MONTHLY
CURRENT AFFAIRS
MARCH-APRIL 2023
for Competitive Exams

The Complete Coverage of All Important Events from March - APRIL 2023

HIGHLIGHTS

▶ SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

▶ SAUDI ARABIA-IRAN RECONCILIATION

▶ 22 MAR 23 DEATH PENALTY BY HANGING

▶ JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE (JPC)

▶ INDIA'S MOON MISSION – CHANDRAYAAN – 3

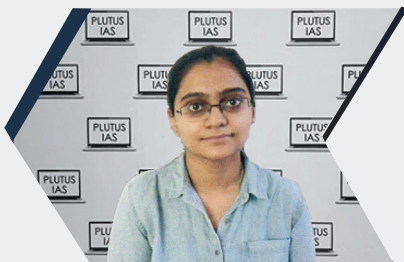▶ THE CHALLENGES OF WORKING AS AN AYURVEDIC PRACTITIONER (AYUSH)

PLUTUS IAS

UPSC CSE 2021 ACHIEVERS

DIVYA MISHRA
AIR 28

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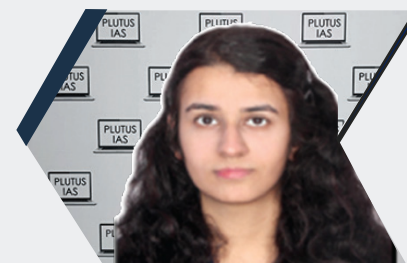
ANJALI SHROTRIYA
AIR 44

NIKHIL MAHAJAN
AIR 80

NITISH RAJORA
AIR 268

SURYABHAN ACHHELAL
AIR 488

NEERAJ KUMAR
AIR 550

MAHIMA MADAN
AIR 612

Many more...

Foreword

Dear Aspirants,

This magazine by **Plutus IAS team** is designed in such a fashion that it holistically covers all the relevant and important topics for civil services exam or IAS exam to make aspirants battle or exam ready. **Plutus IAS Current Affairs Magazine** is a secondary source of information, the newspaper will always remain the first source for preparation of current affairs.

Now, current affairs no longer remain the current, it is contemporary affairs. Questions asked in prelims as well as mains test the conceptual clarity of an aspirant.This magazine prepared with an aim to help you understand the interlinkage of both statics and current and internalize those concepts required to crack this examination.

Plutus IAS team wishes you all the best. Prepare for UPSC Civil Services Examination with calm , composed and serene mind with some patience to crack this examination in one go.

Team
Plutus IAS

Sources:

The Hindu | The Indian Express | The Economic Times | Press Information Bureau (keep checking the Features section for imp articles and our weekly PIB Gist) | PRS (only for recent Bills and articles related to them) | IDSA: Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis (keep checking every 2-3 days for in-depth IR articles) | Yojana and Kurukshetra (no need to read all articles – read selectively) | LokSabha and RajyaSabha Debates | NCERTs All standard reference books.

Plutus IAS Current Affairs Magazine covers a wide range of topics that overlaps with the CORE subjects.

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CONTENT

General Studies -1

(Indian Heritage and Culture, History and Geography of the World and Society)

General Studies -2

(Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice & International Relations)

General Studies -3

(Technology, Economic Development, Biodiversity, Security & Disaster Management)

General studies - 1

(Indian Heritage and Culture, History and Geography of the World and Society)

Same-Sex Marriage

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs for UPSC" and details the ongoing proceedings in the Supreme Court of India regarding the legalization of same-sex marriage. The government has filed an affidavit stating its non-supportive stance.

FOR PRELIMS:

Supreme Court cases related to LGBTQ rights.

Abolition of Section 377 of IPC.

Transgender Rights Act.

FOR MAINS:

GS 1 – Indian Society.

The debate between societal and individual interests.

INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE

Why in news: In an affidavit presented to the Supreme Court, the Centre expressed disapproval of same-sex marriage and cited the commonly held belief in India that a marriage between a biological man and woman is a sacred union, a sacrament, and a Zanskar.

THE RATIONALE BEHIND THE STANCE OF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT

The Government has adopted a conservative approach not reflecting modern values. It has based its argument considering the institution of marriage as a sacrament, a holy union, and a Zanskar. Invoking a religious spiritual basis also resonated with a large section of the society that considers same-sex marriage an "unnatural act". It further stated that the act of marriage derives its origin from age-old customs, rituals, practices,

cultural ethos, and societal values, To caution the SC not to interfere in such matters it further stated that any kind of "deviation" from this "statutorily, religiously and socially" accepted norm in "human relationship" can only happen through the legislature and not the Supreme Court.

> The institution of marriage has a sanctity attached to it, and in major parts of the country, it is regarded as a sacrament, a holy union, and a sanskar

> In our country, despite statutory recognition of the relationship of marriage between a biological man and a biological woman, marriage necessarily depends upon age-old customs, rituals, practices, cultural ethos and societal values

UNION GOVERNMENT AFFIDAVIT

SHOULD SC INTERFERE IN SENSITIVE ISSUES OF PUBLIC CONCERN?

- The government's cautionary note to the SC to let the legislature decide on such issues is party right. The elected representatives are legitimate voices of the people and any decision taken by them after debates and deliberation have a chance of better acceptability and legitimacy. The actions of SC in the Sabarimala case led to wide protests creating a social crisis.

- But, on the other hand, it has been seen that the governments are reluctant to take up sensitive issues that are against the majoritarian-held views. They fear the wrath of the public and their vote bank and sacrifice individual rights.

- The Supreme Court which is the protector of individual freedom has intervened on many occasions to uphold the fundamental rights of people. It has delivered such judgments which would not have been taken by governments. It has upheld that tradition and costumes will be tested on the altar of "Constitutional morality"

WHAT IS THE STATUS OF MARRIAGE IN INDIA?

The marriage tradition is a social process where couples in the presence of people come into a union. There is no explicit requirement to get legal sanction. The willing couple can solemnize their marriage legally, commonly called a "court marriage". The Special Marriage Act, of 1954 has provision for marriage for the people of India and all Indian nationals in foreign countries, irrespective of religion or faith followed by either party. The LGBTQ community is demanding their inclusion in the Act so that they can marry

and gain legal recognition.

ISSUES INVOLVED IN SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

- Open discrimination: The nonrecognition of a homosexual relationship is a discriminatory act by the State. A person irrespective of their choices is free to choose whom to love and marry. The SC in its previous judgment in Puttaswamy held that privacy is a fundamental right.

- Violation of fundamental rights: The Indian Constitution grants the citizens a certain set of inviolable and inalienable rights. These rights cannot be infringed by the State on account of one's choices.

- Natural and Unnatural relationship: The argument given by governments across the world against homosexual relationships is that these are 'unnatural' unions. It must be noted that with evolution the definition of natural and unnatural has changed with more emphasis on individual rights.

- Legal issues related to the progeny: A homosexual couple faces issues of legal recognition when they surrogate or adopt a baby. The lack of a legal framework also infringes on the right of the child to have legal safety of possession.

- Social morality vs Constitutional morality: There is a conflict between social and constitutional values. Indian Constitution and judiciary's interpretation has been more liberal and individual focussed than the larger social ethics. A lot of societal ills have been curbed when tested on the altar of constitutional values. The previous case of Sabarimala ending discrimination on a gender basis was heavily opposed by society.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE LEGAL RECOGNITION OF SAME-SEX MARRIAGE?

There is a need to amend SMA and legalize unions of the same genders lawfully. The legal framework can make LGBTQ a separate category like religion, faith, etc. It can also add provisions for the child adopted by the couple.

WAY FORWARD

- Raise Societal awareness and destigmatize homosexual individuals: The awareness campaigns must be made to understand the issues related to homosexuals. The wide societal support generated can remove the negative stereotypes attached to these people.

- Encouragement of role models: There are individuals with influencing positions in society who are open about their sexuality. They must step forward and share their experiences and stories.

- Anti-discriminatory legal framework: The law must be amended in keeping pace with the changing times. There is a need to amend property, adoption, and

inheritance related to laws to provide a seamless antidiscrimination framework.

Source:
Indian Express

ZEALANDIA

*This article covers "Daily current events "and the topic is about '**Zealandia'** which is in the news, it covers "**Geographical Features & Their Location**" In GS-1, the following content has relevance for UPSC.*

For Prelims: Zealandia
For Mains: GS-1, Geographical Features & Their Location

WHY IN THE NEWS:

After 375 years of discussion and exploration, scientists have officially proven the presence of Zealandia, also known as Te Riu-a-Mui. Zealandia is now officially designated as the world's eighth continent.

WHAT DEFINES A CONTINENT

- A continent is defined by geologists as a large geographical mass that includes both dry land and continental shelf off the coast.
- A continent is formed by continental crust, which is composed of igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary materials.
- Basalt comprises the oceanic crust, which is thinner and denser than the continental crust.
- A continent should also have considerable elevation zones in comparison to the surrounding seabed.
- A continent has no minimum size requirement.

HOW ZEALANDIA FITS IN THE DEFINITION

- The islands of New Caledonia to the north, the North, South, and Stewart Islands to the south, the Auckland Islands and Campbell Island to the south, and the Chatham Islands to the west form a continuous span of continental crust.
- The continental crust of Zealandia is physically distinct from the continental crust of Australia.

- This place is likewise relatively high, reaching nearly 3,000 meters above the surrounding oceanic crust.
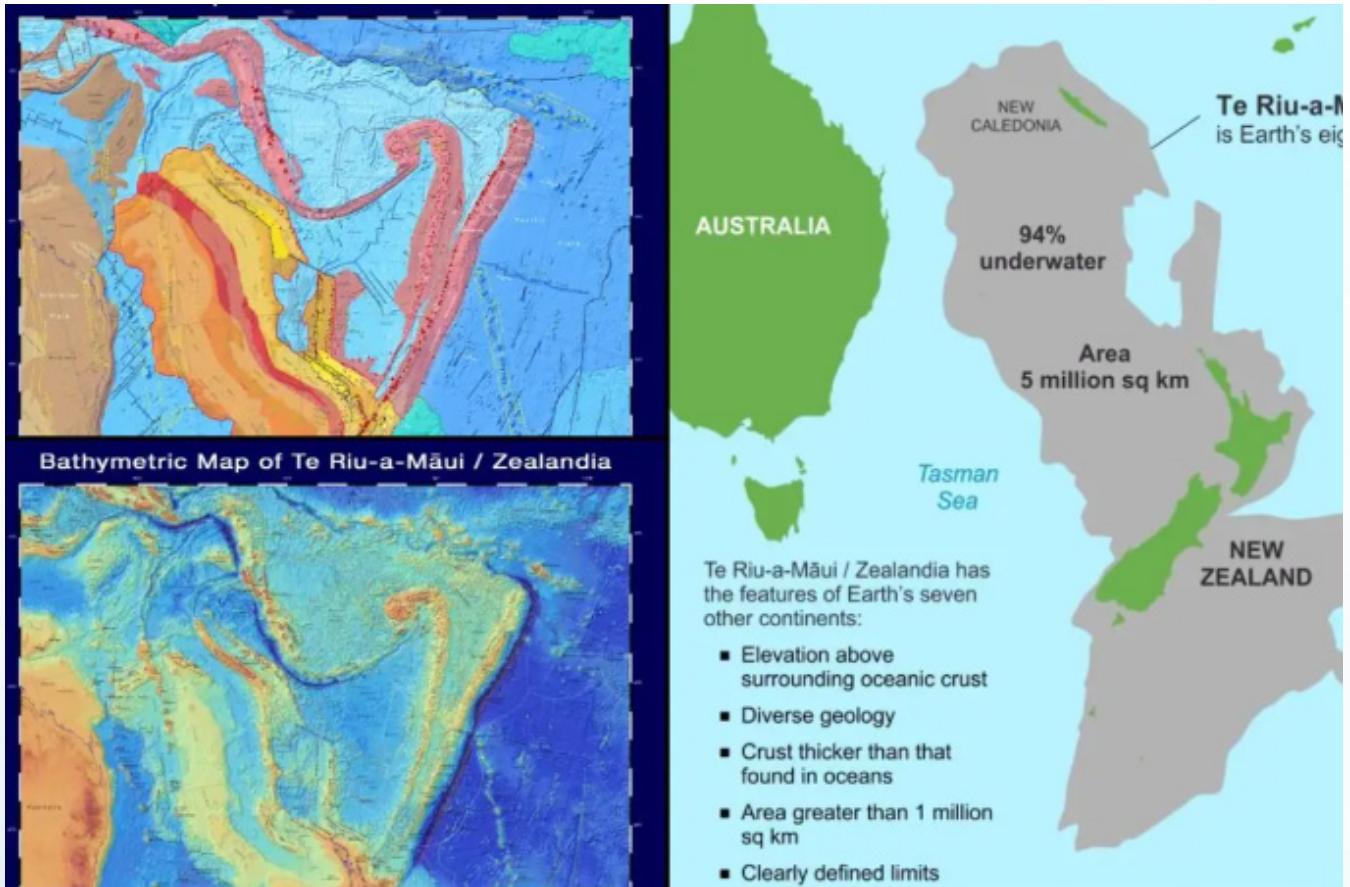
Zealandia

ABOUT ZEALANDIA

ORIGIN

- Around 500 million years ago, it was part of an ancient supercontinent called Gondwana, which also contained Western Antarctica and Eastern Australia.
- Zealandia began to separate from Gondwana approximately 105 million years ago.
- It progressively fell beneath the seas, with over 94% of the continent lying submerged for millennia.
- A Dutch businessman and sailor, Abel Tasman Tasman, first discovered Zealandia in 1642.

LOCATION

- Zealandia is a long, narrow microcontinent mostly submerged in the South Pacific Ocean.

WHAT IS A MICROCONTINENT?

- A microcontinent is a landmass that has separated from a larger continent.
- Zealandia separated from Antarctica approximately 100 million years ago, and subsequently from Australia approximately 80 million years ago.

SIZE

- This continent covers around 1.89 million square miles.
- Zealandia is roughly half the size of Australia, although just 7% of its land area is above sea level.

WHAT DOES IT CONSIST OF

- The majority of that terrestrial land is made up of New Zealand's two big islands, the North and South Islands.
- Zealandia also includes Stewart Island, which is located close south of the South Island, as well as other smaller islets.
- The northern extremity of Zealandia comprises the French-governed islands of New Caledonia.

CLIMATE

- Zealandia has a usually pleasant, temperate climate.
- The tropical climate of New Caledonia is more similar to that of Oceania and the South Pacific.

TOPOGRAPHY

- Its larger islands have glaciers, the most notable of which is Tasman Glacier on the South Island.
- Several fjords and valleys were also formed by glacial activity during the last ice age.

VOLCANIC ACTIVITY

- Zealandia is a highly active tectonic area.
- A portion of the microcontinent is located on the Australian plate, while the remainder is located on the Pacific plate.
- The Taupo Volcanic Zone on the North Island is the largest of six major zones with active volcanoes.
- Because of the geothermal activity induced by the contact of the Australian and Pacific plates, This place is home to several natural geysers and hot springs.
- The North Island is dominated by the North Island Volcanic Plateau, whereas the

South Island is dominated by the Southern Alps.

- Both mountain ranges are gradually rising due to a process known as tectonic uplift.
- Tectonic uplift is the geologic uplift of the Earth's surface caused by plate tectonics.

UNDERWATER ZEALANDIA

- Mineral riches abound in Zealandia's submerged region.
- The government of New Zealand strictly regulates undersea mining operations.
- Zealandia, a microcontinent, contributes to the determination of New Zealand's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
- Without the approval of another organization, a country may utilize any natural resources, such as oil or fish, in its EEZ.
- The EEZ of New Zealand is approximately 4.3 million square kilometers in size, which is more than 15 times the amount of land above ground.
- There are also numerous natural gas fields distributed around it.
- The largest natural gas field in the Tasman Sea is the Maui field.

Source

The Hindu

The Indian Express

General Studies - 2

(Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice & International Relations)

PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES

This article covers "Daily current events "and the topic is about 'Parliamentary Privileges' which is in news, it covers "Polity" In GS-2, and the following content has relevance for UPSC.

For Prelims: Parliamentary Privileges

For Mains: GS-2, Polity

WHY IN THE NEWS:

The Privileges Committee, led by Deputy Chairman and JD(U) Member of Parliament Harivansh, was given a directive by Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar to look into the "disorderly conduct" of 12 Opposition Members of Parliament that had resulted in numerous adjournments during the first leg of the Budget session.

Parliamentary Privileges: Article 105 and Article 122

Photo source: https://parliamentofindia.nic.in/

Parliamentary Privileges

ABOUT PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES

- The Indian Constitution's Article 105 defines parliamentary rights.
- The Indian Constitution's Article 122 defines Courts are not allowed to look into Parliamentary proceedings
- Members of Parliament are not held liable in civil or criminal court for their words or deeds while carrying out their official duties.
- Only members of the house are eligible to use the **Parliamentary** privileges.
- The right to free speech and expression has been granted to parliamentarians.

INDIVIDUAL FREEDOMS PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES

- A citizen's right to free speech and expression is distinct from a member of the parliament's right to the same rights under Article 19(2).
- Even non-members with a voice in the house are granted **Parliamentary privileges**.

For instance, the attorney general of India.

- **Freedom from Arrest:** Members are not subject to arrest in any civil matter for 40 days before and following the house's adjournment, as well as when the house is in session.
    - o To prevent any interference with their ability to perform their duties, no member may be detained beyond the walls of the parliament without the consent of the house to which they are assigned.

- **Freedom from Appearing Witnesses:** Parliamentarians are granted special rights and are not required to testify in court. Without any interference from the court, they are given complete freedom to attend the house and carry out their tasks.

- **Collective Freedoms:** No one can be held liable for publishing any reports, conversations, etc., of the house under the authority of the member of the house, according to Article 105(2) of the Constitution.

- **Exclude Strangers:** The members of the house have the authority and right to prevent strangers and other non-members from participating in the proceedings. This right is crucial for ensuring fair and open debate in the house. If a breach is reported, a warning, reprimand, or even incarceration may be imposed as punishment.

- **Breach of Privileges:** The Indian Parliament has the authority to penalize anyone for violating its rules or showing a member of the house contempt. A member of the house is expelled from the home if they violate any rules.

- **Regulate Internal Affairs:** The Indian Parliament has the authority to penalize anyone for violating or showing contempt for the house, whether they are visitors or members of the house. If a member of the home violates any rules, that member gets kicked out of the house.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES

- The freedom of the press, which is a fundamental right, is constrained by parliamentary privileges. The press must exercise extreme caution when reporting on the behavior of any member of the parliament or its proceedings. There are some circumstances in which the press may be held in contempt of the house:
    - o Publishing any information on a member of the parliament's character.
    - o Any early release of the proceedings.
    - o Misreporting or distorting the house's proceedings.
    - o The proceedings' portion that was deleted was published.

- The Parliamentary Proceedings (Protection of the Publication) Act of 1977 safeguards press freedom in the following situations:

  o   The reports of the events are mainly accurate.

  o   The information is provided unbiasedly.

  o   The report was created for the general welfare.

  o   A private meeting of the house should not be considered in the report.

LIMITATIONS

- According to Article 118 of the Constitution, the right to free speech must be in compliance with the constitution and be subject to parliamentary norms and regulations.

- Parliamentarians are prohibited from discussing the actions of the judges of the Supreme Court and the High Court under Article 121 of the Constitution. Yet, even if it does, the court cannot get involved because it is a matter for the parliament.

- The member is not entitled to any immunity or privileges for anything spoken outside the proceedings of the house.

PUNISHMENT FOR VIOLATION OF PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES

- **Imprisonment –** If a significant violation has been committed, the punishment may include the incarceration of any member or person.

- **Imposing Fine** – The parliament may impose a fine on the person if, in its opinion, the breach or contempt was an economic offense and a financial gain resulted from the breach.

- **Prosecuting the offenders –** The parliament may also take legal action against the violator.

- **The punishment given to its own members –** The house must punish any contempt shown by members of the parliament, and the punishment may include suspension of the offending member from the house.

Source:

The Hindu
Rajyasabha

NEW START TREATY

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details the "New START treaty". The topic is important in the context of the ongoing US-Russia rivalry. The two countries are exchanging blows amid the Ukranian crisis.

NEW START TREATY

For Prelims:

About New Start Treaty: features Arms Control Regimes

For Mains: GS 2, International Relations

- Implications of the Nuclear Arms race

- India, China, and Pakistan Nuclear Arms race

WHY IN THE NEWS:

Recently Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that Moscow was unilaterally suspending the last remaining nuclear arms control treaty with the U.S., stating that the West was trying to "destroy" Russia. Mr. Putin remarked that Russia will resume nuclear weapon tests in a situation if the US does the same. This announcement raises apprehensions about the removal of the global ban in place on nuclear weapons tests since the Cold War times.

WHAT IS THE NEW START TREATY

It is a nuclear arms reduction treaty between the United States and Russia. The treaty was signed on April 8, 2010, and entered into force on February 5, 2011.

The treaty replaced the previous START I treaty, which had expired in December 2009.

