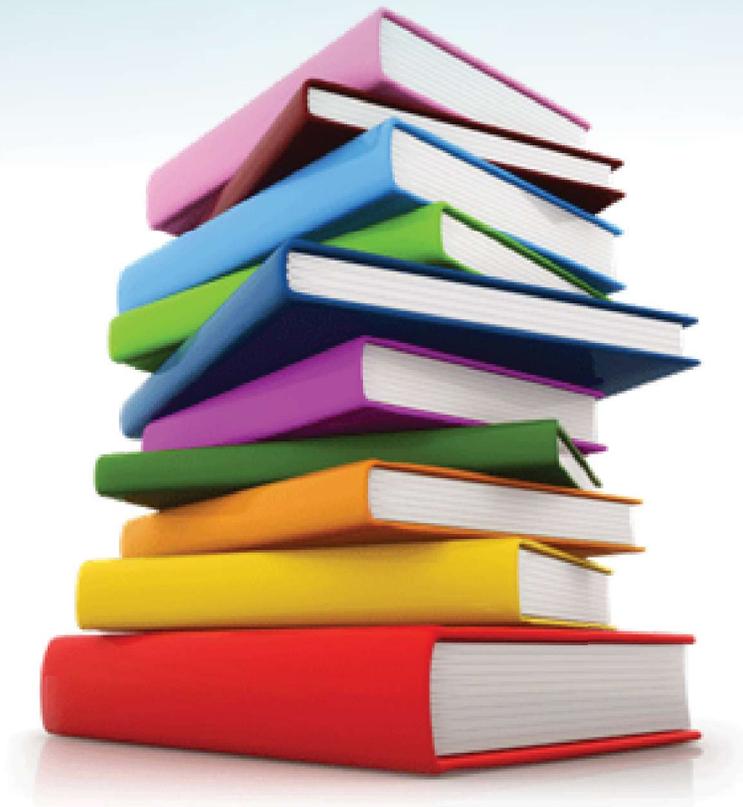




# **PLUTUS IAS**

## **Weekly CURRENT AFFAIRS**



**PLUTUS IAS WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS 27-06-2022 to 03-07-2022**

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# CURRENT AFFAIRS

## MAY 2022

### G-7 (Group of Seven)

#### G-7 (GROUP OF SEVEN) – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

- It is an inter-governmental political forum consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. Also European Union is a 'non-enumerated member'. It formed as on 25 March 1973.
- As of 2020, the collective group accounts for over 50 percent of global net wealth (which is \$418 trillion), 32 to 46 percent of global gross domestic product, and approximately 770 million people or 10 percent of the world's population.
- The G7 is not based on a treaty and has no permanent secretariat or office and its presidency rotates annually among the member states. The Hindu Analysis
- First Summit was held in France (Nov-1975) as G6 and further Canada joined the group, forming G7. Recently 48th Summit held in Germany (26-28 June-2022)
- Besides India, Germany has also invited Argentina, Indonesia, Senegal and South Africa as guests for the summit to recognise the democracies of the world as its partners.
- India focused on following issues such as Climate, energy, food security, counterterrorism, environment, gender equality and democracy.

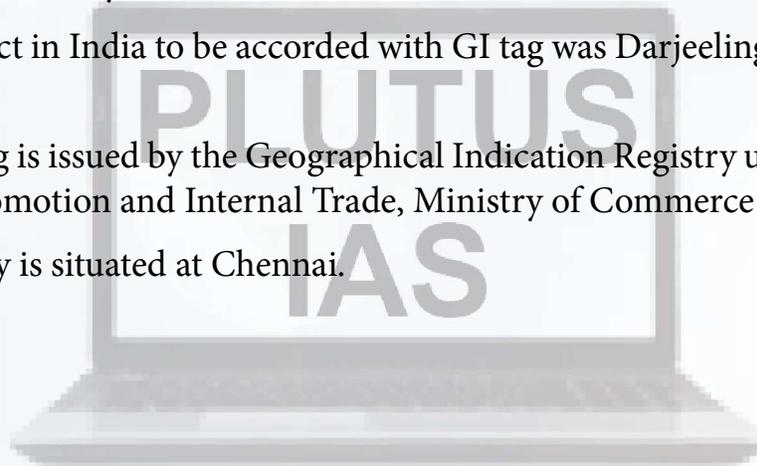
Anoop Singh

### Geographical Indication (GI)

#### GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION (GI) – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

- A geographical indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin like region, country and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. In order to function as a GI, a sign must identify a product as originating in a given place.

