:**
  - Implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in employment
  - Implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment in employment
  - Implied or explicit threat about present or future employment status
  - Interference with work or creating an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment and
  - Humiliating treatment likely to affect health or safety.



- **Defines an employee (not just in accordance with the company law):** All women employees, whether employed regularly, temporarily, contractually, on an ad hoc or daily wage basis, as apprentices or interns, can seek redressal to sexual harassment in the workplace.
- **Expands the definition of ‘workplace’:** Beyond traditional offices to include all kinds of organisations across sectors, even non-traditional workplaces (for example, telecommuting) and places visited by employees for work.

### INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE & LOCAL COMMITTEE

- The law requires any **employer with more than 10 employees** to form an **ICC**, where a formal sexual harassment complaint can be filed by a woman.
- **Composition of ICC:** It is required to consist of a **minimum of four members** (at least half of whom should be women):
  - A Presiding Officer who has to be a woman employed at a senior level at the workplace.
  - Two Members from amongst employees and who have had experience in social work or have legal knowledge.
  - One **“External Member”** from NGOs to pre-empt any undue pressure from senior levels.
- Besides, the Act mandates **every district in the country to create a LC** to receive complaints from women working in **firms with less than 10 employees and from the informal sector**, including domestic workers, etc.

### ROLE OF ICC & LC

- These two bodies have to **conduct inquiries** in line with the POSH Act and comply with the **“principles of natural justice”** stated in the Rules of the Act.
- **A woman can file a written complaint** either to the internal or local complaints committee **within three to six months** of the sexual harassment incident.
- There are two ways to resolve the issue by the committee -
  - **“Through conciliation”** between the complainant and the respondent (**which cannot be a financial settlement**), or
  - **Committees could initiate an inquiry**, taking appropriate action based on what it finds.

### DUTIES OF THE EMPLOYER

- **An employer has to file an annual audit** report with the district officer about the number of sexual harassment complaints filed and actions taken at the end of the year.
- An employer is duty-bound to organise **regular workshops and awareness programmes** to educate employees about the Act, and conduct orientation and programmes for ICC members.
- If the employer fails to constitute an ICC or does not abide by any other provision, **they must pay a fine of up to ₹50,000, which increases for a repeat offence.**

### HURDLES

- **The law is largely inaccessible to women workers in the informal sector:** As more than 80% of India’s women workers are employed in the informal sector.



- **Huge underreporting:** Due to the power dynamics of organisations, fear of professional repercussions (loss of employment), concrete evidence is often lacking, etc.
- **Lacunae in the constitution of ICCs:** 16 out of the 30 national sports federations in the country had not constituted an ICC to date.
- **Improper composition of ICCs:** ICCs either had an inadequate number of members or lacked a mandatory external member.
- **Lack of clarity in the law:** About how to conduct such inquiries, lack of awareness in women employees about who to approach in case of facing harassment, etc.

### REASONS BEHIND THESE HURDLES

- **The Act does not satisfactorily address accountability,** not specifying who is in charge of ensuring that workplaces comply with the Act, and who can be held responsible if its provisions are not followed.
- **The government maintains no centralised data** regarding cases of harassment of women at workplaces.

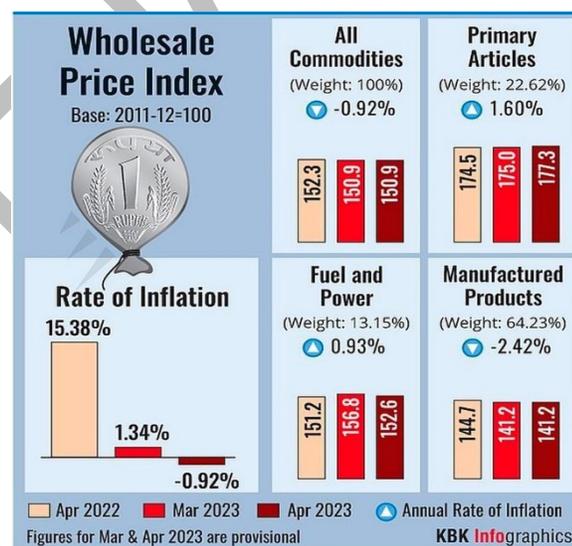
## 3.14 WHOLESALE PRICE INDEX

The WPI inflation has fallen into negative for the first time since July 2020.

According to data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, **INFLATION RATE** based on Wholesale Price Index (WPI) fell to a near three-year low of (-) 0.92 % in April, slipping into negative territory for the first time in 33 months.

### CAUSES

- A **high base effect** along with **moderation in global commodity** prices reflected in easing of food, fuel and other input costs.
- The decline in the WPI inflation rate in April 2023 was primarily contributed by **fall in prices of basic metals, food products, mineral oils**, textiles, non-food articles etc.



### WHAT IS WPI?

- Wholesale Price Index (WPI) represents **the price of goods at a wholesale stage** i.e. goods that are sold in bulk and traded between organizations instead of consumers.
- The index has a **total of 697 items**, including **Primary Articles** (117), **fuel and power** (16), and **Manufactured Products** (564).
- The percentage increase in WPI over a year gives the rate of inflation for that year.
- Currently, the **base year** of WPI is **2011-12**.
- WPI is used as an important **measure of inflation in India**.

### WHAT IS BASE YEAR?

- The inflation rate is calculated based on indices — WPI and CPI. The indices are set to 100 in a particular year and the year is the base year.



- For instance, a basket of goods was Rs 2 lakh in the base year and the index is set as 100 in that year. Now, if the price of the basket increases to Rs 2.2 lakh in the next year, the index will change to 110 that year. The change in the index value from 100 to 110 indicates 10 per cent inflation.