BACKGROUND OF NEW START TREATY

The background of the New START Treaty goes back to the end of the Cold War when the United States and the Soviet Union began to negotiate arms control agreements to reduce their nuclear arsenals.
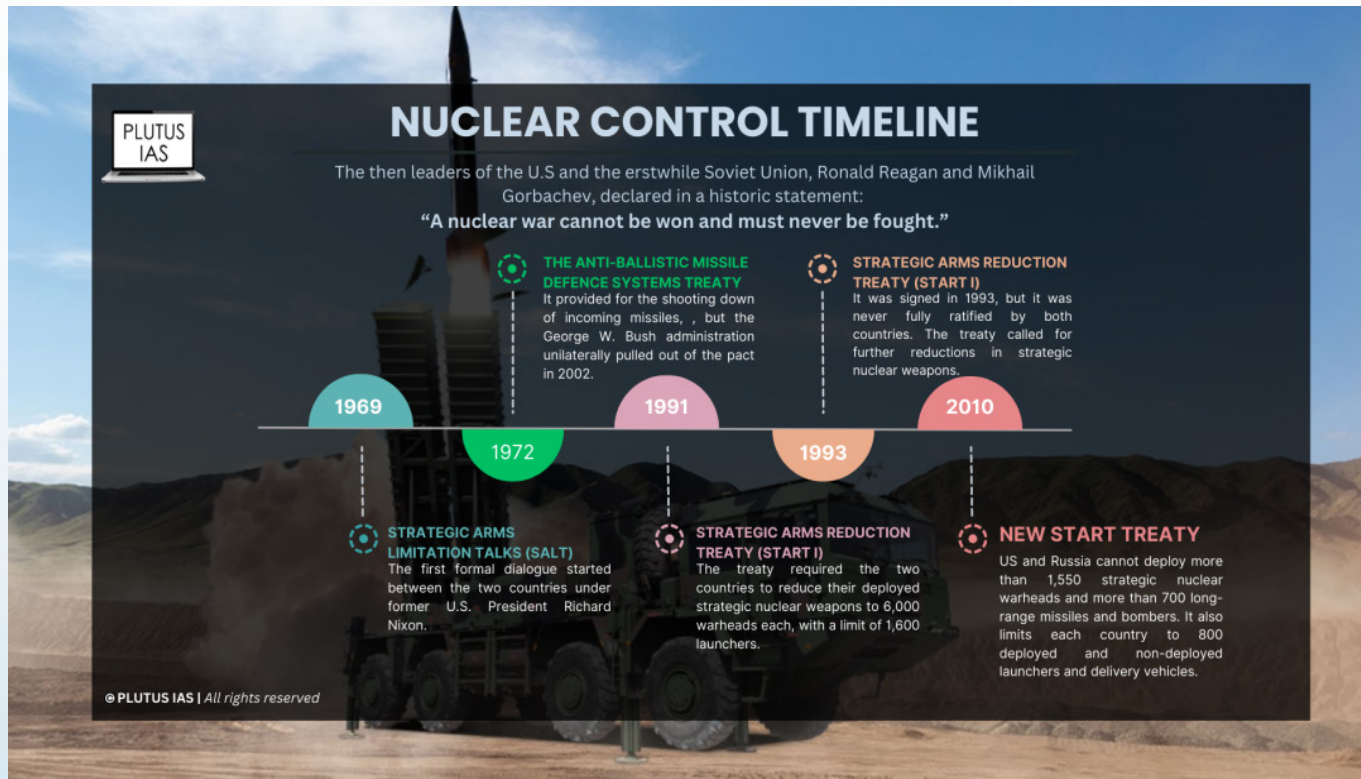
NUCLEAR CONTROL TIMELINE

The first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) was signed in 1991 and resulted in significant reductions in the number of strategic nuclear weapons deployed by the two countries. However, as the START I treaty was set to expire in 2009, the United States and Russia began negotiations for a new arms control agreement. The negotiations took place against a backdrop of deteriorating relations between the two countries, with tensions over issues such as missile defense and NATO expansion.

Despite these challenges, the negotiations eventually led to the signing of the New START Treaty in April 2010. The treaty was seen as a significant achievement in arms control, as it reduced the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads

for each country by more than 30%.

The treaty also included a comprehensive monitoring and verification regime, which built on the existing verification measures from the START I treaty. This allowed both countries to verify each other's compliance with the treaty and build confidence in the process.

The New START Treaty was ratified by both the United States Senate and the Russian parliament, and it entered into force in February 2011. The treaty was widely praised for its contribution to international security and for reducing the risk of a nuclear conflict between the two countries. In 2018, both nations achieved the arms limits as agreed in the treaty.

FEATURES OF THE NEW START TREATY

The New START Treaty is seen as an important step in reducing the number of nuclear weapons in the world and promoting international peace and security. The features are as below:

- **Limits on warheads**: The New START Treaty limits the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads for each country to 1,550, which is down from the previous limit of 2,200.
- **Limits on missiles and bombers:** It also limits the number of deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments to 700, with an additional 100 in reserve.
- **Monitoring and Verification:** The treaty also includes a comprehensive monitoring and verification regime, which allows both countries to verify each other's compliance with the treaty. This includes on-site inspections, data exchanges, and telemetry exchanges.

CURRENT STATUS OF THE TREATY

Over the past three years, inspections under the New START Treaty have faced significant challenges. The inspections were initially halted in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and efforts to restart them have since been delayed.

In November 2022, Moscow and Washington were scheduled to discuss the resumption of inspections, but the meeting was postponed by Russian President Vladimir Putin. Since then, there have been no further developments.

On February 23, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the unilateral suspension of the New START treaty, the last remaining nuclear arms control treaty between the US and Russia. Putin cited NATO's support for Ukraine, which he claimed was being used to target Russian nuclear facilities and the exclusion of France and Britain's nuclear arsenals from the treaty as reasons for the suspension. The US accused Russia of not complying with the treaty by not allowing on-site inspections.

Features of the New START Treaty

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF RUSSIA SUSPENDING THE TREATY?

According to analysts, Russia's decision to suspend the treaty is a symbolic move and not an immediate trigger for an arms race. The Russian government has stated that it does not plan to breach the limits on warheads prescribed in the New START treaty and will continue to notify Washington of planned test launches of ICBMs.

Experts believe that the move is intended to put pressure on President Biden and European allies to allow Russia to dictate the terms under which the war in Ukraine would come to an end. This suggests that Russia no longer sees nuclear arms control as a separate issue from its bilateral relations with other countries.

> **Mr. Putin's move was entirely symbolic, as Russia had already not been permitting inspections.**
>
> **The suspension seemed to be targeted at putting pressure on President Biden and European allies "so Russia can dictate the terms under which" the war would come to an end.**

Sarah Bidgood
James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies

John Erath
Senior policy director at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation

> **Russia's move is linked to the Ukraine conflict, indicating that the country no longer thinks that nuclear arms control is a separate issue from the ups and downs of bilateral relations.**

Source : THE HINDU

Implications of Russia suspending the treaty

WHAT IS THE IMPLICATION OF RUSSIA'S SUSPENSION OF THE TREATY?

The move has been widely criticized by the international community, with NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg saying that it has made the world a more dangerous place by dismantling the full arms control architecture.

- **Increase in arsenals:** Experts believe that the suspension could give other nuclear-armed countries, such as China, Pakistan, Iran, Israel, and India, an opportunity to increase their arsenals.

- US-China arms control cooperation: It could hamper arms control cooperation between the U.S. and China.

WAY FORWARD

The background of the New START Treaty goes back to the end of the Cold War when the United States and the Soviet Union began to negotiate arms control agreements. To address this situation, there are several potential ways forward:
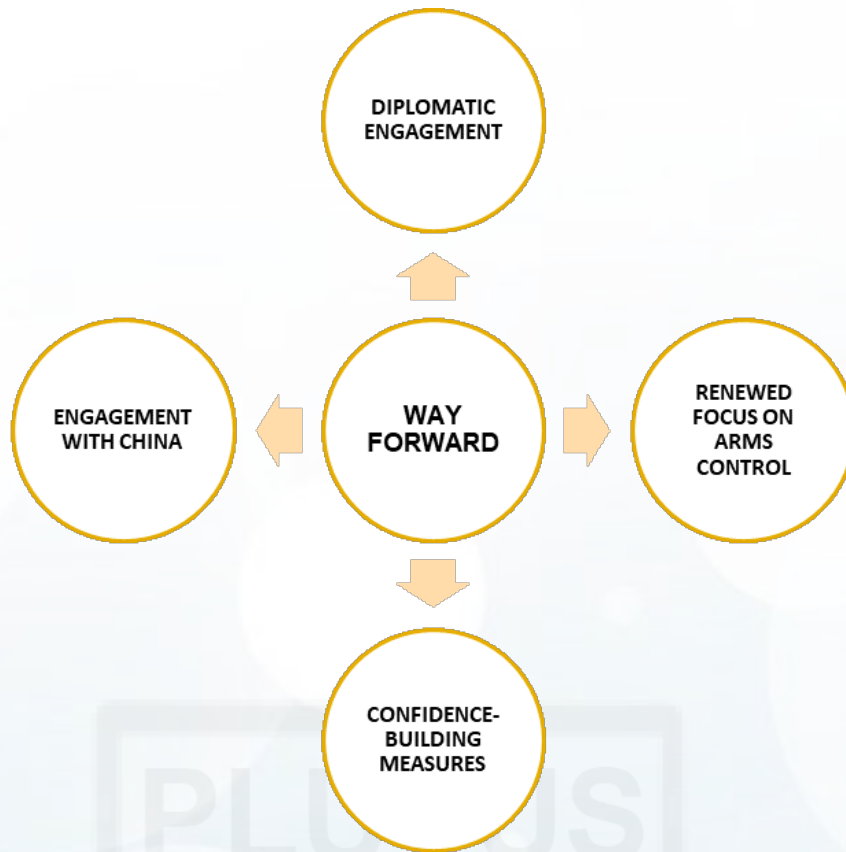
WAY FORWARD OF NEW START TREATY

- **Diplomatic engagement:** The United States and its allies could engage in diplomatic efforts to encourage Russia to reverse its decision to suspend the treaty. This could include high-level talks and negotiations to address Russia's concerns and find a mutually acceptable way forward.

- **Renewed focus on arms control:** The international community could place a renewed focus on arms control efforts, both globally and regionally. This could involve efforts to establish new arms control agreements or to strengthen existing ones, such as the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty or the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

- **Confidence-building measures:** The United States and Russia could take steps to build trust and confidence between the two countries. This could involve measures such as increased transparency and communication, joint military exercises, and mutual reductions in nuclear stockpiles.

- **Engagement with China:** As China's nuclear capabilities continue to grow, it will be important to engage with Beijing in arms control efforts. This could involve efforts to encourage China to join arms control agreements or to establish new agreements with China.

Overall, the suspension of the New START treaty by Russia is a serious challenge to international arms control efforts. However, through diplomatic engagement, a renewed focus on arms control, confidence-building measures, and engagement with China, there may be opportunities to address this situation and build a more stable and secure world.

Source:
State.gov
Nti.org
The Hindu
Carnegieendowment.org
Wikipedia

NATIONAL RURAL LIVELIHOOD MISSION (NRLM)

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihood Mission (Day-NRLM). The Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India has implemented a flagship program called DAY-NRLM to uplift the lives of people at the last mile by alleviating poverty.
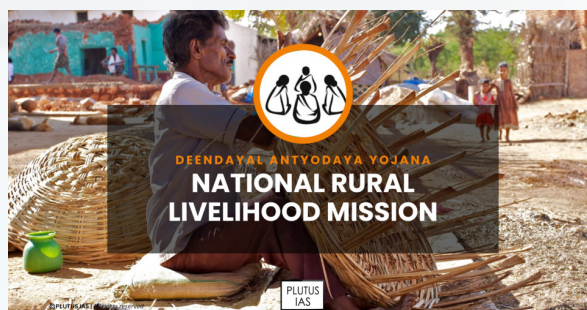
NRLM Scheme

FOR PRELIMS:

1. Features of the Scheme

2. Target beneficiaries

3. Ministry implementing the Scheme

1. Performance of the Scheme
2. Issues related to the implementation of the scheme
   Solutions for successful implementation of the *NRLM* scheme.

CONTENTS:

- **Why in the news?**
- **Objectives of the Scheme**
- **Core Values of the Scheme**
- **Features of the Scheme**
- **Status of the Scheme**
- **Issues related to the implementation of the scheme**
- **Solutions for successful implementation of the scheme**

WAY FORWARD

Why in the news?

Recently, DAY-*NRLM* organized a CSR conclave with Corporates for synergizing efforts at the grassroots

OBJECTIVES OF THE NRLM SCHEME

Its primary objective is to reduce poverty by promoting sustainable livelihood opportunities in rural areas and empowering rural women. The specific objectives of DAY-NRLM are:

- Organize rural poor households into Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and their federations for improving their social and economic status.

- To provide them with access to financial services such as credit, savings, insurance, and pension.

- To enhance the skills and knowledge of the rural poor and provide them with support services to improve their livelihoods.

- To ensure that the rural poor have access to basic services such as health, education, and sanitation.

- To promote the participation of women in all aspects of the program, including decision-making.

- To build partnerships with other stakeholders, including government departments, civil society organizations, and private sector institutions, to promote rural development.

Day-NRLM

The Mission seeks to achieve its objective through investing in four core components viz.

a. Social mobilization and promotion and strengthening of self-managed and financially sustainable community institutions of the rural poor women;
b. Financial inclusion;
c. Sustainable livelihoods; and
d. Social inclusion, social development, and access to entitlements through convergence.

CORE VALUES OF THE SCHEME
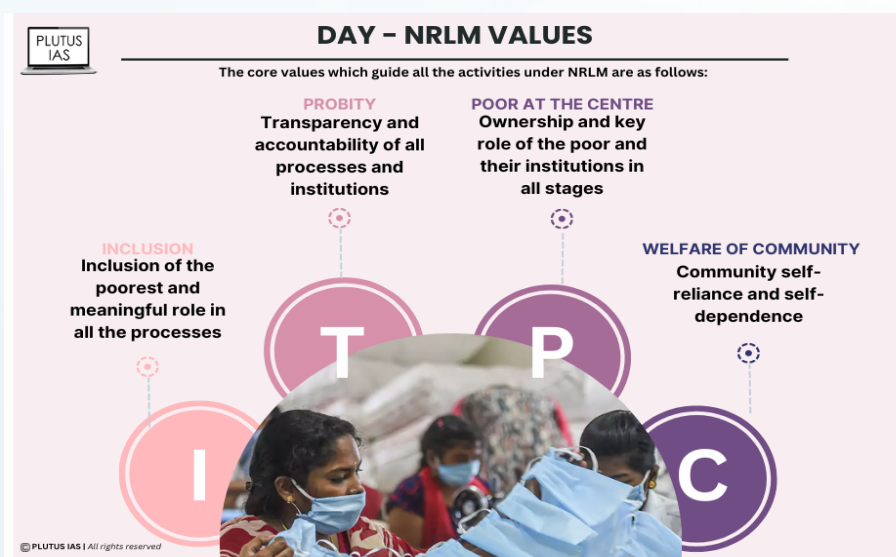
NRLM is guided by some values.

NRLM scheme

FEATURES OF THE NRLM SCHEME

Some of the features of NRLM are:

- **Target Group:** NRLM primarily targets the rural poor, particularly women, Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and other vulnerable sections of society.

- **Self-Help Groups (SHGs):** NRLM promotes the formation of SHGs at the village level. These groups comprise 10-20 members, predominantly women, and operate on the principle of mutual trust and support.

- **Community-based Organizations (CBOs):** NRLM also promotes the formation of CBOs, such as Village Organizations (VOs) and Cluster Level Federations (CLFs), to provide institutional support to the SHGs.

- **Financial Inclusion:** NRLM aims to promote financial inclusion among the rural poor. It provides support to SHGs to open bank accounts, avail of loans, and access other financial services.

- **Livelihoods Promotion:** NRLM supports the livelihoods of the rural poor through various activities such as skill development, entrepreneurship promotion, and market linkages.

- **Convergence:** NRLM promotes convergence with other government programs and schemes such as MGNREGA, PMAY, and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

- **Capacity Building:** NRLM provides training and capacity-building support to the SHGs and CBOs to enhance their skills and capabilities.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** NRLM has a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track the progress and impact of the program.

STATUS OF THE SCHEME

The program has made significant progress in reducing poverty and empowering rural communities since its inception. According to the Ministry of Rural Development, over **6.3 crore rural households** have been mobilized under the program and over **4.6 crore women** have been empowered through the formation of Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

The program has also helped to increase access to credit for the rural poor, with over 4.4 crore SHGs accessing bank loans amounting to over Rs. 1.73 lakh crore. In addition, the program has helped to build the capacity of over 6 lakh community resource persons and provided them with training on various livelihoods and

financial inclusion-related topics.

ISSUES RELATED TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHEME SOME OF THE ISSUES RELATED TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NRLM ARE

- **Limited reach and awareness:** The NRLM has not been able to reach all the poor households in rural areas due to poor implementation and inadequate resources. Many of the targeted beneficiaries are not aware of the program or how to access its benefits, which limits the program's impact.

- **Lack of training:** Many of the community resource persons (CRPs) responsible for implementing the NRLM have not received adequate training, which affects the quality of their work and the outcomes of the program.

  Low awareness: Limited financial resources: The NRLM has limited financial resources, and limits its ability to provide support to all eligible households.

- **Gender bias:** Despite the program's focus on empowering women, there are still gender biases in the implementation of the NRLM, particularly in terms of access to credit and decision-making.

- **Inadequate monitoring:** There is a lack of adequate monitoring and evaluation of the program, which makes it difficult to track its progress and identify areas for improvement.

SOLUTIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHEME

To ensure the successful implementation of the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) in India, some possible solutions are

- **Increase the reach of NRLM:** The NRLM should be expanded to touch all vulnerable sections of the population.

- **Create awareness:** There is a need to create awareness about the program among targeted beneficiaries through targeted outreach and communication campaigns.

- **Ensure proper training:** There is a need to appropriately train both the community resource persons (CRPs) and the beneficiaries.

- **Addressing gender biases:** The program has women at the core, therefore there is a need to provide them with equal access to credit, resources, and decision-making opportunities.

- **Strengthening monitoring and evaluation mechanisms** to track progress, identify gaps, and improve the program's effectiveness.

- **Encouraging convergence and collaboration** among various stakeholders such as government agencies, NGOs, and local communities to leverage resources and achieve common goals.

- **Use of Technology:** Encouraging the use of technology and digital platforms to streamline the implementation process, improve transparency, and enhance accountability

WAY FORWARD

Overall, the NRLM needs to be an integrated and comprehensive program that addresses the diverse needs of the rural poor and is sustainable, resilient, and scalable. To achieve this, a multi-stakeholder approach, effective implementation, and robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are essential.

Source:
PIB
Aajeevika
gov.in
worldbank

The challenges of working as an ayurvedic practitioner (Ayush)

*This article covers "Daily current events "and the topic is '**The challenges of working as an ayurvedic practitioner** (**Ayush)**' which is in the news, it covers "Health" In GS-2, and the following content has relevance for UPSC.*

For Prelims: Ayush

For Mains: GS-2, Health

WHY IN NEWS:

Despite advertising initiatives to support AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy), there is a lack of faith in these practices.

ABOUT AYUSH

- The AYUSH systems reflect healthy living with established disease prevention and health promotion beliefs and are founded on specific medical philosophies.
- The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare established the Department of Indian Medicine and Homeopathy in 1995 with the goal of maximizing and concentrating the growth of these systems.
- The Department of AYUSH replaced this department's last name in 2003.
- The Vedas, which became Ayurveda, have left a rich legacy of medical knowledge in India.
- With its roots in Indian ethos and culture, AYUSH has long served as the primary medical practice in the nation.

Ayush

WHY IS AYUSH VIEWED WITH SUSPICION?

- **Ayurvedic ideas' reliability:** The public has a general lack of faith in the validity of Ayurveda beliefs and the efficacy of its methods.
- Sophisticated dogmas are offered in place of antiquated notions that are likely to raise skepticism in the minds of educated patients.
- **Not in accordance with modern science:** The establishment of ayurveda has been unable to keep up with modern intellectual and scientific developments.
- **Lack of scrutiny:** Because of their alleged roots in such theories, treatments are designed to evade straightforward experimental inspection.
- **Lack of evidence:** The declining level of Ayurveda's evidence-based quality is a significant factor in the lack of faith in the system.
- **Sluggish treatment:** Another typical perception that describes the way Ayurveda is viewed by the general public is that its therapies take a long time to work.

THE PRESENT STATE OF AYUSH

- **From modern to contemporary science:** Like every other type of medicine or school of medicine worldwide, Ayurveda has evolved and changed over time.
- **National Ayush Mission (NAM):** It is a centerpiece program of the Ministry of AYUSH.
- The main goal of NAM is to advance AYUSH medical systems by providing affordable AYUSH services.
- It anticipates flexible program execution, resulting in significant engagement from the UT and State Governments.

CHALLENGES CONFRONTED BY AYUSH PRACTITIONERS

- **Lack of application:** The practitioner would learn that the knowledge they received throughout their undergraduate education is a vast body of antiquated medical knowledge, of which only a small portion is actually useful today.
- **Lack of ecosystem:** Ayurveda lacks a thriving scientific and research ecology, therefore the poor practitioner must rely on himself to find cures and methods that genuinely work.
- **Reputational impact:** The procedure necessitates a great deal of patient trial and error and predictably damages the practitioner's reputation.
- **Gimmicks:** Few doctors use social media, TV shows, and regular newspaper columns to deceive their unwary patients.