- The use of a GI, as an indication of the product's source, is intended as a certification that the product possesses certain qualities, is made according to original & traditional methods, or enjoys a good reputation due to its geographical origin. And also there is a clear link between the product and its original place of production. The Hindu Analysis
- GI Tags are used for agricultural products, handicrafts, industrial products etc.
- GI Tag ensures that none other than those registered as authorized users are allowed to use the popular product name.
- GI are covered as a component of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property and also governed by the World Trade Organisation's (WTO's) Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).
- In India, GI registration is administered by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 which came into force with effect from September 2003. The Hindu Analysis
- The first product in India to be accorded with GI tag was Darjeeling tea in the year 2004-05.
- In India this tag is issued by the Geographical Indication Registry under the Department of Industry Promotion and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- The GI Registry is situated at Chennai.



**Anoop Singh**

## **Global Health leaders Award 2022**

### **GLOBAL HEALTH LEADERS AWARD 2022 – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

India's ASHA volunteers have received arguably the biggest international recognition in form of the WHO's Global Health Leaders Awards 2022.

#### **TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

#### **HOW DID ASHA EVOLVE?**

- India launched the ASHA programme in 2005-06 as part of the National Rural Health Mission.
- Initially rolled out in rural areas, it was later extended to urban settings as well.

- The core of the ASHA programme has been an intention to build the capacity of community members in taking care of their own health and being partners in health services. The Hindu Analysis
- The ASHA programme was inspired from the learnings from two past initiatives.
  - In 1975, a WHO monograph titled 'Health by the people' and then in 1978, an international conference on primary health care in Alma Ata.
  - The biggest inspiration for designing the ASHA programme came from the Mitandin initiative of Chhattisgarh, which had started in 2002.

### **WHAT ABOUT THE KEY FEATURES OF ASHA? THE HINDU ANALYSIS**

- The ASHA selection involved key village stakeholders to ensure community ownership for the initiatives and forge a partnership.
- ASHAs coming from the same village where they worked had an aim to ensure familiarity, better community connect and acceptance.
- The idea of having activists in their name was to reflect that they are the community's representative in the health system, and not the lowest-rung government functionary in the community. The Hindu Analysis
- Calling them volunteers was partly to avoid a painfully slow process for government recruitment and to allow an opportunity to implement performance-based incentives.
- ASHAs have become pivotal to nearly every health initiative at the community level and are integral to demand side interventions for health services in India.

### **WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF THE PROGRAMME? THE HINDU ANALYSIS**

- Salary- ASHAs do not have a fixed salary.
- Career progress- They do not have opportunities for career progression.
- Delays- Though performance-based incentives are supplemented by a fixed amount in a few Indian States, the total payment continues to remain low and often delayed.
- Protests- The issues have resulted in dissatisfaction, regular agitations and protests by ASHAs in many States of India.

### **WHAT IS THE NEED OF THE HOUR? THE HINDU ANALYSIS**

- High remuneration- Indian States need to develop mechanisms for higher remuneration for ASHAs.
- Capacity building- It is time that in-built institutional mechanisms are created for capacity-building and avenues for career progression for ASHAs.

- Social services- Extending the benefits of social sector services including health insurance for ASHAs and their families should be considered. The Hindu Analysis
- External review- While the ASHA programme has benefitted from many internal and regular reviews by the Government, an independent and external review of the programme needs to be given urgent and priority consideration.
- Permanent staff- Considering the extensive shortage of staff in the primary health-care system in India, ASHAs can be made permanent government employees.

