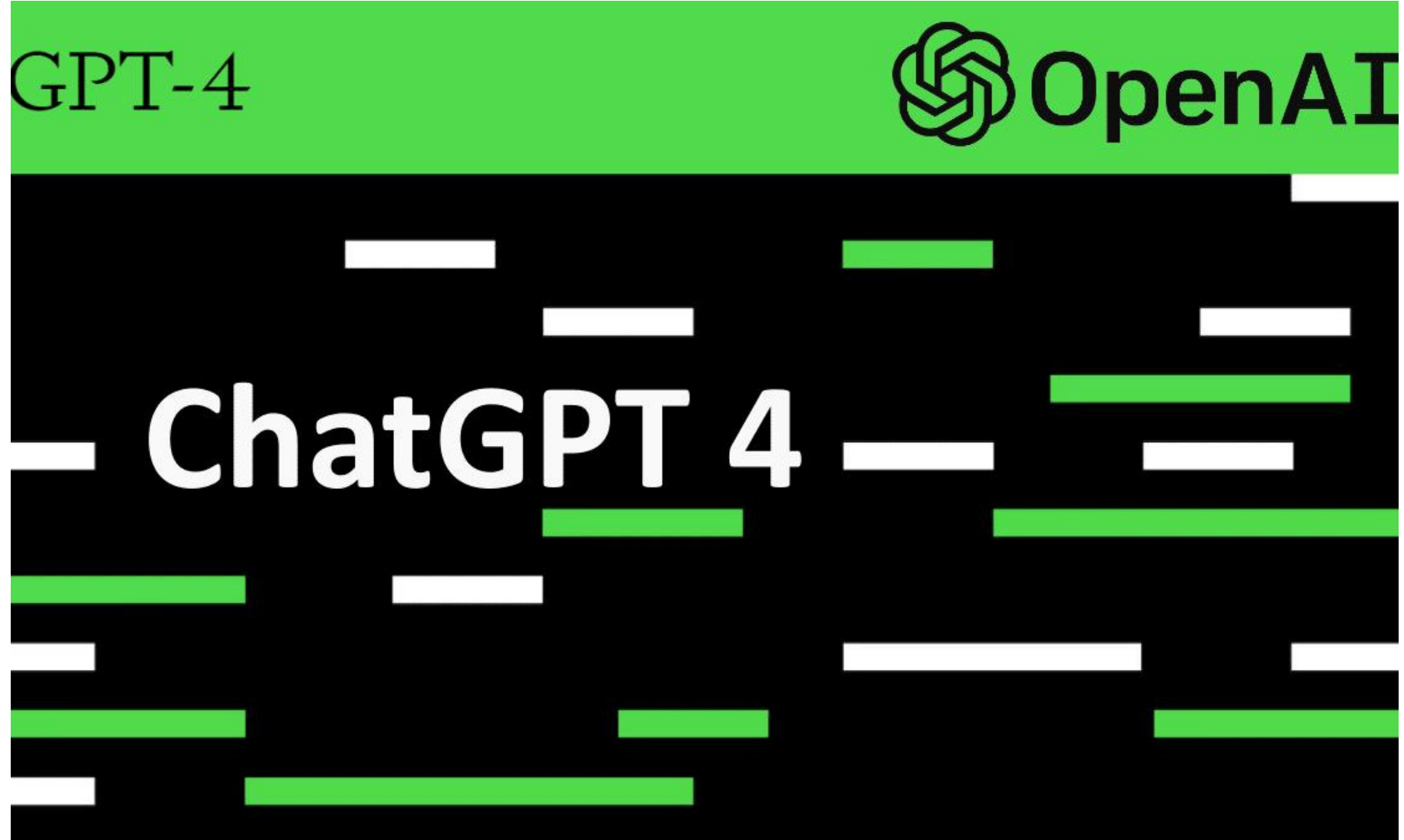


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General Studies I: Modern Indian History

ALLURI SITARAMA RAJU AND KOMARAM BHEEM

1. Context

With a win for Best Original Song for "Naatu Naatu" at the 2023 Oscars, the Telugu Movie "RRR" is garnering attention on the global stage.

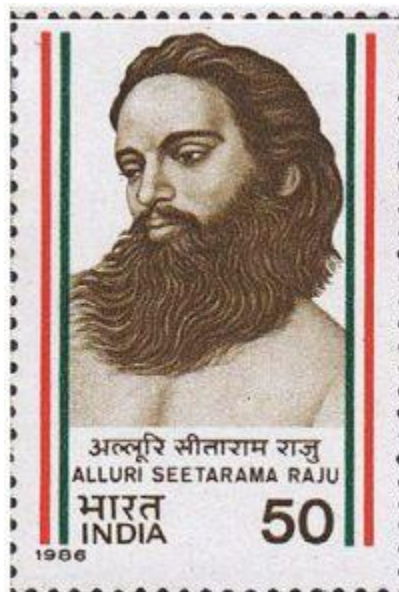
2. Key Points

- Its story and characters have roots in real historical figures, inspired by the lives of Indian Freedom fighters Alluri Sitharama Raju and Komaram Bheem.
- Both men were 20th Century revolutionaries who led tribal people in present-day Andhra Pradesh against the British and the Nizams.
- Bheem was a tribal man but Raju was not. Both leaders died young while resisting colonial rule.
- Raju and Bheem, along with Ramji Gaur, as prominent leaders who stood against the Nizams.
- RRR shows the two freedom fighters' lives and friendships in a fictionalised manner, as there is no record of them ever having met in real life.
- The film spans the period before they joined the freedom struggle.