#### What is a Base Effect?

- The base effect refers to the effect that the choice of a basis of comparison or reference can have on the result of **the comparison between data points**.
- It often involves the use of **some kind of ratio or index value between two points** in a time-series data set and can also apply to cross-sectional or other types of data.

### 3.15 CENTRAL CONSUMER PROTECTION AUTHORITY

Recently, The Central Consumer Protection Authority has issued order against five e-commerce platforms for selling seat belt alarm stopper clips.

#### ABOUT CCPA:

- It is a regulatory body established in 2020 based on the provisions of the **Consumer Protection Act, 2019**.
- **Nodal Ministry:** The Ministry of Consumer Affairs.

#### COMPOSITION OF CCPA

- It will have a Chief Commissioner as head, and only two other commissioners as members one of whom will deal with matters relating to goods while the other will look into cases relating to services.
- The CCPA will have an Investigation Wing that will be headed by a Director General.
- District Collectors too, will have the power to investigate complaints of violations of consumer rights, unfair trade practices, and false or misleading advertisements.

#### OBJECTIVES OF CCPA

- To **promote, protect and enforce the rights of consumers as a class**.
- It will be **empowered-**
  - To conduct investigations into violation of consumer rights and institute complaints prosecution,
  - Order recall of unsafe goods and services,
  - Order discontinuation of unfair trade practices and misleading advertisements,
  - Impose penalties on manufacturers/ endorsers/ publishers of misleading advertisements.



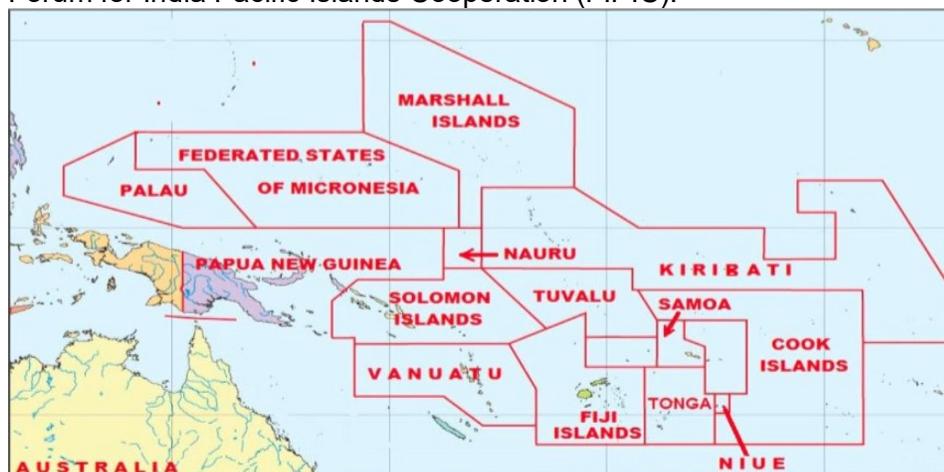
## WEEK 4

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

### 4.1 THE FIPIC SUMMIT: PM UNDERLINES IMPORTANCE OF A FREE & OPEN INDO PACIFIC

#### What does FIPIC stand for?

Forum for India Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC).



#### What is the purpose of FIPIC?

Forum for India-Pacific Islands cooperation (FIPIC) is a **multinational grouping** for cooperation between **India and 14 Pacific Islands nations**.

#### Which are the 14 island nations?

It includes **14 islands named-** Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

#### When & where was the first FIPIC summit held?

All Head of state/head of government of the above countries **met in Suva, Fiji in November 2014** for the **first time** where the annual summit was conceptualised.

#### What is the significance of FIPIC for India?

- The FIPIC initiative marks a serious effort to **expand India's engagement in the Pacific region**.
- The FIPIC initiative is a vital component of our **Act East Policy**.
- A major part of India's engagement with these countries is through development assistance under **South-South Cooperation**, mainly in **capacity building (training, scholarships, grant-in-aid and loan assistance) and community development** projects.
- Mr. Modi's visit to Papua New Guinea highlights the **growing strategic significance** of the Pacific Island nations that has also received attention from **China which signed last year a security agreement with the Solomon Islands**.
- In 2015, **FIPIC Trade Office** at Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (**FICCI**) to promote Trade & Investment opportunities between India & Pacific Island Countries.

#### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PM'S SPEECH

- Small Island nations of the Pacific Ocean are in fact **"large ocean states"**



- Addressing the opening session of the FIPIC-3 summit in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, Mr. Modi focused on India's commitment to assist the development goals of the member countries of FIPIC and said New Delhi will continue to help the Pacific island states in **“every possible” way**.
- In the meanwhile, the world dealt with the **COVID pandemic** and several other global challenges. **Climate change, natural calamities, poverty and famine** already existed but now **new challenges are emerging as supply chains of food, fuel fertiliser and pharma are facing hurdles**. Those we thought were reliable, we came to know they were not standing with us. In this time of difficulty, we are reminded of the old saying that **a friend in need is a friend indeed**.
- From vaccines to medicines, wheat and sugar, India has supplied the countries that required these items. For me, you are large ocean countries and not small island nations. Your ocean connects India with you.

### CONCERNS OF THE PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES

- We suffered as a result of the big nations at play in terms of geopolitics and power struggle,” said Mr. Marape who is the co-chair of the FIPIC-3 Summit.
- **“We are victims of global power play and we want you to be an advocate for us and sit in those meetings,”** said Mr. Marape. Mr. Marape said the small size of the island nations of the Pacific Ocean region should not overshadow the fact that the islands have large space in the ocean. Mr. Modi assured the FIPIC members of India's support in the field of sustainable development, science and technology and space application.

## 4.2 G7'S CLIMATE WISHLIST

The **World Meteorological Organisation** said the **1.5 degree Celsius** threshold was likely to be breached, at least temporarily, over the next five years. It also said that at least one of the next five years was almost certain to become the warmest year on record.