**Anshum Verma**

## **G7 Summit 2022**

### **G7 SUMMIT 2022 – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

#### **WHY IN NEWS?**

- In order to attend the G7 Summit in Schloss Elmau, a century-old resort in the Bavarian Alps, Prime Minister Narendra Modi travelled to Germany.

#### **WHAT IS G7? THE HINDU ANALYSIS**

Members- The G7 is an informal grouping of the world's seven most industrialised countries, including the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom.

At the G7 heads of state and government gathering every year, the European Union is always represented.

In 1975, the first “World Economic Summit,” which later evolved into the G7, was established.

Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, and the US made the original G6.

The panellists discussed the 1970s’ economic issues, including the first oil crisis and the fall of the fixed exchange rate regime (Bretton Woods).

G7: Canada joined the organisation in 1976, and the first G7 summit was held in Puerto Rico.

The European Community (now the European Union) has participated in every working session since the Ottawa Summit in 1981.

The G7’s focus widened to encompass matters of foreign and security policy in the 1980s.

G8: When the Group of Eight was established in 1998, Russia joined but was expelled in 2014 for violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Importance: By 2022, the G7 countries will account for 10% of the world's population, 31% of its gross world product, and 21% of its carbon dioxide emissions.

### **HOW WAS THE MOST RECENT G7 SUMMIT? THE HINDU ANALYSIS**

This year was Germany's sixth G7 leadership, with the overriding theme of "Progress towards an equal world."

This objective is to use five areas of action to direct the G7's activity.

- planetary sustainability
- stability and change in the economy
- A healthy life
- Putting money toward a brighter future
- stronger collectively

India, Argentina, Indonesia, Senegal, and South Africa have been invited to the summit in 2022 as partner nations by the German Chancellor.

The UN, WHO, WTO, IMF, and World Bank were among the international organisations that attended the summit.

The G7 leaders discussed a variety of issues at the three-day gathering, including Ukraine and working together on foreign policy.

- energy and food security issues
- Promoting partnerships for infrastructure and investment while investing in climate and health
- influencing the world economy
- Promotion of gender equality
- Developing global collaboration

### **WHAT WERE THE SUMMIT'S MAIN RESULTS? THE HINDU ANALYSIS**

Communiqué – The G7 leaders signed a communiqué to jointly preserve democratic values, universal human rights, the multilateral system of rules, and the resiliency of democracies.

Ukraine: The G7 leaders reiterated how strongly they disapproved of Russia's illegitimate and unjustified aggression against Ukraine.

The G7 nations are firmly committed to supporting Ukrainian reconstruction through an international reconstruction plan and have pledged and supplied EUR 28 billion in fiscal help. The Hindu Analysis

Security of food and energy supplies was a commitment made by the G7 leaders to gradually reduce reliance on Russian energy.

They investigated further measures, such as price controls, to safeguard the energy supply and lessen price spikes.

Through the Global Alliance on Food Security, the G7 nations will also improve nutrition and food security worldwide. The Hindu Analysis

Economic concerns: The G7 leaders are still committed to working together to collaborate on economic security, increase supply chain resilience, and address citizens' rising cost of living.

Environment and climate: The G7 leaders backed the plans of a global Climate Club to hasten the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

The G7 leaders made a pledge to

a significantly carbon-free road sector by 2030

a power industry that is substantially or completely carbon-free by 2035

accelerating the phase-out of domestic unabated coal power as a top priority

Investments- The Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII), a cooperative project to finance infrastructure projects in underdeveloped nations, has been created by the G7 nations. The Hindu Analysis

Through the cooperation, they hope to close the global investment gap by mobilising USD 600 billion over the following five years.