NEED FOR INTEGRATING MEDICINE FIELDS

- **China:** With its economic and political objectives, it pushed traditional medicine in the 1970s to spread high-quality Chinese medicine outside of China, which was finally accepted by the rest of the globe.
- **India:** The Prime Minister of India is a yoga and wellness brand ambassador, and wellness is becoming more and more popular worldwide.
- **Wellness:** By approaching wellness from the standpoint of how it complements what is happening in allopathic hospitals, we should concentrate on advancing wellness throughout a wider range of time.
- **Post-surgery recovery:** Ayurveda can be utilized in conjunction with hospital treatments, particularly when patients need to recover from surgery.

WAY FORWARD

- **Formulating policy:** Many of the issues that Ayurveda practitioners confront can be resolved with the right policy-making.
- **Prioritise primary care:** The primary care physician is a dying breed in India's healthcare system.

- If a nation wants to ensure the health of its people, it must revitalize primary care.
- **Training:** If properly taught, graduates of ayurveda can make a significant contribution to this rejuvenation.
- **Promotion of Ayurvedic theories:** This can be accomplished by conducting a thorough, evidence-based evaluation of Ayurveda theories and practices to separate the useful from the useless.
- **Modern medicine:** Graduates from ayurveda schools must be permitted to practice modern medicine in designated primary care settings.

These changes would contribute to the development of a workforce capable of efficiently addressing both India's urban and rural populations' basic healthcare demands.

Source:
The Hindu

TROPEX 23

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details the recently concluded military exercise named TROPEX 23.

For Prelims:

a) Details of Tropex 23.

b) About Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

For Mains: GS2, International Relations and GS3, Maritime Security

a) Issues related to the Navy's Operational readiness.

b) Importance of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

c) Initiatives are taken by India to enhance its leadership in Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

CONTENTS:

Why in news?

Indian Navy's major Operational level exercise TROPEX 23 for the year 2023, conduct-

ed across the expanse of IOR over four months from Nov 22 – Mar 23, culminating this week in the Arabian Sea. The overall exercise construct included the Coastal Defence exercise Sea Vigil and the Amphibious Exercise AMPHEX. Together, these exercises (Tropex-23) also witnessed significant participation from the Indian Army, the Indian Air Force, and the Coast Guard.

WHAT IS TROPEX 23?

Tropex 23 is a naval exercise conducted by the Indian Navy. Tropex 23 stands for Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise, and it is conducted every two years to test the readiness and interoperability of the Indian Navy's various units in a simulated combat environment.

Tropex 23, which was held in early 2023, involved a range of naval assets and personnel, including ships, submarines, aircraft, and special forces units. The exercise was held across multiple locations, including the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal, and the Indian Ocean.

TROPEX 23

THE OBJECTIVE OF TROPEX 23

The primary objectives of Tropex 23 were to enhance the Indian Navy's operational preparedness, test its ability to respond to a range of maritime security threats, and demonstrate its readiness to undertake joint operations with other friendly navies.

INDIAN NAVY: CAPACITIES AND CAPABILITIES

Indian Navy is one of the largest and most powerful naval forces in the world, with a fleet of more than 150 ships and submarines, and over 300 aircraft. The Indian Navy has made significant progress in enhancing its capabilities, modernizing its fleet, and developing its human resources. Here are some of the key aspects of the Indian Navy's readiness:

- **Modernization:** The Indian Navy has been actively pursuing the modernization of its fleet and equipment to enhance its operational capabilities. It has been acquiring new warships, submarines, and aircraft, and upgrading its existing assets with advanced sensors and weapons systems.

- **Training and human resource development:** The Indian Navy has been focused on training and developing its personnel to ensure they are prepared for a wide range of operations, from humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to combat operations. The Navy has established a robust training and education system that includes technical and leadership training, and it also conducts regular exercises with other navies to enhance interoperability.

- **Maritime domain awareness:** The Indian Navy has developed a comprehensive maritime domain awareness system that includes satellite and radar-based surveillance, as well as human intelligence. This system enables the Navy to monitor and track maritime activity in the Indian Ocean Region, and respond to any potential security threats.

- **Regional cooperation:** The Indian Navy has been actively engaged in regional cooperation with other navies in the Indian Ocean Region. It participates in joint exercises, patrols, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, and shares information and expertise with partner countries.

ABOUT INDIAN OCEAN REGION (IOR)

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is a geopolitical term used to describe the vast expanse of ocean that stretches from the east coast of Africa to the west coast of Australia and includes the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It is one of the most strategically important and economically vibrant regions in the world, with a rich history and diverse cultures.

- **Shipping lanes:** The IOR is home to several important shipping lanes, including the Strait of Malacca, the Suez Canal, and the Persian Gulf, through which much of the world's trade and energy supplies pass. The region is also home to several important ports and naval bases, which are critical to maintaining maritime security and ensuring the free flow of goods and services.

- **Diversity:** The IOR is a region of immense diversity, with a rich mix of cultures, religions, and languages. It is home to some of the world's fastest-growing economies, including India, China, and several countries in Southeast Asia.

- **Strategic Partnerships:** The region is also home to several important strategic partnerships, including the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), which bring together like-minded countries to promote security and economic cooperation in the region.

INITIATIVES (TROPEX 23) ARE TAKEN BY INDIA TO ENHANCE ITS LEADERSHIP IN INDIAN OCEAN REGION (IOR)

India has been an active participant in initiatives aimed at promoting cooperation and stability in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Some of the Indian initiatives in IOR are as follows:

- **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA):** India was one of the founding members of the IORA, a regional forum comprising 23 countries bordering the Indian Ocean. The IORA aims to promote economic cooperation and maritime security in the region through dialogue and collaboration.

- **SAGAR:** The Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) initiative were launched by India in 2015. Tropex 23 seeks to promote economic and security cooperation in the IOR by strengthening maritime links, promoting sustainable development, and enhancing regional security.

- **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS):** India played a key role in the establishment of IONS, a voluntary association of navies from the littoral states of the Indian Ocean. IONS seeks to enhance maritime security and promote regional stability through dialogue and cooperation.

- **Project Mausam:** India launched Project Mausam in 2014 to promote cultural and economic ties among countries in the IOR. The initiative seeks to revive historical maritime links and promote tourism, trade, and cultural exchange in the region.

- **Indian Ocean Conference**: India hosts an annual Indian Ocean Conference that brings together policymakers, academics, and business leaders to discuss issues related to regional security and economic cooperation.

WAY FORWARD

India can expand its maritime capabilities, including naval presence, maritime surveillance, and search and rescue operations, to ensure the safety and security of shipping lanes and territorial waters in the region with the help of Tropex 23. This can be done through the development of infrastructure, acquisition of advanced naval assets, and capacity building of regional countries.

Source:
PIB

MISSION FOR INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT OF HORTICULTURE (MIDH)

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details the Mission for integrated development of the horticulture scheme.

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The cultivation area of Kamalam (Dragon Fruit) is expected to expand to 50,000 hectares in five years under the MIDH scheme from the present 3,000 ha. Under MIDH, the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has approved a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Kamalam Fruit to be established by the Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR), Bengaluru to focus on production, post-harvest and value addition of Kamalam.

For Prelims:

- Features of the scheme
- Target beneficiaries of the scheme
- Ministry implementing the scheme

For Mains:

GS 2, Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and Issues arising out of their Design and Implementation.

- Aims and Objectives behind the launch of the initiative
- Issues related to the implementation of the scheme.
- Solutions for successful implementation of the scheme.

WHAT IS THE MISSION FOR THE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT OF HORTICULTURE?

The Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) is a centrally sponsored scheme implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.

AIM OF THE MISSION MIDH

The mission aims to promote holistic growth and development of the horticulture sector by providing support for the production, post-harvest management, and marketing of fruits, vegetables, and other horticulture crops.

Horticulture

OBJECTIVES OF HORTICULTURE MISSION

The key objectives of the MIDH are:

- To enhance horticulture production and productivity through the adoption of improved technology and best practices.
- To create and strengthen infrastructure facilities for post-harvest management,

storage, and processing of horticulture crops.

- To promote the development of horticulture clusters and value chains to ensure remunerative prices for farmers.
- To provide assistance for the development of market intelligence and marketing infrastructure for horticulture crops.
- To promote the establishment of plant health clinics and diagnostic services to address pest and disease problems in horticulture crops.
- To create awareness among farmers about good agricultural practices, post-harvest management, and marketing of horticulture crops.

SCHEMES UNDER THE MISSION

Some of the key schemes under the MIDH include:

- National Horticulture Mission (NHM)
- Horticulture Cluster Development Programme (HCDP)
- Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North Eastern States, Sikkim, and Jammu & Kashmir
- National Bamboo Mission
- Coconut Development Board
- Mission for Integrated Development of Medicinal Plants (MIDMP)

HOW DOES THE MISSION WORK?

- **Financial Assistance:** Financial assistance is provided to farmers, growers, and entrepreneurs for various activities such as setting up orchards, purchase of inputs, establishing post-harvest infrastructure, and marketing horticulture crops.
- **Promotion of Research and Development activities:** The mission also supports research and development activities to promote the adoption of new and improved varieties of horticulture crops.

ISSUES RELATED TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HORTICULTURE SCHEME

There are several issues that need to be addressed to ensure its effective implementation. Some of the key issues with the MIDH scheme include

- **Inadequate funding:** The MIDH scheme has been facing funding constraints, which have led to delays in the implementation of projects and limited outreach to farmers.
- **Lack of coordination:** The implementation of the MIDH scheme involves multiple

stakeholders, including the central government, state governments, and various implementing agencies. However, there is often a lack of coordination among these stakeholders, leading to inefficiencies and delays in implementation.

- **Limited focus on small and marginal farmers:** While the MIDH scheme aims to benefit farmers across the horticulture sector, there is a limited focus on small and marginal farmers who often lack the resources to adopt new technologies and practices.

- **Inadequate marketing support:** The MIDH scheme provides support for the production and post-harvest management of horticulture crops, but there is a lack of focus on marketing support.

- **Inefficient monitoring and evaluation**: The MIDH scheme lacks a robust monitoring and evaluation mechanism, making it difficult to track the progress of projects and assess their impact. This can hinder the identification of issues and the implementation of corrective measures.

SOLUTIONS TO RESOLVE THE UNDERLYING ISSUES

- **Adequate Funding:** It is required for the timely and successful implementation of the projects. It will also make the coverage of the project wider with more inclusion of farmers etc.

- **Streamlining of organization:** There is a need to streamline and align the stakeholders to improve efficiency and reduce delays.

- **Focus on small and marginal farmers:** There is a need for a greater focus on resource-deprived farmers included in the mission.

- **Promotion of new marketing techniques:** The issue of not finding prospective sales channels arises due to the lack of marketing facilities. There is a need to promote marketing activities through training, organization of fairs, networking meets, etc.

- **Raising awareness:** There is a need to raise awareness of the mission so that the benefits of the mission reach the potential beneficiaries.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** There is a need for regular monitoring to avoid any kind of discrepancies in the mission. It is also needed to weed out any kind of inefficiencies lying in the system.

Overall, addressing these issues can help ensure the effective implementation of the MIDH scheme and enable it to achieve its objectives of promoting the growth and development of the horticulture sector in India.

WAY FORWARD

Overall, the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture is a significant initiative aimed at promoting the growth and development of the horticulture sector in India,

which has the potential to generate employment and income opportunities for farmers and contribute to the country's food security.

<div align="right">
Sources:
PIB
midh.gov.in
</div>

SAUDI ARABIA-IRAN RECONCILIATION

*This article covers "Daily current events "and the topic is about '***Saudi Arabia-Iran reconciliation'** *which is in news, it covers "International Relations***" *In GS-2, the following content has relevance for UPSC.*

For Prelims: Saudi Arabia and Iran

For Mains: GS-2, International Relations

WHY IN NEWS:

The Saudi Arabia-Iran reconciliation, mediated by China, shows the new reality that Beijing is gradually playing a more significant role at a time when the US is engaged with other concerns.

HISTORICAL REFERENCE TO SAUDI ARABIA AND IRAN'S RELATIONSHIP

- Saudi Arabia and Iran's conflict is based on Islamic sectarianism.
- While Iran is the world's leading Shia state, Saudi Arabia is regarded as the spiritual home of Sunni Islam.
- This sectarian strife has evolved into a struggle for regional hegemony in modern times.
- In both the Yemen and Syria wars, Iran and Saudi Arabia are on opposite sides of the conflict.
- Iran is very critical of Saudi Arabia's relationship with the United States.
- Through its sanctions policy, the United States has damaged the Iranian economy for decades.
- Saudi Arabia is concerned about Iran's massive network of armed militias across West Asia, which it sees as a danger to its sovereignty as well as the regional balance of power.

ABOUT THE SAUDI ARABIA-IRAN RECONCILIATION

- Iran and Saudi Arabia will bridge a seven-year rift by renewing a security cooperation pact, reopening embassies in each other's countries, and restarting economic, investment, and cultural ties.

Saudi Arabia-Iran reconciliation

THE TIMING OF THE SAUDI ARABIA-IRAN RECONCILIATION IS CRUCIAL

Saudi Arabia's Perspective

Regional peace will be critical to transforming Saudi Arabia into the global hub that Vision 2030 envisions.

- As a result, Saudi Arabia has made aggressive efforts to resolve long-standing disagreements with regional countries, with the Iran deal being the most recent example.
- Further, it has led to Saudi Arabia gradually shifting away from the United States stranglehold on foreign policy.
- While the United States remains Saudi Arabia's largest military supplier, the desert kingdom has courted different powers in recent years, including Russia, China, and now Iran.

Iran's Perspective

- The pact comes as Iran intensifies its nuclear program following two years of failed US efforts to resurrect a 2015 agreement that aimed to prevent Tehran

from developing a nuclear weapon.

- So far, Iran's efforts have been hampered by harsh sanctions and internal divisions.
- Seeking regional allies is critical for Iran when the Khomeini regime is at its weakest since the revolution.

ROLE OF CHINA IN SAUDI ARABIA-IRAN RECONCILIATION

- China's role as a peace broker is yet another indication of the region's paradigm shifts.
- China has long maintained relations with both countries, and the latest agreement demonstrates Beijing's rising political and economic weight in the region.

CONCERNS FOR THE US

- For a long time, the United States exercised considerable influence in West Asia.
- It has been the leading global force with influence over geopolitics in the conflict-torn region.
- Most importantly, this agreement, as mediated by China, does not bode well for the United States.

CONCERNS FOR INDIA

- **Impact on Energy Security:** Any improvement in Iran-Saudi relations could influence India's energy security.
  - India is significantly reliant on oil imports from both countries, and any conflict or friction between them could result in oil supply disruptions and price increases.

- **The rise of China's influence in the Middle East:** The role of China in mediating the agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia demonstrates the country's rising political capital in the region, which may have ramifications for India's strategic interests.
  - India has long had friendly connections with both Iran and Saudi Arabia, and any shift in the regional balance of power could influence India's interests.

- **Impact on Chabahar port project:** India has made significant investments in the construction of Iran's Chabahar port as a gateway to Afghanistan and Central Asia.
  - Any improvement in relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia could have an influence on India's port plans, which could have ramifications for India's regional strategic objectives.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE SAUDI ARABIA-IRAN RECONCILIATION ON WEST ASIA STAKEHOLDERS

- **Israel:** The move has sparked concern in Israel, which has no formal diplomatic connections with either country.
  - o Israeli leaders regard Iran as an enemy and a threat to their existence, whereas they see Saudi Arabia as a potential partner.

- **Yemen:** Riyadh engaged in Yemen against the Houthi movement after the Iran-aligned organization deposed the internationally recognized government.
  - o Improved ties between Riyadh and Iran could allow negotiations between Saudi and the Houthis.

- **Syria:** Iran has offered President Bashar al-Assad military, economic, and diplomatic backing since his crackdown on protesters in 2011 left him isolated.
  - o The Saudi-Iranian agreement is a step towards Syria's re-admission to the Arab League.

- **Lebanon:** For years, Lebanese politics has been divided between a pro-Iran coalition led by the powerful military group Hezbollah and a pro-Saudi coalition.
  - o The agreement reached by Tehran and Riyadh raises the prospect of an end to the standoff.

- **Iraq:** With Saddam Hussein's demise, Iran increased its political, security, and economic dominance in Iraq, which alarmed Saudi Arabia.
  - o Iraqis hope for a general regional truce that will allow them to reconstruct their country.

WAY FORWARD

- India must now deal with the new reality in which China has been able to transfer its economic clout in West Asia into diplomatic clout.

- The agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia may have a good impact on regional stability, but India will need to closely observe the emerging dynamics and determine how it may leverage its relationships with Iran, Saudi Arabia, and other regional players to ensure its strategic interests.

Source:
The Hindu

AUKUS

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details the AUKUS grouping. The grouping led by Australia, UK, and US is seen as a counter to Chinese growing aggression in the Indo-Pacific. It is dubbed as a military pact that aims to act as a deterrent and thereby dissuade Chinese behavior.

FOR PRELIMS:

- About participating countries
- Details of the grouping.
- Details of Indo-Pacific.

FOR MAINS:

- *GS 2: International Relations*
- *India's role in AUKUS formation*

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Recently, it has been announced that under the AUKUS grouping Australia will receive up to five Virginia class submarines and a nuclear-powered submarine, SSN-AUKUS, being trilaterally developed by the countries.

WHAT IS AUKUS?

AUKUS is the acronym for a trilateral security partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. It is focused on enhancing cooperation in the areas of security, technology, and defense.

The partnership is primarily focused on sharing advanced military technologies, including nuclear submarine technology, in order to counter the strategic influence of China in the Indo-Pacific region.

AUKUS Alliance

WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS OF AUKUS?

- **Assistance to Australia:** Under the AUKUS agreement, the United States and the United Kingdom have agreed to provide Australia with the technology and expertise necessary to build a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines.

    - Nuclear submarines are considered quieter than conventional submarines. They can be deployed for longer periods without the need to come on the surface regularly.

- **Cybersecurity:** The partnership aims to strengthen cybersecurity measures and intelligence sharing between the three countries, with a focus on protecting critical infrastructure and national security interests.

- **Artificial intelligence and quantum technologies:** The partnership aims to enhance collaboration in the development of cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence and quantum technologies.
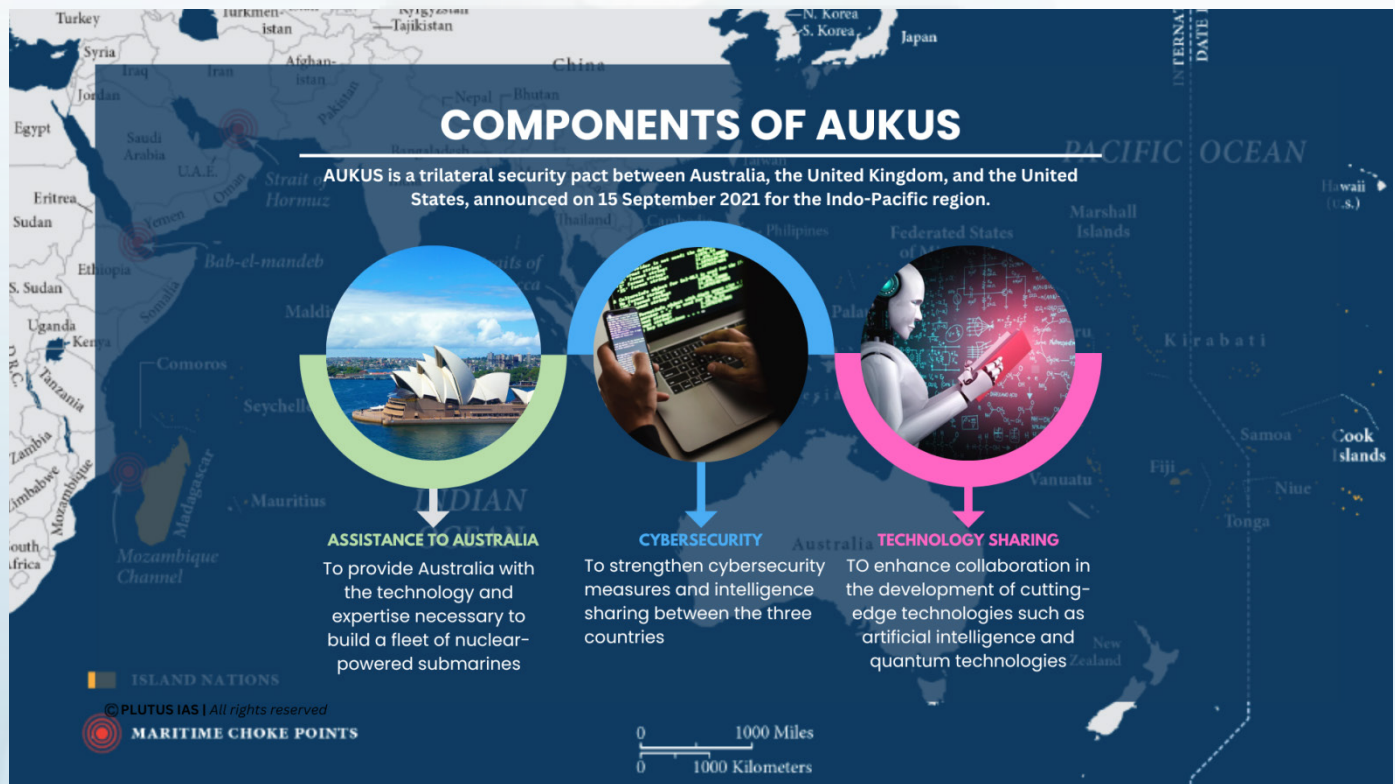
Component of the AUKUS

WHAT IS THE NEED FOR AUKUS?