A few other studies have suggested that this year, **2023, is on track to become the warmest ever, surpassing 2016**. New research claims that the heat wave in India and some neighbouring countries last month was almost certainly due to climate change, the probability of its occurrence having been increased at least 30 times by global warming.

The G7 group has repeatedly acknowledged the urgency for effective climate action but offered little in terms of scaled-up action.

### ABOUT G7

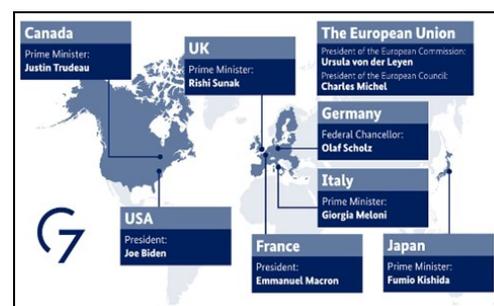
#### ORIGIN OF G7 AND ITS PRESENT COMPOSITION

- The origin of G7 lies in the **oil shocks of 1973** and the **corresponding financial crisis**.
- In order to address the situation after oil shock, the heads of the world's six leading industrial nations decided to hold a meeting in 1975.

These six nations were - **US, UK, France, Germany (West), Japan and Italy**.

- These countries were **joined by Canada in 1976** and G7 came into existence.
- In **1998, Russia** was formally inducted in the group, which transformed **G7 into G8**. However, **Russia annexed Crimea in 2014**. As a result, it was suspended from the grouping. Hence, the group became G7 again in 2014.
- The European Union is also represented within the G7.

#### THE G7 CLIMATE MINISTERS MEETING





- The meeting of the group of rich and developed nations with the economic heft to create the necessary momentum for global change, presents the latest example of the response gap.
- In its final communique (in Hiroshima, Japan), the G7 listed a **set of milestones** that need to be achieved for a realistic chance of containing the global rise in temperatures to within 1.5 degree Celsius.

### THE MILESTONES

- **Seeking a global peak in GHG emissions by 2025:**
  - The G7 claimed that their emissions had already “peaked”, and asked all major economies to ensure that their individual emissions do not continue to rise beyond 2025.
  - “Major economies” is not defined, but in the context of climate change, it usually includes countries like India, China, Brazil, South Africa, and Russia.
- **Net-zero by 2050:**
  - According to scientific claims, the world as a whole must become net zero by mid-century in order to meet the 1.5C target.
  - The G7 reiterated its commitment to turn net-zero by 2050, and asked all ‘major economies’ to attain net-zero status by that year and to come up with detailed road maps to reach the target.
- **Accelerating the phase-out of “unabated fossil fuels” in line with 1.5 degree Celsius trajectories:**
  - G7 said that they would eliminate “inefficient fossil fuel subsidies” by 2025.
  - For example, the G7 claimed they had stopped financing new fossil fuel-based energy projects “except in limited circumstances”. These circumstances include the need to end the dependence on Russian gas.

With fast changing technologies, and rapid adoption of cleaner sources of energy, the situation could alter significantly over the next decade.

## 4.3 HEATWAVES IN DELHI

India Meteorological Department has issued a heat wave warning for Delhi and adjoining areas for May 22, 2023 after **maximum temperatures** in several parts of the capital were recorded **above 45 degrees Celsius**.

### WHAT IS A HEATWAVE?

A Heat Wave is a period of abnormally high temperatures, more than the normal maximum temperature that occurs during the summer season in the North-Western parts of India.

### When does a heat wave occur?

Heat Waves typically occur between March and June, and in some rare cases even extend till July.

### CRITERIA FOR A HEATWAVE

- As per IMD, heat wave is considered if the maximum temperature of a station reaches at least 40°C or more for Plains and at least 30°C or more for Hilly regions.
- IMD uses following criterion to declare the occurrence of heat wave in the region:
  - **Based on Departure from Normal Temperature:**
    - **Heat Wave** - Departure from normal is 4.50°C to 6.40°C;
    - **Severe Heat Wave:** Departure from normal is >6.40degree C



- **Based on Actual Maximum Temperature:**
  - **Heat Wave** - When actual maximum temperature  $\geq 45^{\circ}\text{C}$ ;
  - **Severe Heat Wave:** When actual maximum temperature  $\geq 47$
- If above criteria met at least in 2 stations in a Meteorological subdivision for at least two consecutive days then heat wave occurrence is declared on the second day.
- **Heat Wave in coastal region**
  - When maximum temperature departure is  $4.5^{\circ}\text{C}$  or more from normal, Heat Wave may be described provided actual maximum temperature is  $37^{\circ}\text{C}$  or more

### Why do heat waves occur?

- Heat waves can be connected with **climate change**.
- In May and June, the Bay of Bengal often witnesses Anti-Cyclonic Circulations which work towards trapping the heat in the lower atmosphere.

### What are the health impacts of heat waves?

The health impacts of Heat Waves typically involve dehydration, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and/or **heat stroke**. Heat Wave conditions can result in physiological strain, which could even result in death.

## 4.4 OPEN NETWORK FOR DIGITAL COMMERCE (ONDC)

The Union government is looking to formally launch the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) this year to “**democratise e-commerce**” and “to provide alternatives to proprietary e-commerce sites”

### ABOUT ONDC



Assigned to Quality Council of India (QCI)



Nine member council to design & accelerate adoption



Aims to digitize entire commerce value chain, standardize operations, optimize logistics

### WHAT IS ONDC?

- ONDC is to be based on **open-sourced methodology**, using open specifications and open network protocols independent of any specific platform.
- It is being developed as a counter to the current duopoly in the Indian e-commerce market which is largely dictated by Amazon and Walmart-owned Flipkart.