The G7 will strive toward new Just Energy Transition Partnerships with Indonesia, India, Senegal, and Vietnam while building on their current cooperation with South Africa. The Hindu Analysis

Health: The G7 leaders reaffirmed their dedication to ensuring that everyone has access to vaccines, medicines, diagnostics, and other important medical supplies that are safe, effective, and reasonably priced.

The G7 agreement on pandemic preparedness was also endorsed by leaders.

Democratic principles: The G7 leaders will work with partners and civil society to strengthen our countries' resilience.

- Internet and offline advocacy for human rights
- Deal with misinformation
- Obtain gender parity

**Vivek Raj**

# Small Government Savings Rate

## SMALL GOVERNMENT SAVINGS RATE – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

- Why in news?

For the quarter of July to September in FY23, the Central Government maintained the interest rates for modest savings programmes at their current levels.

## TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

### SMALL SAVINGS SCHEMES: WHAT ARE THEY?

Small Savings Schemes (SSS) are a collection of savings instruments run by the federal government with the goal of encouraging all residents, regardless of age, to save consistently.

The government, banks, and public sector financial organisations all introduce these programmes. The Hindu Analysis

The interest rates for modest savings schemes have been reviewed by the Finance Ministry every three months since 2016.

The National Small Savings Fund (NSSF), which is utilised by the central government to pay its fiscal deficit, collects all deposits made under various small savings programmes. The Hindu Analysis

Classification: The programmes can be divided into three categories: social security plans, savings certificates, and post office deposits.

Post Office Deposits: These include monthly income accounts, time deposits with maturities of 1, 2, and 3 years, recurrent deposits, and savings deposits.

National Savings Certificates and the Kisan Vikas Patra are two examples of savings certificates. The Hindu Analysis

Public Provident Fund, Sukanya Samriddhi Account, and Senior Citizens Savings Scheme are examples of social security programmes.

Benefits:

Returns that are typically higher than bank fixed deposits are made available has tax advantages and a sovereign guarantee.

They are very trustworthy since the government supports them.

not impacted by stock market fluctuations

Encourage people to develop a habit of saving money

## **HOW DOES THE GOVERNMENT FEEL ABOUT THE LOW SAVINGS RATES? THE HINDU ANALYSIS**

Calculating the tiny savings rate Small savings rates and benchmark government bond yields are related.

However, the government hasn't lowered interest rates in the past two years despite changes in G-Sec (government securities) yields.

At this time, the government has chosen to maintain the same interest rates on modest savings instruments. The Hindu Analysis

The National Savings Certificate (NSC) and Public Provident Fund (PPF), for example, will continue to offer yearly interest rates of 7.1 percent and 6.8 percent, respectively, in accordance with the recent decision.

One to five-year term deposits will provide interest rates between 5.5 and 6.7 percent, while five-year recurring deposits would yield a higher rate of 5.8 percent.

## **WHAT DOES THIS ENTAIL FOR SAVERS AND BANKS? THE HINDU ANALYSIS**

Negative real rate of return: The decision was made at a time when bond yields have increased to over 7.4 percent and inflation is over 7 percent.

After accounting for inflation, the choice might give savers and pensioners a negative real rate of return. The Hindu Analysis

Technically speaking, negative real rates encourage spending rather than conserving, which may drive greater inflation and further negative real rates.

Slow down the deposit rate increase: Banks are currently less inclined to pursue a significant increase in deposit rates.

**Vivek Raj**

## **India's law on abortion**

### **INDIA'S LAW ON ABORTION**

#### **WHY IN NEWS?**

Some issues are not addressed in the 2021 amendment to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act.

## **EVOLUTION OF INDIA'S ABORTION LAW**

Following a spike in the incidence of induced abortions in the 1960s, the Union government mandated the formation of the Shantilal Shah Committee to consider the country's abortion legalisation.

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act was put into effect in 1971 with the goal of lowering maternal mortality caused by unsafe abortions.

This law establishes the guidelines for how and when a medical abortion may be performed. It is an exemption to the Indian Penal Code (IPC) provisions of 312 and 313.