The AUKUS aims to target a range of strategic challenges and threats faced by the three countries in the Indo-Pacific region. Some of the key reasons why this agreement was established include

- **Chinese Military Aggression and economic might:** China has been rapidly expanding its military and economic power in the Indo-Pacific region which has raised concerns among the group members. AUKUS is seen as a way to counterbalance China's influence and maintain stability in the region.

- **North Korea's nuclear weapons program:** North Korea has continued to develop its nuclear weapons program. AUKUS aims to strengthen the partners' ability to deter and respond to nuclear threats.

- **Terrorism and other non-state threats:** Owing to its strategic importance the Indo-Pacific region is home to a range of non-state threats, including terrorism, cyber-attacks, and transnational crimes. It aims to enhance cooperation in these areas to ensure the safety and security of the three countries.

- **Changing global power dynamics:** Geopolitics is in a state of flux. AUKUS aims to help the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia strengthen their positions as major powers in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES WITH THIS AGREEMENT?

- **Perception of anti-China alliance:** This agreement has been viewed by some as a way to contain or counterbalance China's growing influence in the region, which has the potential to escalate tensions and contribute to a new arms race in the Indo-Pacific.

- **Exclusion of France:** The announcement of the AUKUS partnership has angered France. France is a key player in the Indo-Pacific with key territories in the region. It was also having an existing contract to supply conventional submarines to Australia.

- **Nuclear proliferation concerns**: The decision to provide Australia with nuclear-powered submarine technology, has raised concerns about nuclear proliferation in the Indo-Pacific region.

WHAT IS INDIA'S ROLE IN AUKUS FORMATION?

India has a strategic interest in the Indo-Pacific region and has been working to enhance its own security and economic interests in the region. It has strategic partnerships with other countries in the region, including Japan, Australia, and the United States, as part of its broader efforts to promote regional stability and balance against the rise of China.

India is not a part of the AUKUS partnership, however, India has been closely monitoring the development of AUKUS and has been involved in discussions with the grouping members about the implications of the partnership for regional security. It has been cautious in exploring strategic and defense aspects in the Quad, and the AUKUS partnership provides a welcomed relief in the Indo-Pacific military landscape.

WAY FORWARD FOR INDIA

India must take measures to prevent the AUKUS announcement from further polarising the already tense divide between US-led alliances and the Russia-China coalition. Any kind of sharpened differences will be a cause of instability in the region. The partnership should be seen as a deterrent for potential conflicts, rather than as a catalyst for global escalation.

Sources:

IndianExpress

Wikipedia

Mint

PROTECTION OF DOMESTIC WORKERS IN INDIA

This article covers "Daily current events "and the topic is about 'Protection of Domestic Workers in India' which is in news, it covers "Social Justice" in GS-2, and the following content has relevance for UPSC.

For Prelims: *Protection of Domestic Workers in India*

For Mains: GS-2, Social Justice

WHY PROTECTION OF DOMESTIC WORKERS IN INDIA IN THE NEWS

- Recently, social workers rescued a 14-year-old girl from a Gurugram home where she was working as a domestic worker.
- The incident has brought to light the poor quality of paid domestic employment in metropolitan India, where worker faces abuse and exploitation in an unregulated industry.

ABOUT DOMESTIC WORKERS

- Domestic workers, according to the International Labour Organization, are individuals who work in or for a private household or household. Such as sweeping, cleaning utensils, washing clothes, cooking, child care, and other remunerated labour performed for an employer.
- They provide direct and indirect care services and play an essential role in the

care economy.

Domestic Workers

STATUS OF A DOMESTIC WORKER IN INDIA

- Domestic workers employed 39 lakh persons in 2012, at least 26 lacks of whom were women.
- According to a 2016 Bengaluru-based research, 75% of them were Scheduled Castes, 15% were OBCs, and 8% were Scheduled Tribes.
- Also, 25% of minor domestic employees were under the age of 14.

ISSUES FACED BY THE WORKER

- It is informal.
- Underpaid and unpaid
- There is no legal contract.
- Work hours that are not specified.
- Faced with discrimination and violence, as well as sexual harassment and exploitation.
- Encounter discrimination from placement agencies (companies that hire these workers) and/or traffickers.
- The domestic worker has been subjected to violence.
- Uncertainty about their data.

THE INTERNATIONAL MEASURES TO PROTECT DOMESTIC WORKERS

- Domestic Worker Convention (No. 189) – The International Labour Organization (ILO) approved the Domestic Worker Convention (No. 189) in 2011 to safeguard domestic worker.
- June 16th is World Domestic Worker Day, commemorating the adoption of International Labor Organization Convention 189 for Decent Employment for

Domestic Worker in 2011.

- Your Work Is Important – The ILO has started a public awareness campaign called "Your Work Is Important."

MEASURES WERE TAKEN BY THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT TO PROTECT DOMESTIC WORKER

- There is no specific regulation or policy in place to control those who operate in the domestic work sector.
- Unorganized Sector Social Security Act of 2008 – The Act established the first legislative framework to give social protection to the worker, including domestic servants.
- Social Security Code, 2020 – The code, which superseded the Unorganized Sector Social Security Act of 2008, is still in effect.
- Child Work Act, 1986 – The Indian government barred children from undertaking domestic housekeeping in 2006, identifying it as a sort of "hazardous child labour".
- They are included as a defined category of ecotone workers in the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act of 2013, with the house as a recognised workplace.
- Only Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Tripura have included them in the schedule of the Minimum Wages Act.
- The National Commission of Women introduced the Domestic Worker (Registration, Social Security, and Welfare) Bill in 2008.
- Domestic Workers' Welfare Bill 2016 – Recognised a private residence as a workplace, and broadened the meaning of "wages".
- Both the 2008 and 2016 bills have yet to be passed.
- The Labour Ministry proposed a National Domestic Worker Policy in 2019 to regulate placement agencies and incorporate domestic workers under existing regulations.
- India has signed the ILO's 189th convention, known as the Convention on Domestic Worker, but has not yet ratified it.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE FOR THE BETTERMENT OF DOMESTIC WORKER

- Placement agencies must be controlled.
- The government must collaborate with social workers to defend the domestic.
- Domestic employees must be protected by legislation.
- Genuine data for domestic employees is required.

Source:
The Hindu

JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE (JPC)

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details about Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC). The topic of JPC is relevant for UPSC in the Polity and Governance section. JPC is a tool that Parliament can use to enforce accountability on the executive.

FOR PRELIMS:

1. Details of JPC
2. Formation and Powers.

FOR MAINS:

GS 2 – Polity

Role of Parliament in fixing accountability of the executive.

JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

WHY IS JPC IN NEWS?

The industrialist Gautam Adani and Adani group has been in news after the release of the Hindenburg report. Adani's assets and stocks have faced a constant decline. At the same time, 13 opposition parties, including the country's main opposition party Congress, are adamant about demanding an inquiry from the Joint Parliamentary Committee i.e JPC, calling it a scam. In the current budget session of Parliament, there is continuous uproar regarding this demand. But, the government has not yet acted on the demand of the JPC.

WHAT IS JPC?

A Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) is a committee consisting of members of both houses of the Parliament of India. It is appointed to examine a particular issue and report its findings and recommendations to Parliament. The JPC is usually constituted when a matter of national importance arises and there is a need for a comprehensive

investigation or review.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS OF FORMATION OF JPC?

The formation of a JPC is a political process that requires the support of a majority of the members of Parliament. The decision to form a JPC is typically taken when there is a significant public interest in the issue at hand and when there is a desire to have a comprehensive and independent investigation.

The process of forming a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) in India is as follows:

- A motion is moved in either house of Parliament, calling for the constitution of a JPC to examine a particular issue.
- If the motion is adopted, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha (lower house) or the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha (upper house) will then appoint the JPC.
- The JPC will consist of members of both houses of Parliament and will be chaired by a member of the Lok Sabha.
- The terms of reference for the JPC, including the scope of the inquiry and the timeline for reporting, will be decided by the Speaker or Chairman in consultation with the members of the JPC.
- The JPC will then proceed with its investigation, which may involve calling witnesses and examining relevant documents.
- Once the JPC has completed its inquiry, it will prepare a report of its findings and recommendations, which will be presented to Parliament.

WHAT ARE THE POWERS OF JPC?

The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) in India has the following powers:

- The power to summon witnesses: The JPC can summon any person to give evidence or produce documents before it.
- The power to examine witnesses: The JPC has the power to examine witnesses on oath or affirmation.
- The power to compel attendance: The JPC can compel the attendance of witnesses or the production of documents by issuing summons or warrants.
- The power to requisition information: The JPC can requisition any information or record from any office or authority.
- The power to take evidence on camera: The JPC can take evidence on camera (in private) if it thinks fit.
- The power to make recommendations: The JPC can make recommendations to the Parliament based on its findings and conclusions.
- The power to report to Parliament: The JPC has to submit its report to Parliament,

which can then take appropriate action on its recommendations.

IS JPC POWERFUL OR A SUPERFLUOUS ENTITY?

JPC is not a court of law and does not have the power to impose any penalties or punishments. Its role is limited to examining issues of public importance and making recommendations to the Parliament based on its findings. The recommendations of the JPC are not binding on the government and the government of the day can choose to ignore the recommendations. Although JPC is conducted on issues of wider public importance therefore it has a political value.

HOW MANY JPCS HAVE BEEN FORMED SO FAR?

- Bofors scandal (1987)
- Harshad Mehta Stock market scam (1992)
- Ketan Parekh share market scam (2001)
- Soft drink pesticide issue (2003)
- 2G spectrum case (2011)
- VVIP Chopper scam (2013)
- Land Acquisition (2015)
- NRC (2016)
- Personal Data Protection Bill (2019)

WAY FORWARD

The formation of a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) is an essential step toward investigating issues of public importance and making recommendations to the Parliament. The government must constitute a JPC and conduct a comprehensive investigation into the issue at hand. This will clear the air of serious allegations made about the government's role in the issue.

Sources:

Indian Express

NET NEUTRALITY

*This article covers "Daily current events "and the topic is about '**Net neutrality**' which is in news, it covers "Government Policies and Interventions" In GS-2, the following content has relevance for UPSC.*

**For Prelims:** Net neutrality

For Mains: GS-2, *Government Policies and Interventions*

WHY IN NEWS:

Many stakeholders have been arguing the payment of a fee for network infrastructure produced by cellular operators over the last few months.

ABOUT NET NEUTRALITY

- Net neutrality is the concept of an open, equal <u>internet</u> for everyone, regardless of the device, application, or platform used and content consumed.

- The idea's supporters think that all organizations, including internet service providers (ISPs), should treat internet data and consumers similarly. They shall not limit access, slow down access speeds, or prohibit content to serve the interests of specific users.
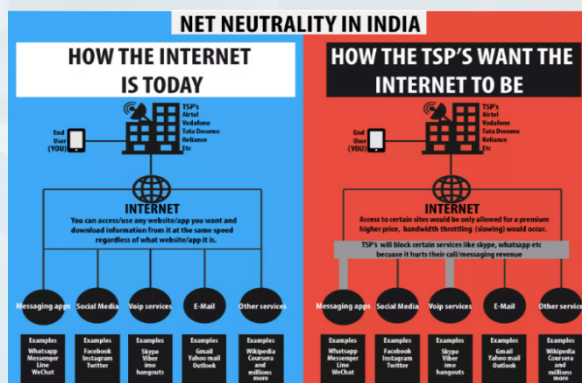
Net Neutrality

THE CURRENT NET NEUTRALITY DEBATE

Origin of Net neutrality

Columbia University law professor Tim Wu coined the term.

It is used as a label widely in Internet regulatory and public policy discussions regard-

ing freedom of expression online, competition for services, innovation, pricing, and traffic management. Internet traffic.

Net neutrality is a contentious concept that has had a rollercoaster-like evolution. The debate centers largely around perceptions of the proper role of government regulation and whether internet access should be legally classified as an opt-in service or a public utility.

CELLULAR OPERATORS ASSOCIATION OF INDIA'S DEMAND

COAI, which represents the three major telecom providers in India, Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea, and Reliance Jio, has demanded that platforms such as YouTube and WhatsApp pay a cut of income to cover network costs.

The concept of paying for the usage of infrastructure is an excellent one, in which every entity that uses another company's infrastructure should pay for it.

Yet, the income earned by the infrastructure provider [telecom operators] should be shared in the same proportion with the organization that uses it.

The telecom operators' apparent allegation is that content providers do not create any of this infrastructure on their own.

Data centers, submarine cables, content hosting centers, content delivery networks (CDNs), and other infrastructure for communication networks are all constructed by OTT platforms.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE COAI'S DEMAND

According to critics, collecting a network fee violates the fundamental principles of an open Internet.

Net neutrality activists (as well as content providers) have argued that imposing such a fee, even on a small number of large players, is a distortion of the Internet's architecture, in which content providers and telecom operators coexist without charging each other, and users pay both, in the form of fees or advertisements, or both.

Telecom providers and platforms help each other flourish, and neither can survive without the other.

Instead of meeting this demand, critics argue that the government should lower spectrum fees and subsidize telecom businesses through the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).

Net neutrality supporters believe that internet access should stay free, open, and non-discriminatory, as this is necessary for a democratic interchange of ideas and knowledge, ethical corporate practices, fair competition, and continued innovation.

TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA'S STAND

TRAI decided in favor of Net neutrality in 2016, stating that all traffic on an Internet network must be handled similarly.

Even though all Internet access must be priced equally, the telecom regulator decided that programs like Facebook's Free Basics (now Meta) and telecom operators' proposals to charge more for data calls using apps like Viber would be unlawful.

In 2018, the Department of Telecommunications incorporated the notion of net neutrality into the Unified Licence, to which all telecom operators and Internet service providers are subject.

WAY FORWARD

- Since, the Indian telecom market has considerably outperformed the United States in terms of data utilized per month on mobile Internet connections, owing to a steep drop in rates with the debut of Reliance Jio's 4G services. Now, Indian telecom operators are imitating the strategy that US carriers adopted aggressively a decade ago.

- A proper mechanism must be put in place to ensure that the exceptions are not used as loopholes by the major Internet players.

- The regulator should also implement a mechanism to monitor and enforce net neutrality principles.

DEATH PENALTY BY HANGING

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details the issue of the Death Penalty. Recently the Supreme Court of India has asked the Union Government to report all such methods of the death penalty which are less painful than the present technique of hanging. The topic "Death Penalty by Hanging" has relevance in the Polity and Governance section of the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance for UPSC-CSE

For Prelims:

- *Supreme Court cases on Death Penalty*

- *Techniques of the death penalty in various countries.*

For Mains:

- *GS 2: Polity and Governance*

- *Relevance of the death penalty in modern societies*

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Recently the Supreme Court (SC) has asked the government to suggest measures of awarding the death penalty that is more dignified and less painful compared to the present procedure of hanging. The Supreme Court also mooted the formation of a committee to give its suggestions on the other available practices in other countries. The court's reasoning was in response to a petition challenging the constitutionality of the death penalty by hanging as a mode of execution. Section 354 of CrPC mandates that a person awarded the death penalty shall "be hanged by the neck till he is dead".

Death Penalty

WHAT IS THE DEATH PENALTY?

Death penalty or capital punishment is a state-led execution of a person in response to a grave and heinous crime committed. The State in such an event becomes authorized to sentence the death penalty and execute a person because it thinks the existence of a person is a threat to other citizens. The State does this in 'rarest of the rare situations' when the right to life (as guaranteed under Article 21) of a person is superseded by the right of peaceful existence of the general public.

Issues with death by hanging

WHAT IS THE REASON BEHIND SC'S REASONING ON THE DEATH PENALTY?

A petition was filed that challenged the present method of the death penalty by hanging. The petition calls for a relook of the present procedure. With advancements in science and technology, it has become relevant to question the archaic method of the death penalty by hanging. The Supreme Court in response to the plea has asked the government to relook at the techniques and procedures present for awarding the death penalty. The idea behind this is to adopt a more humane, less painful, more dignified, and socially acceptable method of awarding the death penalty.

WHAT IS THE ISSUE WITH THE DEATH PENALTY BY HANGING?

The death penalty by hanging is a method of execution that has been used in various

cultures throughout history. However, there are several issues associated with death by hanging, particularly in the context of modern criminal justice systems.

- **Slow and painful death:** One issue with hanging is that it can result in a slow and painful death if not carried out properly. If the drop length is too short, the person being hanged may suffocate as their airway is obstructed, leading to a prolonged and agonizing death. On the other hand, if the drop length is too long, the person's head may be severed from their body, which is both gruesome and violates the principle of humane treatment of prisoners.

- **Higher risk of unsuccessful executions:** Another issue is that hanging has been associated with a higher risk of unsuccessful and bitched up executions compared to other methods such as lethal injection or electrocution. This is because the process requires precise calculations and equipment to ensure a quick and painless death, which may not always be available or properly maintained.

- **Symbol of violence and oppression:** In addition, hanging has been criticized for its cultural and historical associations with violence and oppression, particularly in the context of colonialism and slavery. For these reasons, many countries have abolished the use of hanging as a method of execution in favor of more humane alternatives.

WHAT ARE THE OTHER TECHNIQUES AVAILABLE FOR THE DEATH PENALTY?

The specific techniques available for the death penalty vary by country and jurisdiction. Here are some of the most common methods of execution:

- **Lethal Injection:** This is the most common method of execution in the United States and many other countries. It involves the injection of a lethal dose of drugs, usually a combination of an anesthetic, a paralytic agent, and a drug that stops the heart.

- **Electrocution:** This involves the use of an electric current to cause death. The person being executed is typically strapped to a chair and electrodes are attached to their body.

- **Gas Chamber:** This involves the use of lethal gas, typically hydrogen cyanide, to cause death. The person being executed is placed in a sealed chamber and the gas is released.

- **Firing Squad:** This involves a group of trained marksmen shooting the person being executed. This method is still used in a few countries, including Belarus.

WHAT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLY ON THE ISSUE OF DEATH BY HANGING?

The government in 2018 noted that awarding the death penalty by hanging is a 'matter of legislative policy'. The government had earlier supported this process and had criticized the other available methods like firing squads and lethal injections as "barbaric, inhuman, and cruel". The reasons cited were:

- Lethal Injections: The government had studied the historical data related to lethal injections in the US and found out that they were unsuccessful and only gave the impression of the technique being less painful.

- Firing Squads: The government noted the horrors related, for example, if the shots missed the heart, the prisoners slowly bled to death.

WAY FORWARD

The Supreme Court in the matter clarified that it is not questioning the constitutionality of the death penalty. It is just asking the government to relook at the present method of the death penalty by hanging. But as Senior advocate Indira Jaisingh noted that the problem is not the technique of the death penalty but the death penalty itself. The government and the judiciary must relook at the constitutionality of the death penalty. Modern societies must adopt a rehabilitative approach against the present retributive approach. It's important to note that many countries have abolished the death penalty altogether or have suspended its use.

Sources:

The Hindu

DEFAMATION LAWS IN INDIA

DEFAMATION

This article covers "Daily current affairs for UPSC" and the topic is about 'Defamation and Disqualification of MP' which is in the news, it covers "Polity and Governance" In GS-2, the following content has relevance for UPSC.

For Prelims: Defamation, Disqualification of MP
For Mains: GS-2, *Polity and Governance*

WHY IN NEWS:

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has been disqualified from the Lok Sabha, a day after he was convicted in a defamation case by a Surat court. A notice issued by the Lok Sabha

Secretariat said he stood disqualified from the House from March 23, the day of his conviction. Rahul Gandhi has to now move to a higher court and get his conviction to stay.

MAY ALSO HAVE TO VACATE TUGHLAQ LANE BUNGALOW

➤ Section 8(3) of RP Act mandates **disqualification of any lawmaker who is 'convicted** of any offence and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than 2 years'

➤ Sec 8(4) of Representation of People Act, 1951 states that disqualification takes effect only 'after 3 months have elapsed' from date of conviction. In 2013 ruling in **'Lily Thomas v Union of India', SC struck it down as unconstitutional and declared that MP/MLA would stand disqualified immediately**

➤ In 2018 'Lok Prahari v Union of India' order, **SC said disqualification 'will not operate from date of stay of conviction** by appellate court'

➤ Rahul may have to vacate 12, Tughlaq Lane house in a month if he doesn't get relief from higher court

➤ Abhishek Manu Singhvi cites Lok Prahari judgment, says there's **no automatic disqualification as Article 103 of Constitution states that only President has power to disqualify** after taking EC's advice

➤ Citing Section 8 of RP Act, an expert says **disqualification from contesting polls will be for 8 years** — 2-year jail and 6 from date of release

➤ Gandhi **second LS member, after Lakshadweep MP P P Mohammed Faisal of NCP, to be disqualified** following conviction. Kerala HC suspended Faisal's conviction and sentence but LS Secretariat is yet to revoke his disqualification

➤ RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav was disqualified in 2013 after conviction

Rahul Gandhi attended Lok Sabha's morning session and a meeting of Congress MPs

❝ Consequent upon his conviction by the court of Chief Judicial Magistrate, Surat... Rahul Gandhi, Lok Sabha MP representing Wayanad parliamentary constituency of Kerala, stands disqualified from the membership of the lower house from the date of his conviction, ie 23 March, 2023 —**LS Secretariat**

I am fighting for the voice of India, I am ready to pay any cost —**Rahul Gandhi**

Defamation

ABOUT DEFAMATION

What is Defamation: Defamation is the act of spreading false claims about another person that harms that person's reputation when seen through the eyes of an ordinary man.