**tech**

### ONDC: the nuts and bolts



**ONDC's core** aim is to enable ecommerce for small sellers and businesses.

**Parallels have** been drawn with UPI, meaning it could do for ecommerce what UPI did for digital payments.

**CUSTOMERS CAN ACCESS SELLERS ON ONDC THROUGH ANY APP THAT IS INTEGRATED WITH THE NETWORK.**

**Sellers will** handle deliveries through tie-ups with logistics firm.

**ONDC will** also have embedded services like ledgers and a payment processor.

Source: ET Research, ONDC strategy paper



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Source: ET Research, ONDC strategy paper

#### WHAT IS ONDC?

- Market and Community-led initiative
- An open network
- Eliminates the need for a central intermediary
- An enabler for massive digital commerce expansion
- An enabler for broad-based innovation

#### WHAT IS ONDC NOT?

- A Government Regulatory Body
- An application or a platform
- A central intermediary
- A medium to help digitize businesses



## 4.5 LUMPY SKIN DISEASE

Union minister of Fisheries, Animal husbandry and Dairying recently directed prompt action on reports of rising cases of **lumpy skin disease (LSD)** in livestock of **Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts of West Bengal**.

LSD is caused by the **lumpy skin disease virus (LSDV)**, which is a virus of the capri poxvirus genus in the **poxviridae family**.

The LSDV mainly affects cattle - **cow and its progeny, and the Asian water buffaloes**.



### HOW IS IT SPREAD?

The LSDV spreads through blood-sucking vectors like ticks and mites like houseflies, mosquitoes, etc. It also spreads through contaminated water, fodder and feed.

### HOW DOES IT IMPACT?

LSDV attacks the circulatory system of an animal and causes **inflammation of blood vessels** and lesions in various organs like liver, lungs, spleen, lymph nodes etc.

In turn, it causes **epidermis**, which leads to formation of lumps or nodules on an animal's body.

Other symptoms include fever, increased mucus secretion, loss of appetite, etc.

### CAN IT SPREAD TO HUMANS?

The good news is that the disease **cannot spread among humans** or cannot be transferred from the infected animals to humans.

### DOES IT IMPACT THE DAIRY PRODUCE?

Moreover, reports show that the disease **does not affect the products of animals** as well so you can consume dairy products without any worry.

## 4.6 INS SINDHURATNA

The Navy's INS Sindhuratna which underwent a **major upgrade in Russia** reached Mumbai after sailing for **97 days and almost 10,000 miles**.

### When was it commissioned in the Indian Navy?

It was commissioned into the Indian Navy in **December 1988**.

### Why did it undergo a major upgrade?

INS Sindhuratna had gone for an upgrade in Severodvinsk, Russia after a **major accident in February 2014**.

### TO WHICH CATEGORY DOES INS SINDHURATNA BELONG?

- INS Sindhuratna is a **Russian Type 877EKM diesel-electric submarine** also popularly called a NATO-defined Kilo-class sub.

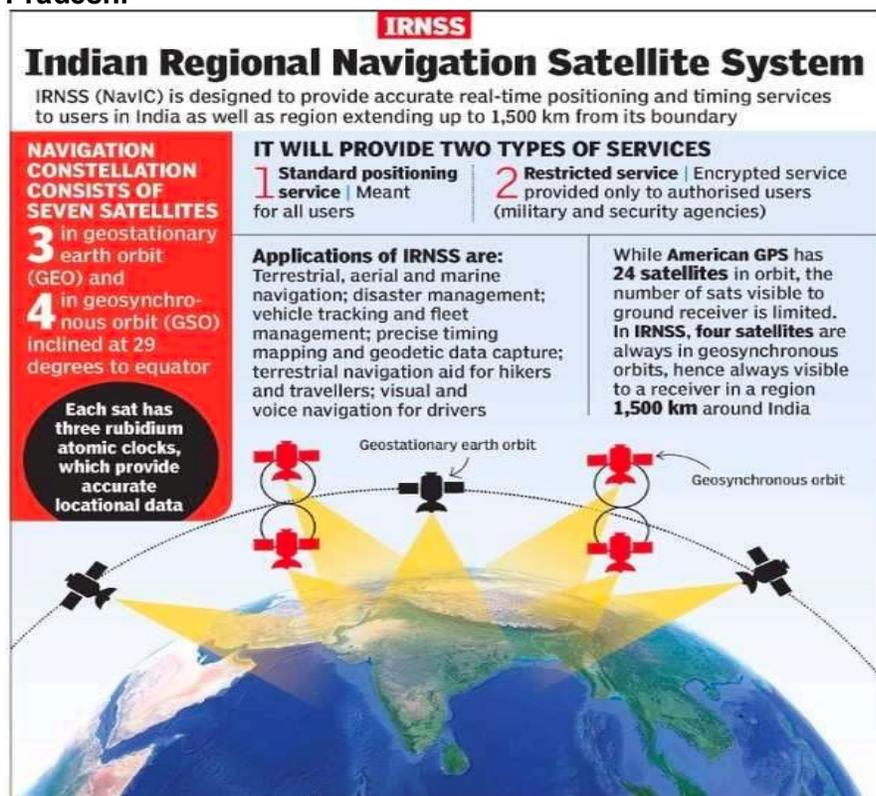


- Eight of the Navy's diesel-electric submarines are Kilo class or Sindhughosh class from Russia (and the former USSR), sourced between 1984 and 2000 and INS Sindhuratna is among the oldest Kilo-class submarines in the fleet.

India is the world's biggest importer of arms according to SIPRI. (A Stockholm based organisation which provides data about arms trade). India's dependence on other countries should reduce with time especially in a crucial domain like arms equipment. This will definitely further our push for Atma Nirbhar Bharat.

## 4.7 NAVIC/INDIAN REGIONAL NAVIGATION SATELLITE SYSTEM (IRNSS)

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is all set to launch the navigation satellite 'NVS-01' onboard its **Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV)** from **Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh**.