3. About Alluri Sitharama Raju

- Raju is believed to have been born in Andhra Pradesh in 1897 or 1898.
- He is said to have become a sanyasi at the age of 18 and gained a mystical aura among the hill and tribal peoples with his austerity, knowledge of astrology and medicine and his ability to tame wild animals.

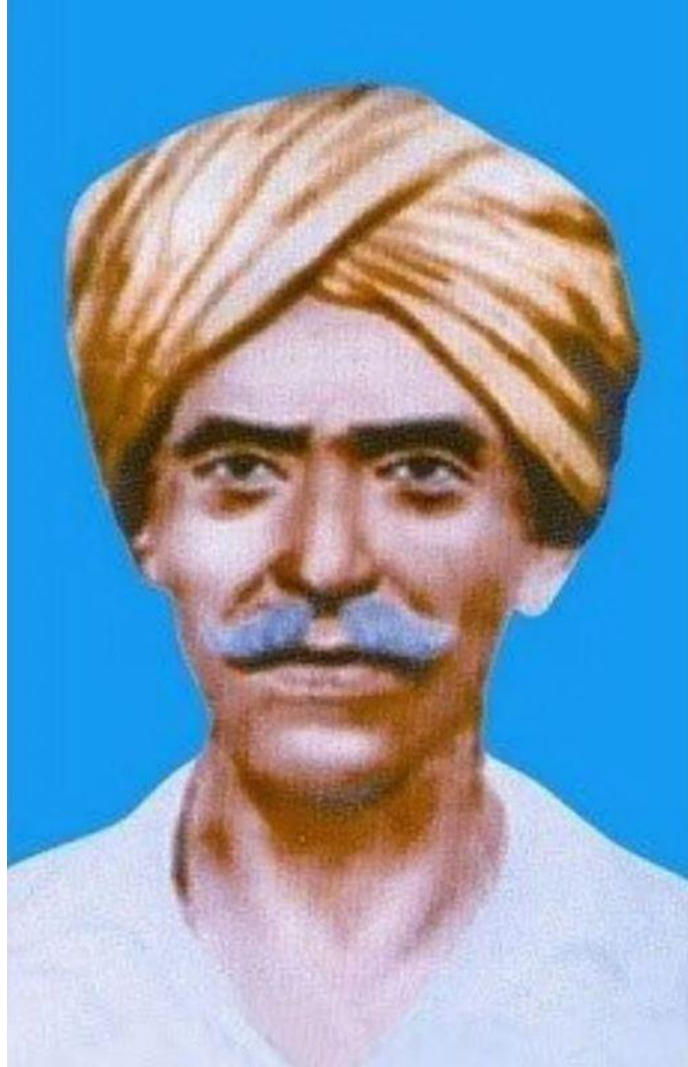
- At a very young age, Raju channelled the discontent of the hill people in Ganjam, Visakhapatnam and Godavari into an effective guerrilla resistance against the British.
- Colonial rule threatened the tribal's traditional **podu (shifting) cultivation**, as the government sought to secure forest lands.
- **The Forest Act of 1882** banned the collection of minor forest produce such as roots and leaves and tribal people were forced into labour by the colonial government.
- While the tribals were subjected to exploitation by muttadars, and village headmen commissioned by the colonial government to extract rent, the new laws and systems threatened their way of life itself.
- Strong anti-government sentiment, shared by the muttadars who were aggrieved by the curtailment of their powers by the British, exploded into armed resistance in August 1922.
- Several hundred tribals led by Raju attacked the Chintapalle, Krishnadevipeta and Rajavommangi police stations in the Godavari agency.
- **The Rampa or Manyam Rebellion** continued in the form of a guerrilla war until May 1924, when Raju, the Charismatic "**Manyam Veerudu**" or Hero of the Jungle, was finally captured and executed.
- The Rampa Rebellion coincided with Mahatma Gandhi's **Non-Cooperation Movement**.



The NCERT history textbook notes that "Raju talked of the greatness of Mahatma Gandhi and said he was inspired by the Non-Cooperation Movement and persuaded people to wear khadi and give up drinking. But at the same time, he asserted that India could be liberated only by the use of force, not non-violence".