- **Defamation Laws in India:** Article 19 of the Constitution guarantees citizens the right to free expression. However, certain legitimate exceptions to this freedom have been established by Article 19(2), including contempt of court, defamation, and incitement to an offence.
- **In India, there are two categories of defamation:** Civil and Criminal.
- **Civil Defamation:** The individual who has been defamed can sue in either the Supreme Court or a lower court for monetary damages. There is no such thing as a prison sentence.
- **Criminal Defamation:** The individual who is the subject of a defamation prosecution may be punished to two years in prison, fined, or both.

FREE SPEECH V/S DEFAMATION LAWS

- The defamation laws, it is contended, violate fundamental rights protected by Article 19 of the constitution.
- The Supreme Court has concluded that defamation laws are legally acceptable and

do not violate the right to free expression.

- The Supreme Court has also ruled that treating defamation as a public wrong is permissible, and that criminal defamation is not a disproportionate restriction on free speech, because reputation protection is both a fundamental and a human right.
- The Court relied on previous decisions and confirmed the right to reputation as a component of the right to life under Article 21.
- Applying the idea of 'balancing essential rights,' the court determined that the right to freedom of expression and speech cannot be "given so much latitude that even an individual's reputation, which is a constituent of Article 21, would have no admission into that region."

CONCERNS ASSOCIATED WITH DEFAMATION LAWS

- The criminal provisions have frequently been applied only for the purpose of harassment.
- Due to the arduous nature of Indian judicial proceedings, the process itself becomes a form of punishment, regardless of the merits of the case.
- Critics assert that defamation law violates the fundamental right to free speech and expression and that civil defamation is an acceptable remedy for such wrongs.
- Criminal defamation has a negative impact on society because the state uses it to compel the media and political opponents into self-censorship and unreasonable self-restraint.

SUPREME COURT ON DEFAMATION LAWS

- In Subramanian Swamy vs Union of India, the Court upheld the constitutionality of sections 499 and 500 of the Indian Penal Code (criminal defamation), emphasising that an individual's fundamental right to live with dignity and reputation "cannot be ruined solely because another individual can have his freedom."
- In August 2016, the court additionally imposed sanctions on Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa for allegedly abusing the criminal defamation statute in order to "suffocate democracy," stating that "public people must face criticism."

DISQUALIFICATION OF MP

- According to Section 8(3) of the Representation of the People (RP) Act 1951, which governs a legislator's removal from office, a Member of Parliament who is found guilty of any crime and sentenced to at least two years in prison is automatically disqualified from holding public office.
- Experts also highlight the Supreme Court's judgement in the Lok Prahari case from 2018. According to the judgement, if the conviction is overturned on appeal, the disqualification will also be overturned.

- According to constitutional law expert P.D.T. Achary, because the court suspended the MP's punishment for 30 days, the disqualification process is also on hold for the same amount of time. He says that the disqualification is directly tied to the severity of the penalty.
- Former Chief Election Commissioner S.Y. Quereshi contends that under the RP Act and its interpretation by the Supreme Court in the Lily Thomas case, disqualification is inevitable because the court postponed the punishment rather than the conviction.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT

- The disqualification would not become official until the Lok Sabha Secretariat was notified, after which the Election Commission (EC) would call new elections to fill the seat.
- There are presently no intentions to declare the MP seat vacant, according to sources within the Lok Sabha secretariat, and they are awaiting a formal complaint.
- The secretariat is proceeding with caution in view of the recent instance involving a Lakshwadeep MP.
- A Lakshadweep court accused and convicted an MP in January 2023, but the Kerala High Court suspended the decision and deemed the MP's suspension from the Lok Sabha no longer relevant a week later.
- The decision of the Election Commission to hold byelections in his constituency was promptly contested in the Supreme Court, and the court requested that the EC decision be withdrawn.

MP HAVE OPTIONS

- To have the disqualification order lifted, the MP must have his conviction stayed by a higher court.
- The MP can approach the President. Mr Achary stated that after discussing with the Electoral Commission, the President would decide whether to disqualify an MP under the terms of Article 103 of the Constitution.

Source:
[The Indian Express](#)

General Studies - 3

(Technology, Economic Development, Biodiversity, Security & Disaster Management)

KHALISTAN ISSUE

*This article covers " Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details how Amrit Pal Singh, a pro-Khalistani Sikh Leader is trying to revive the **Khalistan issue** again. After the stern action taken by the Indian Government in the past, the movement had lost its momentum. The current developments are showing an upward trend to bring the dormant issue to the political center stage.*

The topic is important because any such separatist or secessionist movement has a direct impact on the internal security of India.
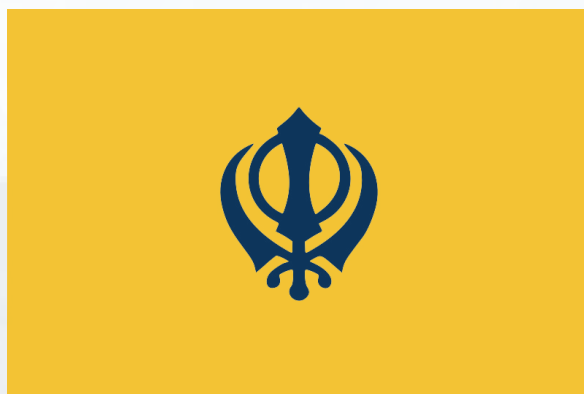
KHALISTAN FLAG

The Proposed Flag of Khalistan. It is often used for political mobilization for the movement.

FOR PRELIMS

Geographical features of Punjab – Rivers, Neighboring states, etc.

Facts about Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Anglo-Punjab Wars, etc.

FOR MAINS

GS 3, Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security.

- Meaning of State and Sovereignty.
- List of secessionist movements in the past.
- Causes of separatist/ secessionist movements.

Government policy and previous experiences in dealing with separatist/ secessionist movements.

Content of the Article:

- Why in news
- Introduction
- What are the causes of Separatist or Secessionist Movements?
- How has been the experience of the Indian government in dealing with separatist tendencies across the country?
- Historical Background of the Khalistan Movement
- Indian Government Policy about the Khalistan issue
- Way Forward

WHY IN NEWS:

Recently, armed supporters of self-styled Sikh preacher and pro-Khalistan propagator Amritpal Singh indulged in a scuffle with Punjab police personnel. A few policemen were hurt. Singh, who heads the radical '*Waris Punjab De*' outfit, has been speaking the language of secession and separatism, evoking calls for the freedom of Punjab and the creation of Khalistan.

"Our aim for Khalistan shouldn't be seen as evil and taboo...It's an ideology and ideology never dies. We are not asking for it from Delhi"

AMRIT PAL SINGH

Khalistan movement

INTRODUCTION

The Khalistan movement is a separatist movement that emerged in the 1980s and seeks to create a separate homeland for Sikhs in the Punjab region of India. The proposed state, called *Khalistan*, would consist of parts of Punjab, neighboring states (Himachal Pradesh, Haryana & Rajasthan), and Lahore in Pakistan. The movement envisages Lahore to be the capital of Khalistan.

The demand for Khalistan emerged in response to what some Sikhs perceived as the marginalization and discrimination of the Sikh community in India. However, the Indian government launched a crackdown on the movement, and most of the militant groups were dismantled by the mid-1990s. Since then, the demand for Khalistan has lost momentum, and the majority of Sikhs in India do not support it, barring some occasional voices.

WHAT ARE SEPARATIST OR SECESSIONIST MOVEMENTS?

These are political movements that aim to establish a separate independent state within a region or territory that is currently part of a larger state. Such movements are usually driven by a desire to address political, cultural, linguistic, or economic grievances and to gain greater autonomy or self-determination for the region in question. The residents often feel a sense of relative deprivation which is exploited politically by leaders. Examples of separatist or secessionist movements around the world include the Basque separatist movement in Spain, the Tamil separatist movement in Sri Lanka, the Chechen separatist movement in Russia, the Kurdish separatist movement in Turkey, and the Quebec separatist movement in Canada.

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF SEPARATIST OR SECESSIONIST MOVEMENTS?

There are various causes of separatist movements, and they can vary depending on the specific region and context. Here are some common factors that can contribute to separatist movements:

SEPARATIST AND SECESSIONIST MOVEMENTS
CAUSES

Political oppression

Economic grievances

Cultural and linguistic identity

Historical and territorial disputes

External influences

PLUTUS IAS

KHALISTAN ISSUE

- **Political oppression:** Discrimination, marginalization, and oppression of a particular group by the state or dominant group can lead to feelings of disenfranchisement and

a desire for autonomy or independence.

- **Economic grievances:** Unequal distribution of resources and economic disparities can fuel demands for greater economic control and self-determination.
- **Cultural and linguistic identity:** The desire to protect and promote a unique cultural or linguistic identity can lead to calls for greater autonomy or even independence.
- **Historical and territorial disputes:** Historical claims to a particular region, border disputes, or territorial grievances can fuel separatist movements.
- **External influences:** External actors, such as neighboring countries or diaspora communities, can influence and support separatist movements in a particular region.

HOW HAS BEEN THE EXPERIENCE OF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT IN DEALING WITH SEPARATIST TENDENCIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY?

Secession and separatist tendencies are considered illegal in India. Traditionally, the Indian government has adopted a zero-tolerance policy toward any attempt to break the country. Any individual or group advocating for secession or separatism may face legal consequences.

The Indian government has had mixed experience in dealing with secessionist and separatist movements in different parts of the country. Allowing a mixed approach, It has given room to separatists to voice their grievances and at the same time has also dealt with them with an iron hand in other cases. A range of measures like negotiation, force, and development initiatives are adopted.

In some cases, the government's handling of separatist movements has been successful. For example, the government has been able to resolve the Bodo separatist movement in Assam through negotiations and the creation of an autonomous council. Similarly, the Mizoram separatist movement was resolved through negotiations and a peace accord that granted greater autonomy to the region.

However, in other cases, the government's approach has been strict and has been criticized for being heavy-handed. There are allegations of excessive use of force which has led to further exacerbating the tensions. For instance, the government's handling of the Kashmir separatist movement has been controversial, with accusations of human rights abuses by security forces and allegations of lack of political engagement.

Similarly, in dealing with the Khalistan movement in the 1980s and 1990s, the government's approach was characterized by a hash military crackdown that led to a period of violence and unrest in Punjab. While the situation in Punjab has since stabilized, the use of force has been criticized for exacerbating tensions and leading to

further violence.

In a nutshell, the Indian government's experience in dealing with separatist movements has been mixed, and there is a need for a nuanced and comprehensive approach that takes into account the grievances of the affected communities while ensuring the integrity and unity of the country. Political dialogue at the highest is the key.

The idea of Khalistan, a separate Sikh homeland, has

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE KHALISTAN MOVEMENT

been a controversial topic for decades, particularly in India. Here is a brief time-line of some significant events related to Khalistan:

1947: India gained independence from British colonial rule and is partitioned into two countries, India and Pakistan.

1966: The state of Punjab is divided into three parts, with the Hindi-speaking areas forming the new state of Haryana, and the Punjabi-speaking areas being divided between Punjab and the new state of Himachal Pradesh.

1973: The Anandpur Sahib Resolution was passed by the Shiromani Akali Dal, a political party representing Sikhs in Punjab, calling for greater autonomy for Punjab and recognition of the Sikh religion.

1980: The Khalistan movement gained momentum as some Sikhs demand a separate homeland for themselves, citing discrimination and economic hardship.

1982: Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a militant Sikh leader, took over the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar and declared it to be the seat of Khalistan.

1984: In June, the Indian government launched 'Operation Blue Star' to flush out Bhindranwale and his followers from the Golden Temple complex. The operation resulted in a military siege of the temple and the deaths of hundreds of people, including Bhindranwale.

1984: In October, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards in retaliation for 'Operation Blue Star'. This led to widespread anti-Sikh riots in which thousands of Sikhs were killed in Delhi and other parts of India.

1985: The Punjab Police and other security forces began a crackdown on Sikh militants, leading to a period of violence and terrorism in Punjab.

1992: The Khalistan movement lost momentum as many of its leaders were arrested or killed by security forces.

1995: The Punjab state government signed the Punjab Accord, which granted greater autonomy to the state and promised to address some of the grievances of Sikhs.

2002: The Khalistan movement became largely dormant, though some Sikh activists continue to call for a separate homeland.

INDIAN GOVERNMENT POLICY ABOUT THE KHALISTAN ISSUE

The Indian government's policy on the Khalistan issue has been focused on maintaining the territorial integrity and unity of India. The government has consistently rejected demands for a separate Sikh homeland and has taken a hardline stance against any separatist or secessionist movements.

Currently, the Indian government remains committed to maintaining peace and stability in Punjab and other parts of the country affected by separatist movements. It has implemented measures such as increased security and surveillance to prevent and counter any separatist activities. The government also continues to engage with Sikh community leaders and political parties to address their concerns and grievances within the framework of the Indian Constitution.

WAY FORWARD FOR THE KHALISTAN MOVEMENT

The way forward for the Khalistan movement is a complex issue, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. However, here are some possible ways forward that could be explored:

- **Political engagement:** The Khalistan movement leaders could engage in political dialogue with the Indian government to address their grievances and demands within the framework of the Indian Constitution. This could involve negotiations on issues such as greater autonomy for Punjab, sharing of river waters, and distribution of central funds. But, the caveat is to engage and recognize only those sections that have genuine demands.

- **Focus on development:** The Indian Government could focus on development initiatives for Punjab and its people, such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. This could help address some of the underlying grievances of the movement.

    It's important to note that any way forward for the Khalistan movement should

be peaceful, and democratic and must follow rule of law. Outright violence on the part of Khalistani leaders and total intolerance on part of the Indian government can only complicate the issue. Thus, political dialogue, the formation of a comprehensive policy, and a focus on development initiatives should be the way forward.

<div align="right">

Source:
The *Hindu*
Wikipedia
*Legals**erviceindia***

</div>

ESanjeevani

This article covers "Daily current events "and the topic is about 'eSanjeevani' which is in news, it covers "Governance" in GS-2 and "Science and Technology" in GS-3, the following content has relevance for UPSC.

For Prelims: eSanjeevani

For Mains: GS-2, Governance; GS-3, Science and Technology

WHY IN NEWS:

In the 98th episode of his regular radio broadcast Mann Ki Baat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi claimed that initiatives like the eSanjeevani had ensured access to medical care for citizens living in remote regions of the nation.

<div align="right">

Esanjeevani opd

</div>

ABOUT ESANJEEVANI

- A doctor-to-patient telemedicine system is called eSanjeevani.

- The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has implemented it across the country.

- eSanjeevani is a key element of the Indian government's Ayushman Bharat Plan.

- The scheme is especially helpful in times of the pandemic COVID-19 since it prevents individuals from going outside to see a doctor or go to the hospital.

- Anybody can access voice and video medical advice and prescriptions through eSanjeevani OPD.

- With the advent of this service, residents in even the most remote locations will have access to medical consultation.

- This project has earned the title of the largest government-owned telemedicine platform in the world in less than three years.

- **eSanjeevani** consists of two verticals that provide healthcare services to patients across all states and UTs, so successfully creating a presence in the interior of the nation.

- By offering aided teleconsultations and guaranteeing that Ayushman Bharat Scheme recipients may receive their due benefits, eSanjeevani AB-HWC aims to close the digital health gap between rural and urban areas.

- In this vertical, the "Ayushman Bharat health and Wellness Centers" (HWCs), which are established at the state level and serve as spokes, are mapped with the hub (which consists of MBBS/Specialty/Super-Specialty doctors) at the zonal level.

- The latter vertical, eSanjeevani OPD, offers services to both urban and rural residents. It makes use of technology to enable patient access to doctor consultations via smartphones, tablets, and laptops from anywhere.

TELEMEDICINE

- Telemedicine is the practice of physicians diagnosing and treating patients remotely through the use of communications technology such as phone calls, emails, SMS/chat, and video calling.

- The Indian telemedicine market with the highest potential is the telemedicine

sector, which is predicted to reach $5.4 Billion by 2025.

- The CAGR is currently 39.6%.

- Some well-known telemedicine firms, including Practo, 1mg, mFine, iCliniq, and myUpchar, claimed a 4–9 times increase in doctor consultations between March and June 2020, with about 80% of those users being first-timers on their platforms.

Current Trends of Telemedicine
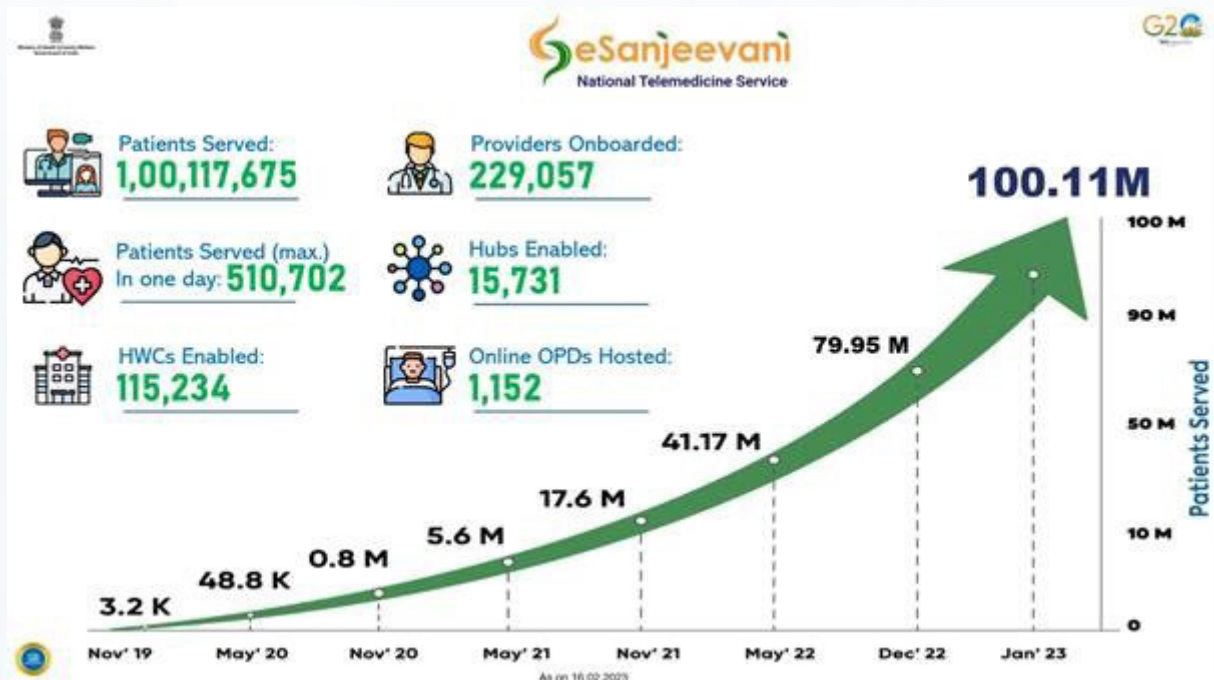
esanjeevani

HOW ESANJEEVANI BECOMES MAIN PART OF AYUSHMAN BHARAT DIGITAL MISSION

OBJECTIVES

- To manage the essential digital health data and the infrastructure needed for its seamless exchange, establish cutting-edge digital health systems.

- Establish registers at the appropriate level to produce a single source of truth regarding clinical facilities, medical personnel, healthcare workers, medications, and pharmacies.

- All national stakeholders in digital health should be compelled to use open standards.

- Establish a system of individual health records based on world standards that are easily available to people and healthcare professionals and service providers and rely on informed consent from the individual.

- Encourage the creation of enterprise-class health application systems with a particular emphasis on attaining the health SDGs.

- Employ the best cooperative federalism principles as you collaborate with the States and Union Territories to make the vision a reality.

- By using a combination of prescription and promotion, make sure that healthcare organizations and professionals in the private sector actively collaborate with public health authorities on the development of the ABDM.

- Make sure that the delivery of health care is portable across the nation. The adoption of clinical decision support (CDS) systems by practitioners and professionals in the medical field is encouraged.

- Promote the management of the health sector by utilizing medical research and health data analytics

PM NARENDRA MODI LAUNCHES
AYUSHMAN BHARAT DIGITAL MISSION

Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission will create a seamless online platform that will enable interoperability within the digital health ecosystem

"There is no such big connected infrastructure anywhere in the world" says the PM referring to JAM trinity

"Digital infrastructure is taking everything from *'Ration to Prashasan'* to the common Indian in a fast and transparent manner"

" There has also been an unprecedented expansion of telemedicine "

Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission

BUSINESS PRINCIPLES

- **Wellness-centric and wellness-driven:** Real-time access to individual health records would boost wellness centers and mobile screening teams.

- **Designed to be inclusive:** Encourage and educate people to use a variety of health and wellness services

- **Ensure security and privacy by design:** In accordance with the PDP Bill 2019, a national policy on the security of health systems and the privacy of individual health records would be created. All the components that must deal with personal health records will be created from the beginning to adhere to this policy.