### KEY FEATURES:

- It is an independent stand-alone navigation satellite system which **Presently comprises 7 satellites**.
- It is **developed by ISRO**. NavIC was **approved in 2006**.
- It was expected to be completed by late 2011, but it only became **operational in 2018**.
- NavIC covers the whole of India's landmass and up to **1,500 km** from its boundaries.
- It was **recognised by the International Maritime Organization (IMO)** as a part of the **World Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS)** for operation in the Indian Ocean Region in 2020.

### APPLICATIONS OF NAVIC

- Currently, NavIC is being used in:
  - Public vehicle tracking in India,



- For providing emergency warning alerts to fishermen venturing into the deep sea where there is no terrestrial network connectivity, and
- For tracking and providing information related to natural disasters.
- **Enabling it in smartphones is the next step India is pushing for.**

### SIGNIFICANCE OF NAVIC

- In line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's drive for **self-reliance**, India has over the years expanded the use of its regional navigation satellite system called NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation).
- The Union government wants to **reduce dependence on foreign systems**, including the widely used **U.S. Global Positioning System (GPS)**, and says NavIC provides more accurate domestic navigation and that its use would benefit the economy.

### NAVIGATION SYSTEMS OF OTHER COUNTRIES:

**China (BeiDou)**, the **European Union (Galileo)**, **Japan (QZSS (Quasi-Zenith Satellite System))** and **Russia (GLONASS)** have their own global or regional navigation systems to rival GPS. Operational since 2018, NavIC's uptake is minimal; it is mandated in public vehicle location trackers, for example.

## 4.8 THE COSTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

- The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) announced that global temperatures are likely to surge to record levels in the next five years, fuelled by **heat-trapping greenhouse gases (GHGs)** and an **El-Niño event**.  
The WMO warned that the economic cost of extreme weather, climate and water-related events has been rising.

### WHAT IS GREENHOUSE EFFECT?



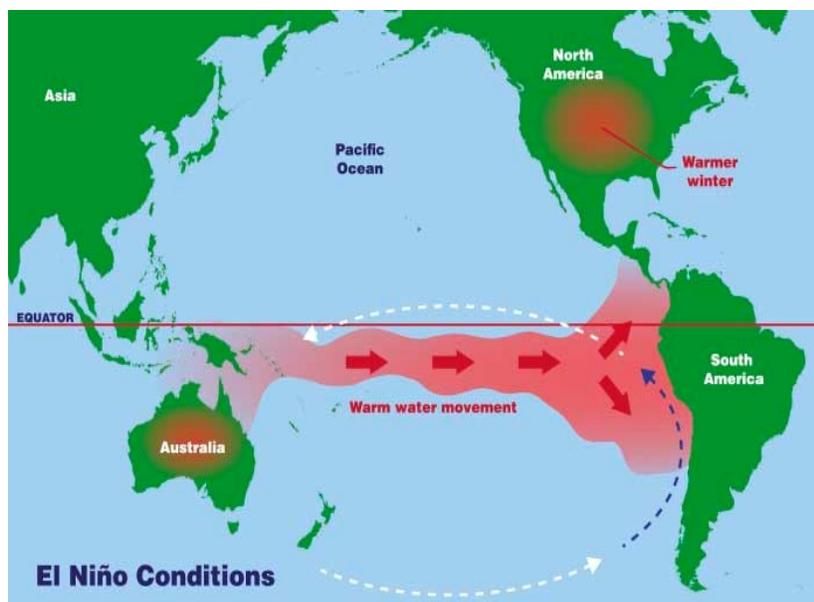
### EL NINO

A warming of the ocean surface, or **above-average sea surface temperatures (SST)**, in the **central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean**.

This accumulation of warm water causes the **thermocline to drop** in the eastern part of Pacific Ocean which **cuts off the upwelling of cold deep ocean water** along the coast of Peru. Fishing industry is affected.

It is associated with **lower than normal monsoon rainfall in India**.

### EL NINO & LA NINA



### EVIDENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN INDIA

- **Constantly rising temperature**
  - Annual average temperature in India has been increasing gradually.
  - RBI's latest report on currency and finance states that the rise has been significantly sharper during the last 20 years than during any other 20-year time interval since 1901.
- **Erratic Monsoon**
  - The south west monsoon is more erratic.
  - While the average annual rainfall at the all-India level during 2000-2020 saw a rise over that during 1960-1999, **annual average rainfall in India has gradually declined.**
- **Frequent Dry and Wet Spells:**  
RBI's research suggests that while dry spells have become more frequent during the last several years, intense wet spells have also increased.
- **Frequent Floods and Storms**
  - Research about natural disasters since 1975 has shown that India is relatively more exposed to floods and storms (cyclones and hailstorms) than droughts and heatwaves.
  - "Such incidences pose significant risks to agricultural production and food price volatility," states the RBI.

The Global Climate Risk Index 2021 had ranked India **7th in the list of most affected countries in terms of exposure and vulnerability to climate risk events.**

### ECONOMIC IMPACT ON INDIA

Now, the majority of our economic output comes from the services sector, which is considered as an 'emission light' sector, hence the emission intensity of the overall Indian economy is under control. But globally, India is the third highest emitter, preceded by China & USA. Following can be considered as the impact on the Indian economy:

- **Can affect supply and Demand:** Climate change can adversely impact both the supply side as well as the demand side. It can **stroke inflation, reduce economic output, trigger uncertainty and change consumer behaviour.**



**For example**, heatwaves (induced by climate change) in 2021 impacted wheat productivity. This loss in productivity led to less supply of wheat, thereby bringing in inflation.