A person who "voluntarily induces a woman with child to miscarry" is subject to punishment under Section 312 of the IPC, which carries a maximum three-year prison sentence, a fine, or both, unless it was done in good faith with the intention to preserve the pregnant woman's life.

In India, this clause effectively outlaws all forms of abortion.

According to Section 313 of the IPC, a person who induces a miscarriage without the pregnant woman's agreement, regardless of whether she is far along in her pregnancy, will be subject to a fine, life in prison, or a prison sentence that could last up to 10 years.

## **EVOLUTION OF MTP BETWEEN 1971 AND 2021**

The MTP Act underwent its most recent modification in 2021. Prior to that, new regulations were introduced in 2003 to permit the use of misoprostol, an abortion drug that had just been discovered, to end a pregnancy up to seven weeks into it.

Abortion is legal following a doctor's recommendation under certain conditions, according to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Act of 2021.

The 2021 Act expanded the maximum gestational period to which a woman may obtain a medical abortion from the 20 weeks allowed by the 1971 Act to 24 weeks.

This updated upper limit is only applicable in certain circumstances.

Up to 20 weeks of gestation, MTP might now be accessible based on the recommendation of a single licensed medical professional.

Two licensed medical professionals' opinions are needed between 20 and 24 weeks.

A medical abortion up to 12 weeks of pregnancy required the approval of one registered doctor under the previous version of the Act, while abortions up to 20 weeks required the approval of two doctors.

Additionally, if a pregnancy must be terminated beyond 24 weeks of gestation, only a four-member Medical Board, established in each State under the Act, may do so on the basis of fetal abnormalities.

Despite any of the aforementioned restrictions, the legislation also stipulates that an abortion may be performed whenever necessary by a single licenced medical professional in order to preserve the pregnant woman's life.

Because the 2021 Act does not include the need for spousal consent, unmarried women may also seek abortion under the aforementioned conditions. However, a guardian's approval is necessary if the woman is a minor.

### **JUDICIAL ACTIONS TAKEN IN CASES INVOLVING ABORTIONS**

The decision by a pregnant person to continue a pregnancy or not is part of that person's right to privacy as well as their right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution, the Supreme Court held in the landmark Right to Privacy judgement in the 2017 case Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India and others. Despite the fact that the country's current laws do not permit unconditional abortions

In February 2022, the Calcutta High Court granted a 37-year-old woman's request for a medical abortion at 34 weeks of pregnancy because the foetus had been identified as having an intractable spinal disorder.

### **OBJECTIONS TO THE ABORTION LAW**

A 2018 report published in the Lancet estimates that as of 2015, India saw 15.6 million abortions annually.

The latest National Family Health Survey 2019–2021 found that 27% of abortions were performed at home by the mother herself.

Around 8 women perish every day in India as a result of unsafe abortions, according to the State of the World Population Report 2022 by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

According to the MTP Act, only gynaecologists or obstetricians are permitted to perform abortions.

Critics claim that because the law prohibits abortions performed at any time, it forces women to acquire unsafe, illegal abortions.

According to statistics, 8,00,000 unsafe and illegal abortions are carried out annually in India, many of which result in maternal death.

As "woman" is used in the legislation, pregnant transgender and non-binary people who are biologically able to have children are excluded.

They are compelled to ignore their gender identification and identify as one of the gender-binary.

Affordability and social stigma that encourage unsafe abortions are other major problems.

Private medical facilities with abortion services are pricy and only accessible to those with sufficient funds.

## **CONCLUSION**

India's condition is far from ideal, so now is the time to consider global progressive practices and learn from them.

We should work toward reproductive equity, total physical autonomy, and inclusivity.

We shouldn't start governing by gauging our progress by the rate of regression.

Legal, medical, and societal considerations must be taken into account while evaluating bodily autonomy and reproductive rights.

One cannot say that India is paving the way for the West until women and non-binary pregnant people have complete authority over their own bodies according to these standards

**Vivek Raj**