- **Designed to track and display the effectiveness and responsibility of all healthcare professionals:** All service levels of the health sector's performance against agreed-upon KPIs will be monitored in real-time, and results will be disseminated.

- **Using a Health ID, a national footprint and seamless portability will be made possible:** National mobility will be greatly aided by the Personal Health Identifier and its supporting infrastructure, which includes the implementation of Health Information Standards.

TECHNOLOGY PRINCIPLES

- **By utilizing the India Enterprise Architecture Framework (IndEA):** By default, the IndEA standard will be adopted and followed in the design of the ABDM building blocks. MeitY will notify all design and development efforts to use the Agile IndEA Framework.

- **Every aspect of ABDM will use federated architecture:** There will only be central development and maintenance of the defined Core Building Blocks. Every other component will be created with the intention of operating in a federated paradigm that takes into account regional, state, and institutional platforms and systems while yet allowing them to work together. The information would be federated as per ABDM specifications and stored near the place of origination.

- **The ABDM ecosystem will be based on Open APIs:** The Open API Policy announced by MeitY, GoI will be adopted by all building blocks, and they will all share data in accordance with the requirements outlined in NDHB. The design and development of the APIs will incorporate security and privacy

considerations, which should be reviewed before implementation.

- All significant legacy systems will be examined for compliance with NDHB principles and will be utilized to the greatest extent possible.

BUILDING BLOCKS

- **Health ID:** The Health ID will be used to identify people in a unique way, verify their identity, and connect their health records to other systems and stake-holders (but only with the patient's informed consent).

- **Healthcare Professionals Registry:** It is a complete database of all healthcare professionals engaged in the provision of healthcare services in both contemporary and conventional medical systems. They will be connected to India's ecosystem of healthcare ecosystem by enrolling in the Healthcare Professionals Registry Registry.

- **Health Facility Registry:** It is a thorough database of the country's medical facilities from various medical systems. It consists of both governmental and private healthcare facilities, such as clinics, hospitals, diagnostic centers, imaging centers, and pharmacies.

- **ABHA Mobile App:** A PHR (Personal Health Record) is an electronic record of a person's health-related information that complies with nationally accepted interoperability standards, may be obtained from various sources and is managed, shared, and controlled by the person. The fact that the PHR puts the user in control of the information it holds, distinguishing it from the EMR and EHR, is its most salient feature.

Sources
The Hindu
PIB

INDIA's MOON MISSION – CHANDRAYAAN-3

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details India's endeavor to land its feet on the moon. Moon has always been a topic of inquisitiveness and mystery in the science arena. The topic is important in the context of India's ambitious Chandrayaan 3 mission, to display end-to-end capability in safe landing and roving on the lunar surface.

Moon Mission

FOR PRELIMS:

- Findings of Chandrayaan series of missions
- Lunar Polar Exploration Missions
- Different types of Launch Vehicle and Orbits.

  For Mains: GS 3, Science and Technology

- Details of Space Technology
- Chandrayaan 3 mission and its related significance
- Different Types of Launch Vehicles and their revolution
- Different types of
- Orbits and their significance

CONTENTS

WHY IN NEWS?

Recently, India's premier space agency Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) was successful in a key test for Chandrayaan-3, India's third moon mission. The cryogenic engine that will power the launch vehicle for the mission was successfully tested.

WHAT IS THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF INDIA'S MOON / CHANDRAYAAN-3 MISSIONS?

The first mission in the series, Chandrayaan-1, was launched on October 22, 2008, and was India's first lunar mission. The mission consisted of an orbiter and an impactor that was used to study the moon's surface. The mission's major objectives were to create a three-dimensional map of the moon's surface and study the mineral composition of the moon. Chandrayaan-1 was a remarkable success, and the mission's major discoveries included the detection of water molecules on the moon's surface and the discovery of more than 40 small craters on the moon.

The second mission in the series, Chandrayaan-2, was launched on July 22, 2019. The mission was more ambitious than the previous mission and consisted of an orbiter, a lander, and a rover. The mission's primary objective was to soft land the lander and rover on the moon's south pole and study the lunar surface in greater detail. Despite the soft landing failure of the Vikram lander, the Chandrayaan-2 mission achieved several significant milestones, including the successful insertion of the orbiter into the lunar orbit and the detection of water molecules on the moon's surface.

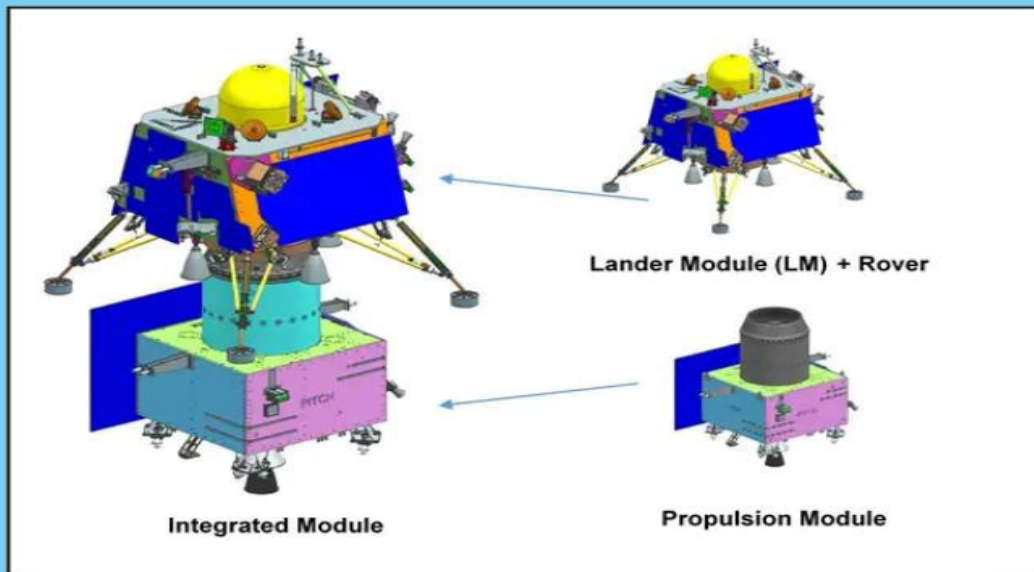| CHANDRAYAAN-1	CHANDRAYAAN-2
Detection of water molecules	Successful insertion of the orbiter into the lunar orbit
Discovery of more than 40 small craters on the moon	Detection of water molecules on the moon's surface.
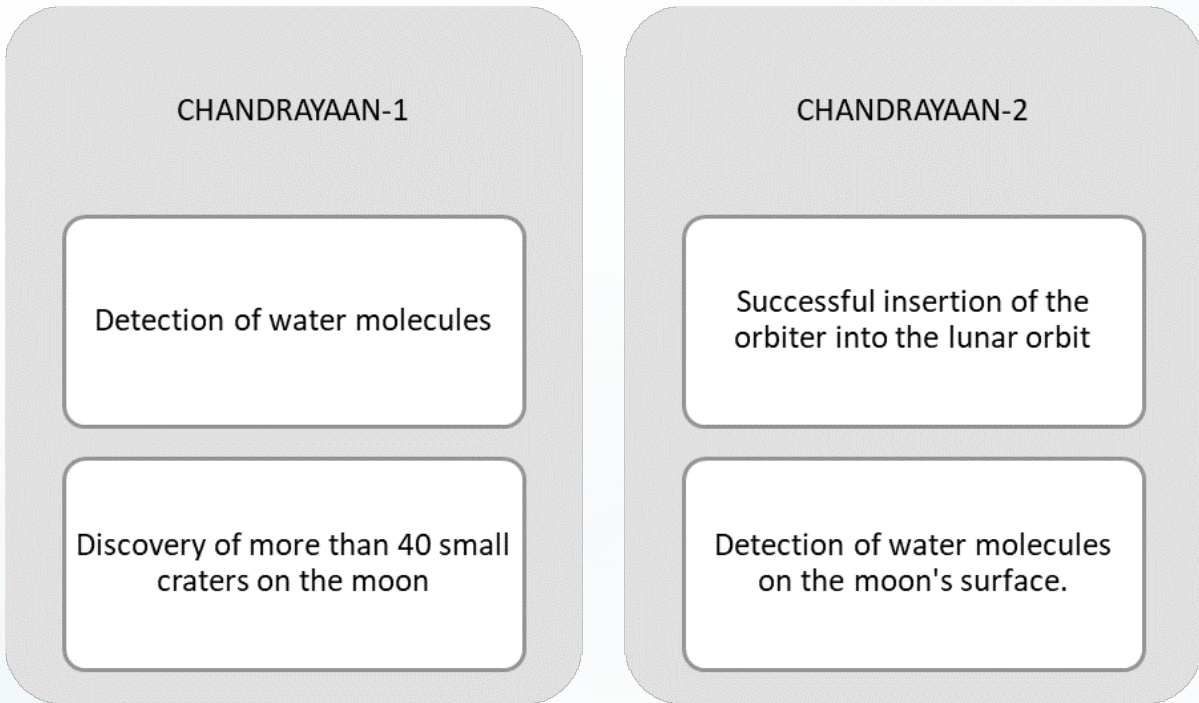
Chandrayaan-1 and Chandraan-2

ISRO is now preparing for the Chandrayaan-3 mission, which is a follow-up mission to the Chandrayaan-2 mission. The mission's primary objective is to land a rover on the moon's south pole and continue the scientific exploration of the moon.
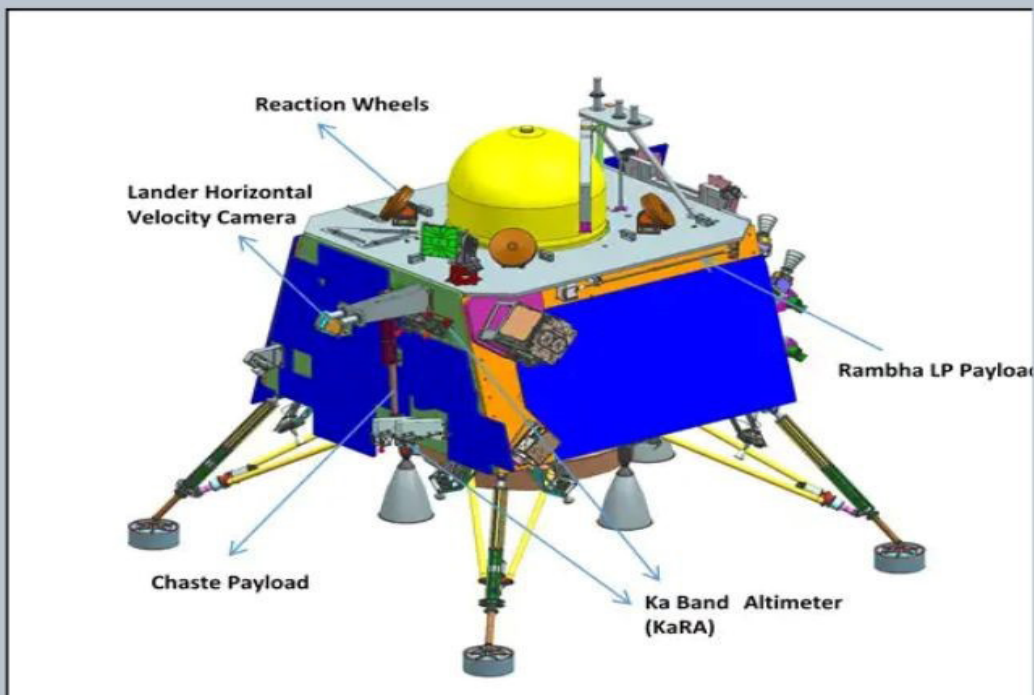
WHAT IS CHANDRAYAAN-3 MISSION?

The Chandrayaan mission is a series of lunar exploration missions undertaken by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to explore the moon's surface, its mineral composition, and the presence of water molecules. The name "Chandrayaan" is derived from two Sanskrit words: "Chandra" (moon) and "Yaan" (vehicle). The Chandrayaan-3 mission is a lunar probe mission. It will have an orbiter and a landing module. It is a follow-up to the Chandrayaan-2 mission. The failure of the Chandrayaan-2 mission led to the making of another mission to demonstrate end-to-end capability in safe landing and roving on the lunar surface. The mission is proposed to be carried out in 2024 in partnership with Japan.

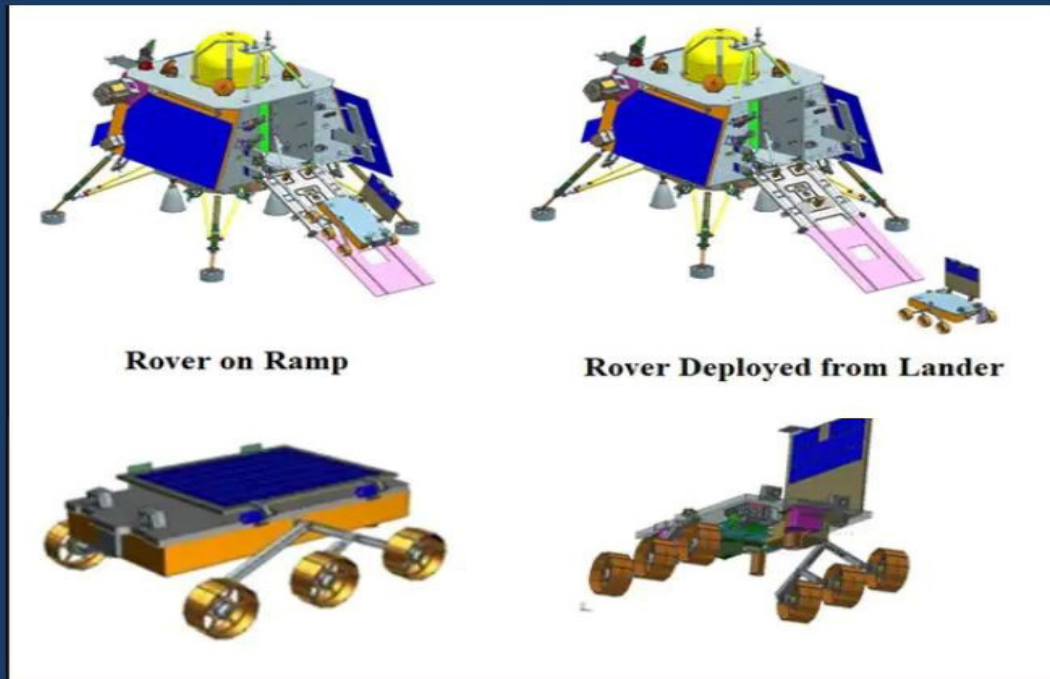# THREE DIMENSIONAL VIEWS OF CHANDRAYAAN-3 MODULES

CHANDRAYAAN-3 – INTEGRATED MODULE

Lander Module (LM) + Rover

Integrated Module

Propulsion Module

CHANDRAYAAN-3 LANDER

Reaction Wheels

Lander Horizontal Velocity Camera

Rambha LP Payload

Chaste Payload

Ka Band Altimeter (KaRA)

CHANDRAYAAN-3 ROVER

Rover on Ramp

Rover Deployed from Lander

Chandrayaan-3

WHAT ARE THE FEATURES OF THE CHANDRAYAAN-3 MISSION?

The following are some of the expected features of the Chandrayaan-3 mission:

- **Mission Objective:** The primary objective of the Chandrayaan-3 mission is to conduct a soft landing on the Moon's surface, deploy a rover, and conduct various scientific experiments.

- **Launch Date and Vehicle:** The launch date for Chandrayaan-3 has not been announced yet. The mission is expected to be launched using the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark III (GSLV Mk III) rocket.

- **Payloads:** The Chandrayaan-3 mission is expected to carry a range of scientific payloads, including a lunar rover, a seismometer, and a thermal profiler. These payloads will help in studying the lunar surface and its environment.

- **Landing Site:** The Chandrayaan-3 mission is expected to land near the South Pole of the Moon, which is an unexplored region that is of great scientific interest.

- **Mission Duration:** The Chandrayaan-3 mission is expected to have a mission

duration of around 14 days. During this time, the lander and rover will conduct various scientific experiments and collect data.

- **Mission Cost:** The total cost of the Chandrayaan-3 mission is estimated to be around Rs 610 crore.
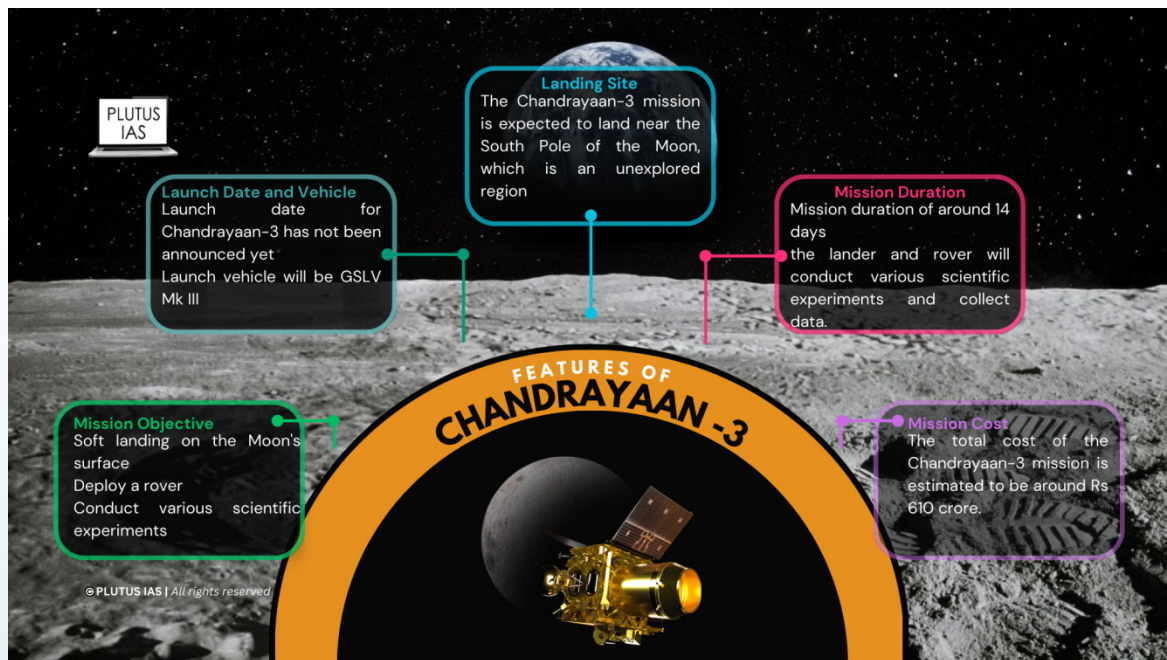
chandrayaan mission 3

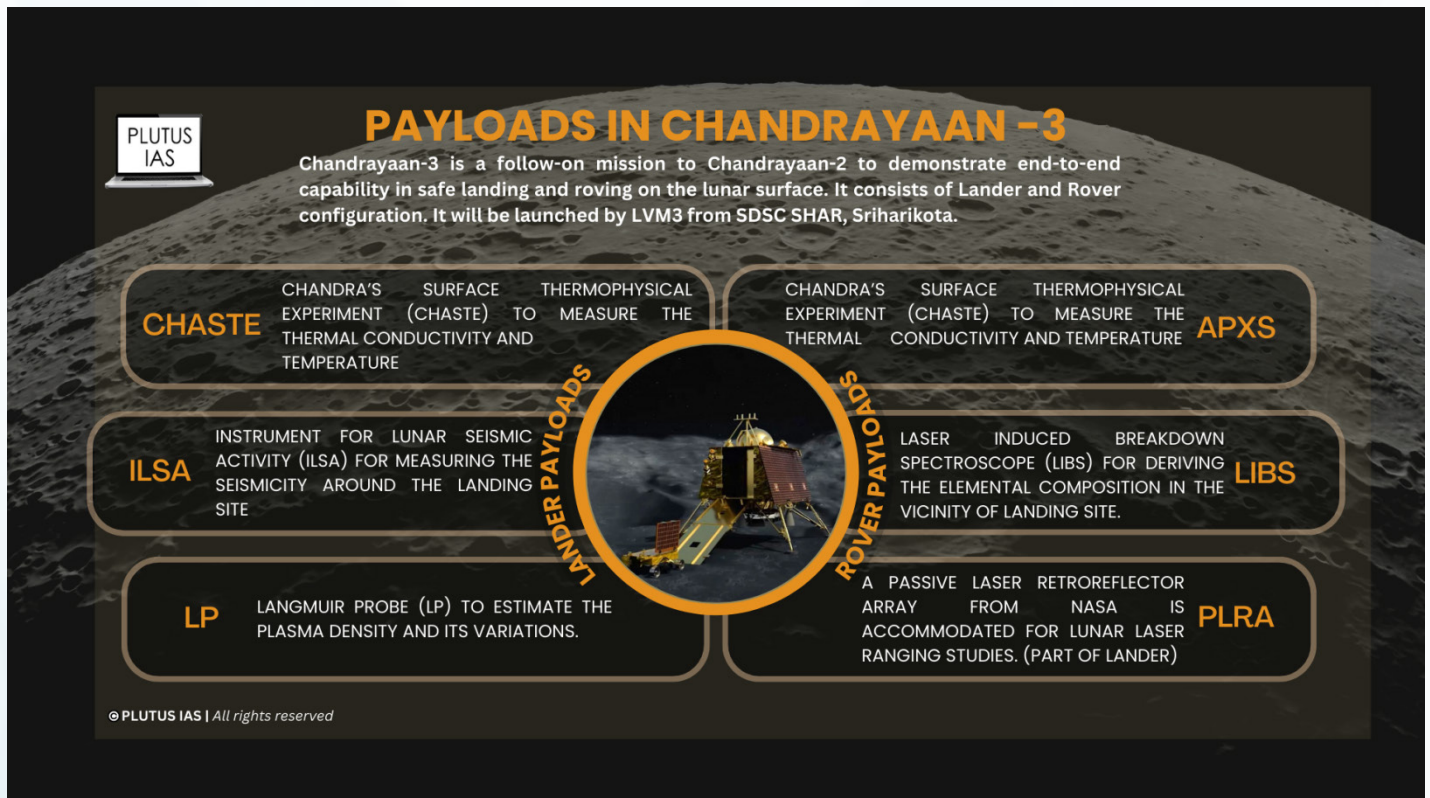## WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MISSION?