- **Employment Loss:** In 2020, the World Bank said **that India could account for 34 million of the projected 80 million global job losses** from heat stress-associated productivity decline by 2030.
- **Coastal floods due to Sea Level Rise**
  - In 2022, the Intergovernmental Panel On Climate Change (IPCC) stated that India is one of **the most vulnerable countries globally in terms of the population that would be affected by the sea level rise.**
  - By the middle of the present century, **around 35 million people in India could face annual coastal flooding, with 45-50 million at risk by the end of the century.**

## STEPS TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT

- **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC):** It was launched in 2008. It established eight National Missions, covering several initiatives and a slew of measures.

## (2) India's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs):

India submitted its first set of INDCs in 2015 and updated them in 2021.

### ◆ The 2015 INDCs:

India's first pledge had **3 primary targets.**

- The first was to **reduce emissions intensity** of the economy (emission per unit of GDP) by 33-35% below 2005 levels.
- The second was to **have 40% of installed electric power from non-fossil-based energy resources by 2030.**
- The third target was to **create an additional carbon sink of 2.5-3 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (GtCO<sub>2</sub>e) by 2030** through additional forest and tree cover.

According to the Paris Agreement, countries must **'update' their pledges every five years** to make larger commitments to reduce GHG emissions.

### ◆ The 2021 INDCs(Panchamrit):

India at the **COP26 to the UNFCCC held in Glasgow, UK in 2021**, expressed to intensify its climate action by presenting a 5-set of **new targets (Panchamrit)** of India's climate action.

These were -

- India will increase its **non-fossil fuel energy capacity to 500 gigawatts (GW) by 2030.** (Presently it is around 167 GW)
- It will meet **50% of its energy requirements from renewable sources by 2030.**
- The total **projected carbon emissions** will be **reduced by 1 billion tonnes** from now through 2030.
- The **carbon intensity** of its economy will be **brought down to less than 45%.**

## National Action Plan on Climate Change

8 missions to address climate change concerns & promote sustainable development





- India will achieve its **target of net zero by 2070**.

## 4.9 PM'S VISIT TO AUSTRALIA

India and Australia established diplomatic relations in the pre-Independence period, with the **establishment of India Trade Office in Sydney in 1941**.



### DIMENSIONS OF OUR RELATIONSHIP

- **STRATEGIC RELATIONS:**
  - In 2009, we established a strategic relationship which was upgraded to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) in 2020.
  - The Australian foreign policy blueprint released in November 2017 sees **India in the front rank of Australia's international partnerships**.
  - In order to pursue the CSP, Foreign and Defence Ministers of both countries **agreed to meet in a '2+2' format biennially**.  
**2+2 Dialogue 2 ministers** i.e. Defence & Foreign ministers of both the countries meet biennially.
- **ECONOMIC & TRADE RELATIONSHIP**
  - **BILATERAL TRADE:** The annual bilateral trade stands at around **25 billion USD**.  
**(Imports: 19 bn USD & Exports: 6.25 bn USD)**
  - India is Australia's largest export market for gold and chickpeas, the second-largest market for coal and copper ores and the third-largest market for lead and wool.
  - Key products of imports from Australia include coal, copper ores and concentrates and petroleum.
  - In April 2022, India and Australia signed an **Economic Co-operation and Trade Agreement (ECTA)**, which came into force in December 2022.
    - ECTA aims to double the bilateral trade to **\$50 billion in five years** and ease movement of people, goods and services across borders.
- **Defence Cooperation**
  - During PM Modi's visit to Australia in November 2014, both sides decided to extend defence cooperation to cover research, development and industry engagement.
  - Arrangement concerning Mutual Logistics Support (MLSA) and Implementing Arrangement concerning cooperation in Defence Science and Technology were concluded during the Virtual Summit held in June 2020.
  - India and Australia conduct their bilateral naval exercise 'AUSINDEX' since 2015.
    - In 2018, Indian Air Force participated for the first time in the Exercise Pitch Black in Australia.
    - In October-November 2020, the Australian Navy participated in Malabar Exercises.

### Indian Diaspora in Australia

- The Indian community in Australia continues to grow in size and importance, with the population of about seven hundred thousand.
- India is one of the **top sources of skilled immigrants to Australia**.



- The number of Indian students continues to grow with approximately 105,000 students presently studying in Australian universities.
- After England, **India is the second largest migrant group** in Australia in 2020.

#### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRESENT VISIT

- **New Indian consulate announced**
  - PM Modi announced that a new Indian consulate would soon open in Brisbane.
- **PM talks about 3 C's, 3 D's, 3 E's**
  - Addressing the Indian diaspora, PM Modi said, "Earlier, it was said that the relations between India and Australia is defined by **3 Cs** – commonwealth, cricket, and curry.
  - Then it was said that our relationship is defined by **3 D's** – democracy, diaspora, and dosti.
  - Some people also said that our relationship is based on 3 E's – energy, economy, and education.
  - But our historic ties are much bigger than that. They are based on mutual trust and mutual respect.
- **Renaming of the Sydney suburb**
  - PM Modi and his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese renamed the Sydney suburb as 'Little India'.
    - For this, PM Modi joined his Australian counterpart for the foundation stone laying ceremony of 'Little India' Gateway.
    - The Gateway is to be built in Harris Park, Parramatta, Sydney, inhabited by a large Indian community.
    - Harris Park is a hub in Western Sydney where the Indian community celebrates festivals and events such as Diwali and Australia Day.
- **PM Modi highlighted India's position in the world as the force of global good**
  - PM Modi said India is always ready to help others whenever there is a disaster.
  - He also hailed India as the mother of democracy, as well as a bright spot in the global economy.

## 4.10 FORUM SHOPPING

Recently, to a litigant appearing before him, the Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud said that he will not permit forum shopping.

### WHAT IS FORUM SHOPPING?

When litigants or lawyers attempt to **deliberately move their case to a particular judge or Court where they think the judgement could be more favourable**, they are said to be "forum shopping."