The importance of the Chandrayaan-3 mission lies in the following areas:

- **Scientific Exploration:** The mission aims to continue the scientific exploration of the moon and build on the discoveries made by the previous missions. The mission will carry advanced scientific instruments to study the lunar surface and its geology, mineralogy, and topography.

- **Technological Advancement:** Chandrayaan-3 will be equipped with advanced technology and equipment developed by Indian scientists and engineers. The mission will provide an opportunity to test and demonstrate new technologies for future space exploration.

- **Lunar Exploration:** The mission aims to land on the moon's south pole, which is an area that has not been explored in detail before. The south pole region of the moon is believed to have water ice, which could be used as a resource for

future human missions to the moon.

- **Boosting India's Space Program:** The successful completion of the third mission will further boost India's status as a leading spacefaring nation and showcase its technological capabilities and commitment to space exploration.

- **Geopolitical Importance:** Chandrayaan's mission helped to elevate India's status in the global community as a leading spacefaring nation. The successful completion of the Chandyayaan 3 will demonstrate India's technological capabilities and its commitment to exploring space for scientific and societal benefits.

It will build on the successes of the previous mission and provide valuable information for future lunar exploration and space missions.

Chandrayaan-3 launch

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE CHANDRAYAAN-3 MISSION?

The Chandrayaan-3 mission, like any space exploration mission, will face several challenges. Some of the significant challenges that the mission might face are:

- **Technical Challenges:** Developing and testing the advanced technologies

required for the mission, including the lander, rover, and orbiter, will be a significant technical challenge. The mission will also have to overcome the soft landing failure of the Vikram lander in the previous mission.

- **Complex Mission Design:** The mission aims to land on the moon's south pole, which presents a complex landing site due to its rugged terrain and low temperatures. The mission will require precise planning and execution to ensure a successful landing.

- **Funding and Resources:** The mission requires significant funding and resources for its successful completion. The mission's budget must be allocated efficiently to ensure the timely development and launch of the mission.

- **Environmental Challenges:** The extreme conditions on the moon, such as the low temperatures and radiation, pose significant challenges for the mission's equipment and instrumentation. The mission must develop and test equipment that can withstand these conditions.

Overcoming these challenges will require precise planning, efficient resource allocation, and advanced technological solutions.

WAY FORWARD

The Chandrayaan-3 mission is a critical mission for India's space program, and several steps can be taken to ensure its success. Here are some ways forward for the Chandrayaan-3 mission:

- **Technical Development:** Robust testing and simulations must be carried out to ensure that the equipment and instrumentation can withstand the harsh lunar environment.

- **Mission Design:** The mission's landing site and trajectory must be precisely planned to ensure a successful landing. The lander and rover's design must also be adapted to the terrain and environmental conditions at the landing site.

- **Resource Allocation:** The necessary funding and resources must be made available to support the mission's objectives and goals.

- **International Collaboration:** Collaboration with international partners can provide valuable support and expertise in the development and execution of the mission.

By implementing these steps, the mission can ensure its success and achieve its scientific and technological objectives.

Neutrinos

This article covers "Daily current events "and the topic is about 'Neutrinos' which is in news, it covers "Science and Technology" In GS-3, the following content has relevance for UPSC.

For Prelims: Neutrinos

For Mains: GS-3, Science and Technology

WHY IN NEWS:

Recently, a Japanese experiment stated that it was unable to uncover "strong evidence" that this is the case, ruling out a few theories that attempted to explain the myriad strange behaviors of neutrinos.

ABOUT NEUTRINOS

- A neutrino is a subatomic particle that resembles an electron in many ways but differs in that it lacks an electrical charge and has a very small mass that might potentially be zero.
- One of the most prevalent particles in the universe is the neutrino.
- They barely interact with matter; they are exceedingly hard to find.
- Both electrons and neutrinos are treated similarly by nuclear forces; neither participates in the strong nuclear force, but both do so equally in the weak nuclear force. Leptons are particles with this characteristic.
- The muon, which has a mass 200 times more than that of the electron, and the tau, which has a mass 3,500 times greater than that of the electron, are two further charged leptons in addition to the electron (and its antiparticle, the positron).
- Like the electron, the **muon** and tau also have companion neutrinos known as muon-

neutrinos and tau-neutrinos.

- Scientists refer to this transition between neutrino kinds as neutrino oscillation.
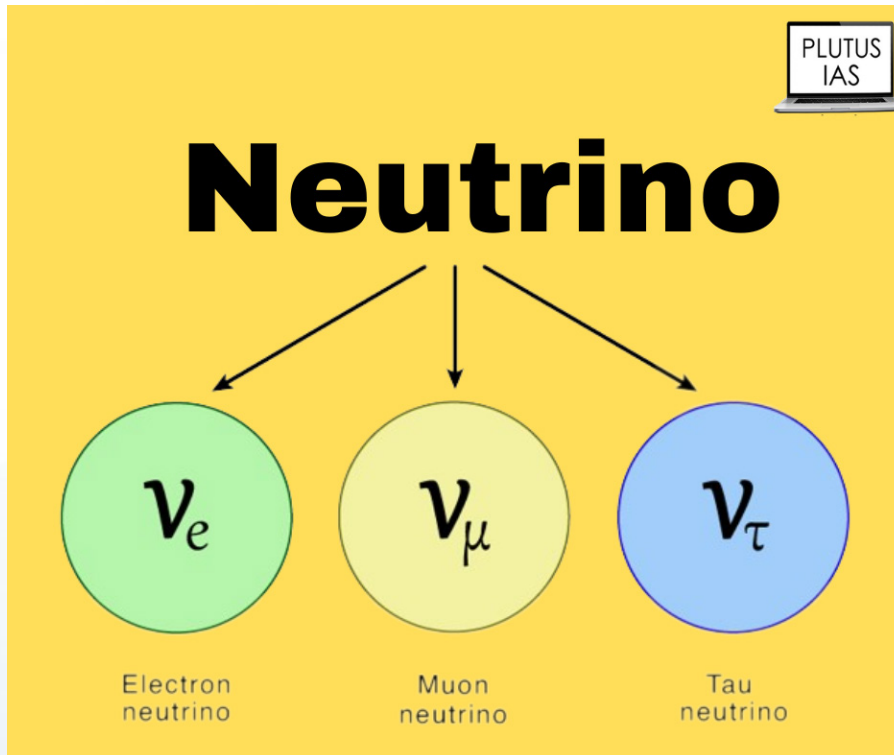
Neutrinos

DISCOVERY

- In 1930, Wolfgang Pauli made the initial hypothesis regarding the neutrino's existence.
- There was difficulty at that time since it appeared that beta decay did not conserve energy and angular momentum.
- But Pauli argued that one could restore the conservation rules if a neutral, non-interacting particle—a neutrino—were released.
- It wasn't until Clyde Cowan and Frederick Reines documented antineutrinos released by a nuclear reactor in 1955 that neutrinos were first discovered.

SOURCES

- The radioactive disintegration of primordial elements within the planet, which produces a significant flux of low-energy electron-antineutrinos, is one of the neutrinos' natural sources.
- According to calculations, the sun's fusion events release neutrinos that take away around 2% of the sun's energy.
- Because only neutrinos can enter the extremely dense material created by a collapsing star, supernovae are also primarily a neutrino phenomenon. Just a small

portion of the available energy is converted to light in supernovae.

INDIA-BASED NEUTRINOS OBSERVATORY

- It is planned to establish the India-based Neutrino Observatory in Tamil Nadu's Theni area.
- A particle physics research project is being built in a cave beneath a mountain that is 1,200 meters (3,900 feet) deep with the main goal of studying atmospheric neutrinos.
- The Iron-Calorimeter Detector is the primary experiment that INO has put forth.

CONCERN ON NEUTRINO

- If the project is carried out, it will have an impact on the plants and animals in the Western Ghats' Periyar Tiger Reserve and Mathikettan Shola National Park, two places known for their effective conservation efforts.
- As a result, the Tamil Nadu government will not approve of its development.

WHY IS THE MOUNTAIN NECESSARY TO INO?

- Most of the charged particles from the cosmic rays are filtered out by the mountain's 1 km of solid rock.
- A portion of the incident cosmic ray protons, pions, and nearly all of the neutrinos make up the filtered set.

WHY MUST THESE TRIALS BE CONDUCTED UNDERGROUND?

- The detector would detect roughly 10 neutrino occurrences per day and billions of cosmic ray muons per hour if it were positioned near the mountain's base.
- After being inserted into the rock, it would only be able to detect roughly 10 neutrinos per day and 300 muon events per hour, of which 3 would be the needed muon neutrino events.

HOW DOES THE IRON CALORIMETER IDENTIFY THE NEUTRINOS?

- Iron slabs alternately cover 150 layers to form the ICAl.
- A muon that is electrically charged is created as a result of the muon neutrino's interaction with the iron.
- Sensitive elements detect this charge.
- The path taken by the muon is traced by combining the pulses.
- From this, one can deduce the characteristics of the neutrino that generated the pulses.

Source:

The Hindu

FARM MECHANIZATION

This article covers "Daily current events "and the topic is about 'Farm Mechanization' which is in news, it covers "Agriculture" In GS-3, and the following content has relevance for UPSC.

For Prelims: Farm Mechanization

For Mains: GS-3, Agriculture

WHY IN THE NEWS:

The separate agriculture budget, which was presented by Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot for the second year in a row, established the agricultural technology mission, which will support farm mechanization in Rajasthan by providing subsidies for equipment purchases.

ABOUT FARM MECHANIZATION

- Farm mechanization is the creation and application of tools that can replace labor-intensive manual labor and animal power in agricultural operations.
- Using agricultural machinery to automate agricultural tasks dramatically increases farm workers' productivity. This practice is known as mechanized agriculture.

HOW IS FARM MECHANIZATION CARRIED OUT

- Presenting the upgraded agricultural tools for use on modest holdings and powered by bullocks.
- Utilizing power tillers, small tractors, and tractor-drawn equipment on medium-sized holdings to supplement existing sources.
- Supplementing animal power sources with heavy tractors and machinery on the remaining holdings.

WHY ARE FARMERS RELUCTANT ABOUT MECHANIZATION

- In India, there is an excess of agricultural labor.
- The country has enough supply of draft animals to do farm chores efficiently.
- The bulk of Indian farmers has small farm holdings to afford using tractors on their fields.
- There is a lack of technical expertise among the populace.
- Tractors and tractor-drawn equipment cannot be used efficiently due to a lack of an adequate farm road system.

- The yield cannot be increased with the use of mechanical power.
- The cost of production will not be reduced by mechanization.
- Not all aspects of farm operations can be automated.
- A significant portion of its working force. will get displaced from agriculture.

Farm Mechanization

WHY IS IT REQUIRED

According to the Economic Survey, farm mechanization and crop productivity are directly correlated for the following reasons:

- Farm mechanization minimizes labor and time costs.

- It minimizes drudgery.

- Reduces production costs over time.

- Cuts down post-harvest losses.

- Increases crop production and farm revenue.

According to World Bank projections, half of India's population will be urban by 2050. It is estimated that the percentage of agricultural workers in the total workforce would drop to 25.7% by 2050 from 58.2% in 2001. Thus, there is a need to enhance the level of farm mechanization in the country.

Benefits:

PLUTUS IAS

- By promoting promptness and excellence in agriculture, increase the yield of the land.
- Support initiatives that help households cope with shocks better and alleviate the strain of labour shortages.
- Reduce the impact of agriculture on the environment when combined with effective conservation farming techniques.
- Alleviate poverty
- Provide food security while enhancing people's standard of living.

Agriculture Mechanisation

FARM MECHANIZATION IN INDIA

- The percentage of mechanized farms in India is between 40 and 45 percent, with the northeastern states needing very little automation compared to states like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Punjab.
- Compared to nations like the US (95%), Brazil (75%), and China (57%), this level of farm mechanization is still modest.

SUB-MISSION ON AGRICULTURAL MECHANIZATION

OBJECTIVES

- Expanding the use of farm mechanization to small and marginal farmers as well as to areas where farm electricity is scarce.
- Promoting "Custom Hiring Centers" to mitigate the unfavorable scale economics caused by small landholdings and high individual ownership costs.
- Establishing centers for high-tech and expensive agriculture equipment.
- Awareness through demonstration.
- Capacity building activities.

COMPONENTS

- **Promoting and Strengthening farm mechanization through Training, Testing, and Demonstrations:** This initiative aims to ensure performance testing of agricultural machinery and equipment, capacity building of farmers and end users, and the promotion of farm mechanization through demonstrations.

  - **Post-Harvest Technology and Management (PHTM) Demonstration, Training, and Distribution:** PHTM aims to popularise technology through demonstrations, capacity building of farmers and end users, low-cost scientific storage/transport, and the management of crop byproducts. Provide financial support for setting up PHT units.

  - **Financial Assistance for Procurement of Agriculture Machinery and Equipment:** Encourages the purchase of different agricultural gear and equipment by aid standards.

  - **Establish Farm Machinery Banks for Custom Hiring:** Establishes Farm Machinery Banks with adequate financial support for the right regions and crops.

  - **Establish Hi-Tech, High Productive Equipment Hub for Custom Hiring:** Establishes high-tech machinery hubs for high-value crops like sugarcane, cotton, etc., with the help of financial aid.

  - **Promotion of Farm Mechanization in Selected Villages:** Provide financial support to establish Farm Machinery Banks in designated villages and to advance applicable technology.

  - **Financial Assistance for Promotion of Mechanized Operations/hectare Carried out Through Custom Hiring Centres:** Financial support is given on a per-hectare basis to those who hire machinery and equipment from specialized hiring facilities in low-mechanized areas.

  - **Promotion of Farm Machinery and Equipment in the North-Eastern Region:** Extends financial assistance in high-potential but low-mechanized states of the northeast.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Sustainable Agriculture Mechanisation

- Sustainable agricultural mechanization covers all farming and processing technologies, from simple and basic hand tools to more sophisticated and motorized equipment.

- Sustainable farm mechanization adopts Conservation Agriculture principles and the "Save and Grow" paradigm to enable agriculture to be both productive and profit-

able for farmers while at the same time contributing to conserving resources and ecosystem services.

- It eases and reduces hard labor, relieves labor shortages, improves productivity and timeliness of agricultural operations, improves the efficient use of resources, enhances market access, and contributes to mitigating climate-related hazards.

- Sustainable mechanization considers technological, economic, social, environmental, and cultural aspects when contributing to the sustainable development of the food and agricultural sector.

- **Sustainable agricultural Mechanization** supports the development of food supply chains through improved agricultural practices for increased production and enhanced food security.

GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs for UPSC" and the topic details about the Great Indian Bustard. There are less than 100 birds today, which is a dangerous sign for its existence.

Great Indian Bustard

For Prelims:

- About Great Indian Bustard – habitat, IUCN status, Indian Protection Status, and Locations in India
- About Great Indian Bustard Protection Programme

- GS 3, Environment:
- Issues concerning the survival of Great Indian Bustard

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES FOR ITS PROTECTION

CONTENTS:

- **Why in the news?**
- **About Great Indian Bustard**
- **Issues facing the survival of Great Indian Bustard**
- **Conservation Programme for Great Indian Bustard**

WAY FORWARD

Why in the news?

The draft notification issued by the Central Electricity Authority on the construction of electric lines in the habitat of the critically endangered Great Indian Bustard is a cause for concern. The Great Indian Bustard is already facing several threats to its survival, including habitat loss, hunting, poaching, and collision with power lines. The construction of new power lines in the bird's habitat could further exacerbate these threats and push the species closer to extinction.

ABOUT GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD

The Great Indian Bustard (Ardeotis Nigriceps) is a critically endangered bird species found mainly in India, but also in Pakistan and Nepal. It is one of the largest flying birds in the world, with males weighing up to 15 kg and females weighing up to 6 kg.

The bird is mainly found in grasslands and semi-arid areas, where it feeds on insects, small mammals, reptiles, and seeds. Its habitat has been greatly reduced due to human activities such as agriculture, grazing, and development, leading to a significant decline in its population. It is estimated that there are only around 150 individuals left in the wild.

ISSUES FACING THE SURVIVAL OF THE GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD

faces several issues that have led to its critically endangered status. Some of these issues include:

- Habitat loss and degradation: The conversion of grasslands into agricultural land, urbanization, and infrastructure development have significantly reduced the bird's habitat. This has led to the fragmentation and isolation of populations, making them more vulnerable to predation and other threats.

- Hunting and poaching: The Great Indian Bustard is hunted for its meat, feathers, and other body parts. The bird is also targeted by poachers who capture it for illegal trade.
- Collision with power lines: The bird is prone to colliding with power lines, which are often located in or near its habitat. These collisions can lead to injury or death, particularly during migration.
- Climate change: Changes in temperature and rainfall patterns can affect the bird's breeding and feeding habits, and alter the availability of resources in its habitat.
- Lack of awareness and conservation measures: There is a lack of awareness among the public and policymakers about the bird conservation status, leading to inadequate conservation measures and limited funding for conservation efforts.

About Great Indian Bustard

CONSERVATION PROGRAMME FOR GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD

The Great Indian Bustard (GIB) is a critically endangered species, and several conservation programs have been initiated to protect the species. Some of these programs include

- Protected areas: Several protected areas, including wildlife sanctuaries and national parks have been established to protect the Great Indian Bustard and its habitat. For example, the Desert National Park in Rajasthan and the Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary in Maharashtra are dedicated to the conservation of the GIB.
- Habitat restoration: Efforts are being made to restore the degraded grasslands and semi-arid areas that are critical for the survival of the GIB. Habitat restoration programs involve activities such as plantation, water conservation, and soil

conservation measures.

- Captive breeding: Captive breeding programs have been initiated to increase the population of the GIB. These programs involve breeding birds in captivity and releasing the offspring into the wild. The breeding centers are equipped with facilities for the incubation, rearing, and rehabilitation of the birds.
- Monitoring and research: Regular monitoring and research programs are conducted to understand the population dynamics, habitat requirements, and behavior of the GIB. These programs help in developing effective conservation strategies and monitoring the effectiveness of conservation efforts.
- Awareness campaigns: Several awareness campaigns are being run to educate the public, policymakers, and local communities about the conservation of the status of the GIB. These campaigns aim to generate public support for conservation measures and encourage local communities to participate in conservation efforts.

WAY FORWARD

These conservation programs are essential for the protection and conservation of the Great Indian Bustard. It is important to continue and strengthen these efforts to prevent the species from going extinct.

- Strengthen conservation measures: The existing conservation measures such as habitat restoration, captive breeding, and protected areas should be strengthened and expanded to cover a larger area.
- Mitigate threats: Efforts should be made to mitigate the major threats to the species such as habitat loss, hunting, poaching, and collision with power lines. This can be achieved through the development of mitigation strategies, such as undergrounding of power lines, awareness campaigns, and strict law enforcement.
- Research and monitoring: Regular monitoring and research programs should be conducted to gather more information about the population, habitat requirements, and behavior of the GIB. This will help in developing effective conservation strategies and monitoring the effectiveness of conservation efforts.
- Engage local communities: Engaging local communities and raising awareness about the conservation status of the GIB is critical to the success of conservation efforts. Local communities should be encouraged to participate in conservation programs and given incentives for their involvement.
- International cooperation: International cooperation is essential for the conservation of migratory birds like the Great Indian Bustard. Collaboration with neighboring countries such as Pakistan and Nepal can help in developing a coordinated approach to conservation.
- Sustainable development: Sustainable development practices should be promoted

in areas where the GIB is found. This will help in balancing the needs of the local communities with conservation goals.

- In conclusion, the conservation of the Great Indian Bustard requires a concerted effort from governments, conservation organizations, and local communities. By implementing the above measures, we can ensure the survival of this magnificent species for future generations.

Sources:
Forest.rajasthan.gov.in
The Hindu

HINDU RATE OF GROWTH

This article covers "Daily current events "and the topic is 'The Hindu Rate of Growth' which is in the news, it covers "Economics" In GS-3, and the following content has relevance for UPSC.

For Prelims: Hindu Rate of Growth
For Mains: GS-3, Economics

WHY IN NEWS:

The State Bank of India published a report titled "Ecowrap" on March 7, 2023, demonstrating that the idea of the "Hindu" rate of growth has no basis in the current situation.

- Raghuram Rajan, a former governor of the Reserve Bank of India, recently stated that the Indian economy is "dangerously close" to growing at the "Hindu" rate.

  o He attributed the slowdown in the global economy too weak private sector investment, high-interest rates, and these factors.

ABOUT THE HINDU RATE OF GROWTH

- Raj Krishna, a late economist, first used the term in 1978.

- It describes the nation's slow growth, which essentially refers to the slow rate of economic expansion from the 1950s through the 1980s.

- An average of 3.5% was the Indian economy during this time.

- Hindu rates of growth can only be identified if they are consistently low and ac-

companied by low per-capita GDP, and they must also take population growth into account.

- **A Hindu rate is often used In a negative sense:** According to A Dictionary of Politics and International Relations in India, the term "Hindu Rate of Development" is frequently used as an insult to refer to India's inability to realize its full economic potential.

WHEN DID INDIA'S GROWTH RATE SURPASS THAT OF THE HINDU RATE OF GROWTH?

- According to GDP growth rate data, India began to expand more rapidly than the Hindu pace of 3.5% a long time before the crisis and reforms of 1991.

- Between 1956 and 1975, India's average annual GDP growth rate was 3.4%, which is nearly identical to the Hindu rate of growth.

- Yet, India's growth averaged 5.8% between 1981 and 1991, a full decade before the crisis and reforms.

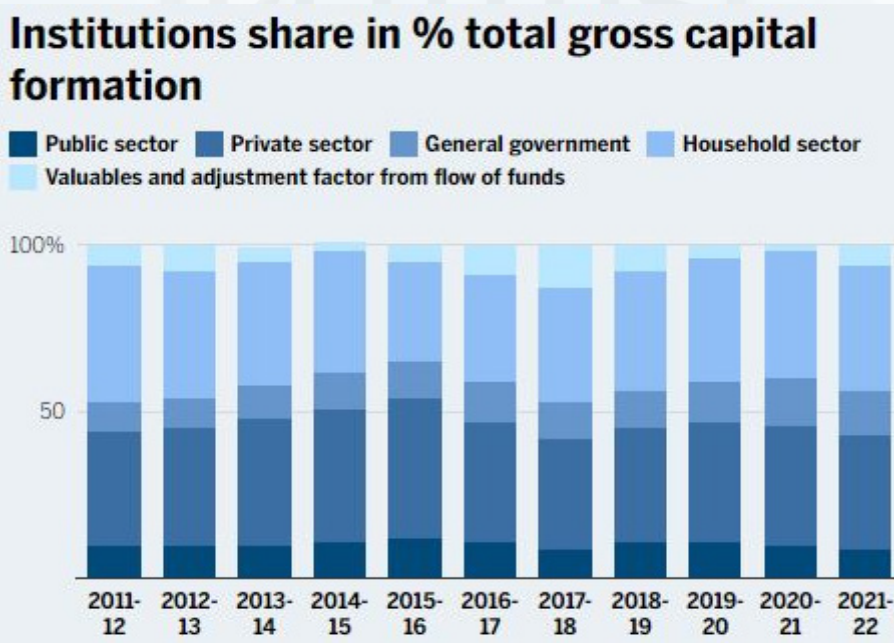## HOW HAS INDIA'S GDP BEEN INCREASING?

- Due to the pandemic, it decreased in the first quarter of the fiscal year 2020–2021 by an astounding 23.8%.

- India's GDP started increasing as the lockdowns started to loosen and commercial operations resumed.

- The conflict that affected nearly all of the world's main economies in FY22–23 created new economic difficulties, slowed growth, and increased inflation to record levels.
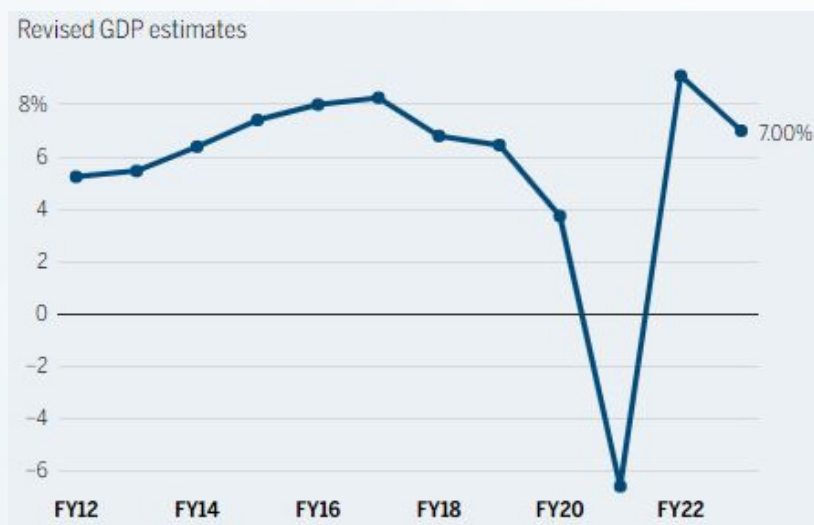
India's GDP increasing rate

## WHAT DID THE SBI REPORT SAY ABOUT INVESTMENTS AND SAVINGS?

- Claims are "ill-conceived, biased, and premature" in light of the most recent GDP figures and the information on savings and investments that is currently available. India is thought to be perilously close to the Hindu rate of growth.

- According to the SBI report "Ecowrap," interpreting GDP growth based on noisy quarterly data is a game of smoke and mirror.

- First impressions suggest that the Incremental Capital Output ratio (ICOR), Significantly reducing ICOR in recent years indicates that the economy is stable and implies a comparatively rising level of capital efficiency.

  - ICOR calculates the incremental capital investment needed to generate increased output units.

- Quarterly growth numbers should be avoided for any serious interpretation because they are noisy.

- Future GDP growth rates, even if they are only 7%, might still be considered good by any standard.

Institutions share in % total gross capital formation

- Public sector
- Private sector
- General government
- Household sector
- Valuables and adjustment factor from flow of funds

SBI REPORT ON INVESTMENT AND SAVING

- **Gross capital formation (GCF):** The government's GCF increased from 10.7% in 2020–21 to a high of 11.8% in 2021–2022.

- **Private sector investment:** The private sector's investment also increased as a result, from 10% to 10.8% over the same time period.

- **Gross savings:** Gross savings increased from 29% in 2020–2021 to 30% in 2021–

2022.
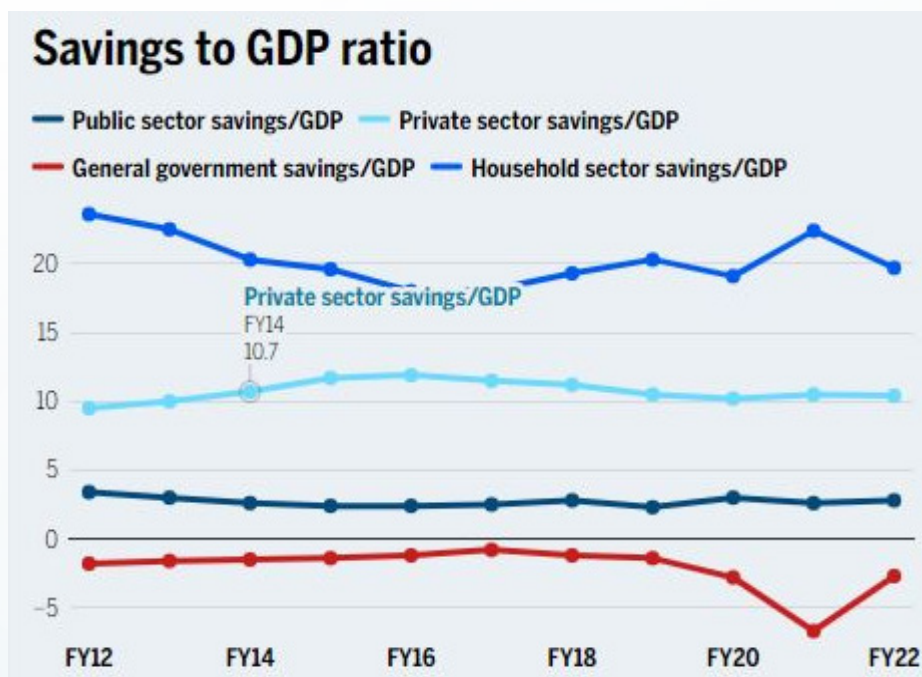
Savings to GDP Ration

CONCLUSION

- The nation is advancing quickly across the board and is eager to compete with the finest in practically every industry.

- India has learned to care for its own in a world where each nation looks out for its own.

- India is currently far from reaching the 3.5% level that is thought to correspond to the Hindu rate of growth.

- It is interesting to note that India had been slowing down for the three years prior to the epidemic and had only seen 3.9% growth the year before Covid.

Source:
Livemint
The Hindu

STAGFLATION

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details Stagflation. Stagflation is an important concept in the Economy and has relevance for UPSC.

Relevance for UPSC CSE
For Prelims:
- *What is Stagflation?*
- *Reasons for the occurrence of Stagflation.*

For Mains:
- *GS 3: Economy*
- *Impact of Stagflation*
- *Measures to control Stagflation*

WHY IN THE NEWS?

- Recent economic developments both domestic and global have cast a dark spell on economic growth across the globe.
- The rising inflation and its negative impact on growth can lead to stagnation in economic growth. The economic data points towards ensuing stagflation that can drown major economies across the globe.

WHAT IS STAGFLATION?

- The term "stagflation" was indeed coined by Iain Macleod, a Conservative Party MP in the United Kingdom, in November 1965.
- Stagflation is a word composed of Stagnation and Inflation. Stagflation is a relationship that shows the coupling of high inflation and stagnation of economic growth. Both the parameters of inflation and stagnation have an impact on unemployment prospects. Stagflation is a concern for policymakers because actions to lower inflation can lead to low growth and high unemployment.

Thus in a nutshell, Stagflation is an economic cycle that is characterized by slow economic growth, high unemployment rates, and high inflation. Stagflation presents a challenging situation for policymakers because attempts to address one issue may worsen another.
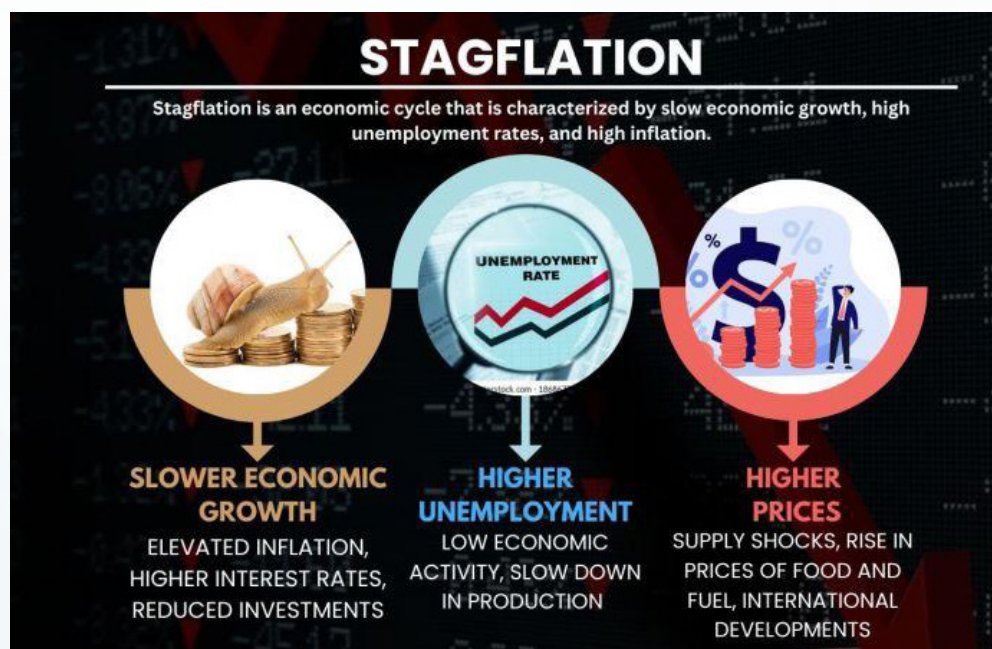
WHY THERE ARE FEARS OF STAGFLATION?

- **Retail inflation crossing the tolerance limit:** The retail inflation recorded in February was at **44%** which is outside the RBI's inflation limits of 2-6 percent.

- **Core inflation stuck around 6 percent**: Core inflation which is the inflation excluding fuel and food prices stands high. The core inflation recorded in February was 6.2. It has hovered nearly 6 percent since May 2021. 2%

- **Prediction of a likely El Niño this year:** The weather uncertainty can hurt the food supply. Any kind of loss or below-normal production can drive food prices high which can further lead to inflation.

- **Monetary tightening and low credit growth:** The Central banks across the words have raised the policy rates to reign in inflation. This can lead to low credit growth which can further dampen growth prospects.

- **High fuel prices:** Fuel prices have a multiplier effect on the prices of commodities in the economy. This can lead to inflation.

WHAT ARE THE FACTORS? (ECONOMIC SURVEY 2022-23)

1. **Global Economic Recovery impeded by the Russia-Ukraine conflict:** The global economic recovery was happening until the Russia-Ukraine conflict broke out. The effect of the Russia-Ukraine conflict was:

- **Broken Supply Chains:** The conflict disrupted the restoration of the supply chains which were broken by the lockdown and limited trade.

- **Rise in prices of critical commodities**: The conflict raised prices of essential commodities like such as crude oil, natural gas, fertilizers, and wheat.

- **Rise in Inflation:** The rise in prices of critical commodities accompanied by the fiscal stimuli given by the governments to push growth (fiscal stimuli and expansionary monetary policies) led to inflationary pressures.

2. **Role of Central Banks:** Central Banks across the world have been hiking policy rates and absorbing liquidity synchronously. The rise in inflation and subsequent monetary tightening by the central banks led:

- **Rise in bond yields:** The rise in bond yields led to the outflow of equity capital from most of the economies around the world into the traditionally safe-haven market of the US.

- **Strong US dollar:** The capital flight subsequently led to the strengthening of the US Dollar against other currencies.

- **Impact of depreciation of currencies on local economies:** The consequent depreciation of other currencies has been widening the Current Account Deficit and increasing inflationary pressures in the net importing economies.

WHAT ARE THE MEASURES TO CONTROL STAGFLATION?

There is no single remedy to control inflation but a combination of measures can be adopted to deal with Stagflation :

- **Contractionary Monetary Policy to control stagflation:** The central bank can use a contractionary monetary policy to control inflation by raising interest rates. This can reduce demand in the economy, which can help to lower prices and control inflation. But this also has the danger to reduce consumption and investments resulting in Stagflation. Stagflation can lead to slower economic growth and may give rise to unemployment.

3. **Impact of Contractionary Monetary Policy:** Monetary tightening is a contraction monetary policy in which a central bank raises (RBI in the case of India) interest rates and deposit ratios to make credit less easily available. It is done to absorb ex-

cess liquidity and cool down inflation. Rise in interest rates by Central Banks → Rise in borrowing costs → Stress on public and private debt and reduced investments → Fear of Stagflation

- **Fiscal Policy to control stagflation::** The government can use fiscal policy to stimulate economic growth and reduce unemployment. This can be achieved through measures such as increasing government spending, cutting taxes, and providing subsidies to businesses. However, these measures can also lead to an increase in inflation.

- **Supply-side Policies to control stagflation::** The government can use supply-side policies to improve the productivity of the economy, which can help to reduce costs and control inflation. This can be achieved through cutting excise duties on fuel, a buffer stock of food, capital investments to drive growth, etc.

- **Wage and Price Controls to control stagflation:** The government can implement wage and price controls to directly control inflation.

Source:
The Hindu

Semiconductors Manufacturing

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details Semiconductors Manufacturing. The government has been pushing semiconductors manufacturing through various schemes like PLI etc. The topic "Semiconductors Manufacturing" has relevance in the Science and Technology section for the UPSC CSE exam.

RELEVANCE OF SEMICONDUCTORS MANUFACTURING FOR UPSC-CSE

For Prelims:

- *What are semiconductors?*

- *Types of semiconductors*

- *Details of the Production linked Incentive (PLI) scheme*

For Mains:

- *GS 3: Science and Technology*

- *Role of PLI scheme to augment Semiconductor manufacturing in India.*

WHY IN THE NEWS?

As a means to attract more of the electronics supply chain to India, the Union Government has distributed approximately ₹1,645 crores in performance-linked incentives (PLI) to electronics manufacturers up to this point. Semiconductors are an important part of the electronics industry.

WHAT ARE SEMICONDUCTORS?

Semiconductors are materials that have electrical conductivity between that of a conductor and an insulator. They are used in a wide range of electronic devices and are essential components of modern electronics.

Semiconductors can be pure elements like silicon or germanium, or they can be compounds like gallium arsenide or cadmium selenide. These materials are carefully chosen for their specific properties to perform various functions in electronic devices.
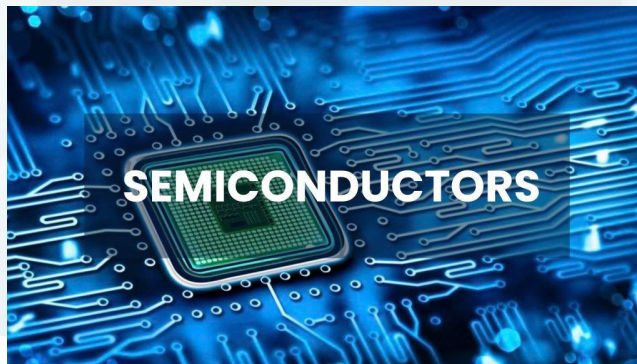
Semiconductors

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF SEMICONDUCTORS IN THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY?

Semiconductors play a critical role in the electronic industry. They are a foundational element in the electronics industry:

- **Fabrication of electronic devices:** They are used to create electronic components such as transistors, diodes, and integrated circuits, which are essential building blocks for electronic devices like computers, smartphones, televisions, and many other consumer electronics.

- **Control the flow of current:** They are used to control the flow of electrical current, which makes them ideal for switching and amplifying electronic signals.

- **Use as sensors:** They can also be used as sensors to detect light, temperature, pressure, and other physical properties.

- **Use in solar cells:** They are used in solar cells to convert sunlight into electrical energy, and in LEDs (light-emitting diodes) to produce light.

Semiconductor

WHY IS THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT FOCUSSING ON SEMICONDUCTORS MANUFACTURING?

- **Promote domestic manufacturing of electronics:** The Indian government is focusing on semiconductor manufacturing as a part of its broader strategy to promote domestic manufacturing as major electronic devices use semiconductors.

- **Reduce the country's dependence on imports:** China is an important semiconductor manufacturing country. India sources its requirements for semiconductors from China. In order to lower the trade deficit and reduce dependence, the Indian government is making a push.

- **Reduce supply chain disruptions:** India being an importing nation is vulnerable to supply chain disruptions caused as a result of trade tensions or geopolitical conflicts.

- **Create self-sufficiency and self-reliance:** This is an effort towards AtmaNirbhar Bharat to attain self-sufficiency in products and processes.

- **Create Employment opportunities:** It is a high-tech and capital-intensive industry that offers high-value job opportunities and generates significant economic benefits.

- **Augment Exports:** India can become a leader in semiconductor manufacturing that can be exported to other countries. This not only earns foreign exchange but also creates a durable market.

- **Create a thriving ecosystem:** The Indian government hopes to attract investments, boost innovation and R&D, and create a thriving semiconductor industry in the country.

- **Drive economic growth:** All the above processes of growth, employment, and exports can drive higher economic growth.

WHAT ARE GOVERNMENT SCHEMES TO PROMOTE SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING?

The Indian government has launched several schemes and initiatives to promote semiconductors manufacturing in the country. Here are some of the notable ones:

- **Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for the electronics industry:** It offers incentives to eligible companies that manufacture electronic components and semiconductors in India. The scheme aims to promote domestic manufacturing, reduce import dependence, and increase exports. Under this scheme, the government has allocated a budget of INR 41,000 crore over five years, starting from 2020-21.

- **National Policy on Electronics (NPE):** The NPE is a comprehensive policy framework that aims to make India a global hub for electronics manufacturing. The policy was first introduced in 2012 and was revised in 2019. The policy outlines a roadmap for the development of the electronics industry in the country, with a focus on semiconductors manufacturing.

- **Modified Special Incentive Package Scheme (M-SIPS):** The M-SIPS was launched in 2012 and offers financial incentives to eligible companies that invest in the electronics industry in India. The scheme provides subsidies for capital expenditure, interest on loans, and reimbursement of certain taxes and duties. The M-SIPS scheme has been extended until 2023.

- **Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC) scheme:** The EMC scheme was launched in 2012 and aims to create world-class infrastructure for electronics manufacturing in the country. The scheme provides financial assistance for the establishment of greenfield EMCs and the upgradation of existing industrial estates.

Source:

Semiconductor.org

The Hindu

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The Civil Services exam has a very broad syllabus and aspirants are very apprehensive about one subject that is not only vast but needs to be covered very strategically, i.e., Current Affairs. Current Affairs is a compulsory part of all the govt. exams especially in UPSC- CSE prelims and mains. Hence, keeping updated about news & events, also maintaining notes of Current Affairs are highly advised to the UPSC aspirants.

Though it is very important to know about the major news and important events happening around the world but also more important is to be able to critically analyze the news, examine the facts and judge it from different points of view and form an independent opinion, while preparing for Civil Services.

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