Lawyers think about which is the right forum to approach as part of their litigation strategy. For example, one could directly approach the Supreme Court via a public interest litigation case instead of the concerned High Court because the issue could get more eyeballs.

### SC'S VIEWPOINT ON FORUM SHOPPING

The concept of forum shopping has **not been rendered an exclusive definition** in any Indian statute.

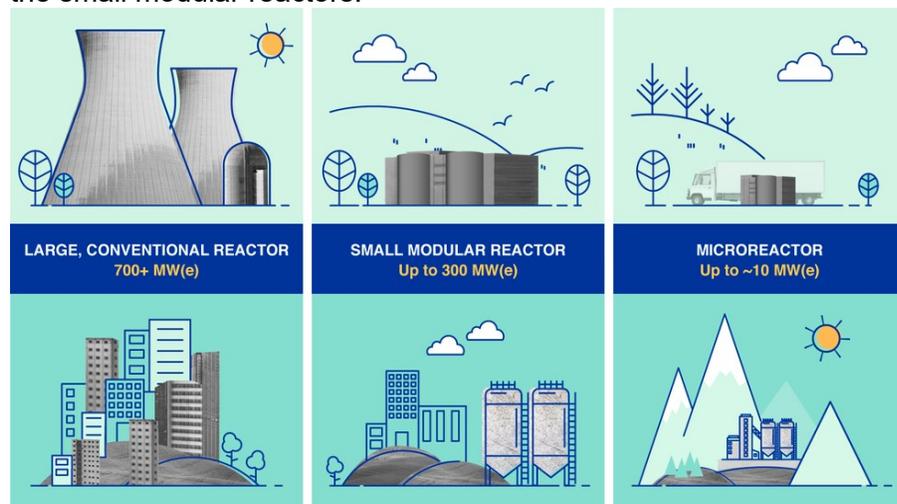
The Supreme Court in its **1988 ruling in 'Chetak Construction Ltd. vs. Om Prakash'** said – "A litigant cannot be permitted choice of the forum," and that every attempt at forum shopping "must be crushed with a heavy hand."



In **March 2022**, in the case of ‘**Vijay Kumar Ghai vs. State of W.B.**’, Supreme Court termed forum shopping as a “**disreputable practice by the courts**” that “has no sanction and paramountcy in law”.

## 4.11 SMALL MODULAR REACTORS

The Science and Technology Minister recently said that India is working on new technologies such as the small modular reactors.



### WHAT ARE SMALL MODULAR REACTORS?

SMRs are **advanced nuclear reactors** that have a **power capacity of up to 300 MW(e)** per unit, which is about one-third of the generating capacity of traditional nuclear power reactors. SMRs, which can produce a large amount of low-carbon electricity, are:

- **Small** – physically a fraction of the size of a conventional nuclear power reactor.
- **Modular** – making it possible for systems and components to be factory-assembled and transported as a unit to a location for installation.
- **Reactors** – harnessing nuclear fission to generate heat to produce energy.

### ADVANTAGES OF SMRs

- SMR, with up to 300 MW capacity by nature, is **flexible in design and requires a smaller footprint**. Given their smaller footprint, SMRs can be sited on locations not suitable for larger nuclear power plants.
- Being mobile and agile technology, **SMR can be factory-built unlike the conventional nuclear reactors** that are built on-site. Thus, SMRs offers significant savings in cost and construction time.
- SMR is a **promising technology in industrial de-carbonization** especially where there is a requirement of reliable and continuous supply of power. It is said that SMR is **simpler and safer as compared to large nuclear plants**.

### DISADVANTAGES

- **Lack of development:** They do not currently exist as reactors for power generation.
- **Cost-effectiveness depends on production:** Large-scale production of SMRs is required to achieve its economic benefits.
- **Licensing issues:** Historically, the licensing process was developed for large commercial reactors and the licensing process for new reactor designs is a lengthy and costly process.



## 4.12 NATIONAL e VIDHAN APPLICATION (NeVA)

The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs is set to organise a two-day National Workshop on the **National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA)** on **24th & 25th of May, 2023** in New Delhi. It is the **second workshop**. The first workshop was organised in September 2018.

### ABOUT NeVA

NeVA system has been developed to **make all the work and data related to legislative bodies available online for the use of both citizens and the members of Assemblies.**

**e-Vidhan is re-designated as NeVA.**

**NODAL MINISTRY: Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs** is Nodal Ministry for rolling out NeVA.

**AIM:** NeVA aims to bring all the legislatures of the country together, in one platform thereby creating a massive data depository.

It will also help in streamlining information related to various state assemblies, and to eliminate use of paper in day-to-day functioning.

## 4.13 HEAL IN INDIA, HEAL BY INDIA

Recently, the Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare delivered the keynote address at a side event session on **“Heal in India & Heal by India”** at the **76th World Health Assembly, in Geneva.**

### WHAT IS HEAL BY INDIA?

‘Heal by India’ initiative is designed with an intent to increase health workforce mobility from India to different parts of the world to serve the world as per the Indian Philosophy of ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’ (The World is One Family).

### WHAT IS HEAL IN INDIA?

‘Heal in India’ initiative seeks to provide “integrated and holistic treatment” to the world in India and enhance patient mobility for access to world class, affordable and quality healthcare services”.

### THE HEALTH MINISTER’S ADDRESS

Highlighting India’s G20 Presidency philosophy of **“One Earth, One Family, One Future”**, the Union Health Minister reiterated that “under the G20 Health Track, India has prioritised:

- **Health Emergencies, Prevention, Preparedness and Response** with focus on **One Health and Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR); Strengthening cooperation within the Pharmaceutical Sector** globally to improve access to safe, effective, quality and affordable Medical Countermeasures, that is, vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics and Digital Health innovations and solutions to aid **Universal Health Coverage** and improve Healthcare Service delivery at grassroots level”.
- Emphasising on the measures taken for strengthening the healthcare ecosystem in India, Dr Mandaviya said that “India achieved an **unimaginable pace of COVID vaccination & more than 2.20 billion doses** have already been administered in India so far. Millions of vaccines were shared with the world through the **‘Vaccine Maitri’ initiative**”.
- “India is home to the world’s oldest medical systems, **Ayurveda**. With its unique strengths coming to the fore, demand for **AYUSH** treatments like **Ayurveda, Yoga, Siddha, Unani, and Homeopathy** has increased across the world and the same is also promoted”
- **AYUSHMAN BHARAT:**  
“World’s largest Government funded health insurance scheme – Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM- JAY) was launched in 2018. 1,50,000 Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs) are transforming the delivery of comprehensive primary health care services in India. Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) aims to bridge the gap amongst different stakeholders of the healthcare ecosystem through usage of technology. And PM-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission aims to build disease



surveillance systems, laboratory networks, building of infectious disease blocks across the country and augmenting research capacity with emphasis on One Health approach”

## 4.14 FASTER ADOPTION OF MANUFACTURING OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES (FAME) SCHEME

The Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME) scheme was launched under the National Electric Mobility Mission, **to encourage electric and hybrid vehicle purchase by providing subsidies.**

### WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

**The government is slashing subsidies** for the electric 2-wheelers segment - a regressive step which will drag India's EV revolution.

### NATIONAL ELECTRIC MOBILITY MISSION

- The Ministry of Heavy Industry launched the **NEMMP 2020** in **2013**.
- Targets:
  - Deploying **5 to 7 million EVs** in the country **by 2020**.
  - Deploying **400,000 passenger battery electric cars (BEVs) by 2020** in order to avoid 120 million barrels of oil imports and 4 million tons of CO2 emissions.
  - **Lowering of vehicular emissions by 1.3 to 1.5% by 2020**.
  - **Total investment** required - **INR 20,000 - 23,000 cr (approx 3 billion USD)**.

### ABOUT FAME INDIA SCHEME

- A part of NEMPP, the **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric and Hybrid Vehicles in India (FAME India) scheme**, has been administered by the Ministry of Heavy Industry since 1st April 2015.
- Under the scheme, **subsidies are being given to promote manufacturing of electric and hybrid vehicle** technology and to ensure sustainable growth of the same.
- Subsidies are meant to **bring a price parity** between vehicles that have electric motors and fossil fuel-run engines, thereby nudging buyers to go for the cleaner option.
- Its first phase - FAME I, ran for four years until 2019.
- Under the FAME II (which ends this financial year - March 2024), companies can offer a discount of up to 40% on the cost of locally manufactured vehicles and claim it as a subsidy from the government.
  - Under this scheme, the subsidies could range from ₹15,000-60,000 for a two-wheeler.

### THE STATISTICS

- The share of EVs in total vehicle sales in India is currently **around 5%**. Cumulative sales of EVs in India crossed the 1 million milestone for the first time in 2022-23.
- 2-wheelers **accounted for more than 60% of all EV sales** with an **increase of 183%** over 2021-22. A major reason for the rise in electric two-wheeler sales is subsidies.

### THE TARGETS:

The government target for EV sales by 2030 is 30% of private cars, 70% for commercial vehicles and 80% for two and three-wheelers.

### THE CURRENT STEP BY THE GOVERNMENT:

- Under the FAME-II scheme, the government is increasing the outlay for 2-wheelers but **cutting the subsidy per vehicle**.



- **The budgetary allocation** for electric 2-wheelers has been **enhanced** to around Rs 3,500 crore from Rs 2,000 crore, **but the subsidy per unit is being reduced to 15%** of the ex-factory price from 40% at present.
- Earlier, the government had announced that since it was **about to achieve the target** of 1 million sales in four years, **the subsidies may not continue**

## 4.15 GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF DELHI (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE, 2023

The President recently promulgated the **Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023** to make a fresh claim of power over the services in the capital.

### BACKGROUND:

- The **Supreme Court recently ruled that the Delhi Govt will have legislative and executive control over administrative services** in the **National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD)** except with regard to public order, police and land.
- Now, the **Centre has brought the ordinance which nullifies the SC order.**

### CONTENT OF THE ORDINANCE:

- The ordinance **seeks to establish** for the first time the **National Capital Civil Service Authority (NCCSA).**
- **NCCSA Composition:** It will be **headed by the Chief Minister of Delhi**, with the Chief Secretary and Principal Home Secretary of Delhi being the other two members.

### FUNCTIONS OF NCCSA:

- It will **make recommendations to the Lieutenant Governor (LG) regarding transfer, posting, vigilance and other incidental matters of all Group 'A' officers and officers of DANICS** serving in the Government of NCTD.
- All matters required to be decided by the NCCSA shall be **decided by majority of votes of the members** present and voting.
- This means, that in effect, the **decision of the elected chief minister of Delhi can be overruled by the two senior bureaucrats.**

### ROLE OF LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

- The ordinance stated that the **LG will pass orders to give effect to the recommendations passed by the NCCSA.**
- However, **LG can ask for the relevant material with regard to officers** belonging to All India Services and DANICS serving the Delhi government.
- **In case the LG differs with the recommendation made, he/she may return the recommendation to the Authority for reconsideration** by the Authority. For this, **reasons will have to be recorded in writing.**
- However, as per the ordinance, **in case of difference of opinion, the decision of the LG shall be final.**
- There is **no specific provision in the ordinance regarding the transfer posting, discipline etc of Group B and Group C officers**, which seems to indicate that the elected government of Delhi would continue to have control over these officers.



सत्यमेव जयते

 **ENSURE IAS**

By an IRS Officer of 2016



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