4. About Komaram Bheem

- Komram Bheem was born in the Gond Tribal community at Sankepally village in Komarambheem District, renamed after him in 2016.
- It is said a jagirdar, who was an informer of the Nizam, occupied his family's land and Bheem killed him in a fit of rage.
- To escape authorities, he went to Assam and worked as a labourer in coffee and tea plantations for five years.
- Though he was illiterate, he learned to read and write and later became aware of movements by the likes of Birsa Munda.
- Around that time, the Nizam government used to collect tax in the name of "**Bambram**" and "**Dupapetti**" from people grazing cattle and collecting firewood for cooking.
- In opposition, Bheem spread the message of "**Jal, Jangal, Zameen**" (Water, forest, land) among tribal people.
- This has become a clarion call for indigenous people's rights to natural resources, used in many parts of India to date.
- Villages in Adilabad were ready with the help of a guerrilla army composed of Gond and Koya Communities men. Bheem trained tribal people to fight with weapons.
- However, Nizam's army overwhelmed them and Bheem died at their hands in the Jodeghat forest.



5. Presence in culture

- In 1986, the Indian Postal Department issued a stamp in honour of Raju and his contribution to India's struggle for Independence.
- Raju and Bheem both have long been folk heroes in the region and the 1974 Telugu film Alluri Seetarama Raju became very popular.
- The 1990 Telugu film "**Komaram Bheem**" was also well-received.

6. Political Claims

- In May 2022, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a 30-foot-tall bronze statue of Alluri Sitarama Raju at Bhimavaram in Andhra Pradesh in the year-long celebration of the freedom fighter's 125th Birth anniversary began.
- On the occasion of Raju's 122nd birth Anniversary in 2019, the government of Y S Jagan Mohan Reedy announced the naming of a district after him, acceding to a longstanding demand of the tribal population of Andhra Pradesh.
- The district of Alluri Sitarama Raju came into being on April 4 last year, made up of Paderu and Rampachodavaram of the existing districts of Visakhapatnam and East Godavari respectively.

General studies I: Indian Society

KATTUNAYAKAN TRIBE

1. Context

The Elephant Whisperers, which won an Oscar for Best documentary, depicts the story of the Kattunayakan tribe of the Western Ghats.

2. About Kattunayakan Tribe

- Kattunayakan (Kattunayakar), is one of the 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) of India and can mainly be found in parts of Tamil Nadu and Kerala (Nilgiris and surrounding region).
- The Kattunayakan are a tribal people who live in south India. Their name means "chiefs of the forest."
- They are believed to be among the earliest inhabitants of south India. Their main livelihood is collecting and selling honey.
- They hunt fish and collect forest products to eat and sell. The Kattunayakan are a scheduled caste meaning they are eligible for special consideration for public jobs and college admission.
- The Kattunayakan is one of the few tribal peoples of India who still live as hunter-gatherers.

- The literacy rate is very low for both men and women. They practice traditional medicine and live without modern conveniences like electricity and indoor plumbing.

3. What are their lives like?

- The Kattunayakan live much like their ancestors have for hundreds of years.
- The Kattunayakan likes to live in separate family dwellings of about ten people. A council of elders makes decisions for the family groups.
- Honey plays a special role in their lives. They eat it, use it for medicine and trade it for things they need.
- The Kattunayakan can climb 20-30 meter trees in search of honey. One hive can yield over 25 pounds of honey.
- They get so many bee stings that their bodies develop immunity. Their main competition is bears, which they sometimes have to fight off to get the honey.
- The Kattunayakan are known for their dancing and singing. They pass on their history and customs through song and dance. The Kattunayakan are monogamous with girls marrying when they reach puberty.

4. Religious affiliation

- The Kattunayakan practice folk religion with some elements of Hinduism.
- Their main god is a form of Shiva, the destroyer. They are animists who believe that spirits inhabit rocks, trees, rivers, snakes, and other animals.
- The Kattunayakan believe in magic which many of their women practice. They perform rituals to protect themselves from evil spirits.
- They honor and venerate their ancestors. A small number of Kattunayakan have become Christians.

5. PVTGs (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups)

- Tribal communities are often identified by some specific signs such as primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness to contact with the community at large, and backwardness.
- Along with these, some tribal groups have some specific features such as dependency on hunting, gathering for food, having a pre-agriculture level of

technology, zero or negative growth of population, and an extremely low level of literacy. These groups are called Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.

- In 1973, the Dhebar Commission created Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) as a separate category, which are less developed among the tribal groups.
- In 2006, the Government of India renamed the PTGs as PVTGs. In this context, in 1975, the Government of India initiated to identify the most vulnerable tribal groups as a separate category called PVTGs and declared 52 such groups, while in 1993 an additional 23 groups were added to the category, making it a total of 75 PVTGs out of 705 Scheduled Tribes.
- PVTGs have some basic characteristics - they are mostly homogenous, with a small population, relatively physically isolated, absence of written language, relatively simple technology, and a slower rate of change, etc.
- Among the 75 listed PVTGs, the highest number are found in Odisha.

6. How they are identified?

- The government of India designed a procedure to identify PVTGs.
- Based on Pre-Agricultural level of Technology, Low level of literacy, Economic Backwardness, and a declining or stagnant population.
- According to the procedure, the state governments or UT governments submit proposals to the Central Ministry of Tribal Welfare for the identification of PVTGs.
- After ensuring the criteria are fulfilled, the Central Ministry selects those groups as PVTGs.

7. Schemes for PVTGs in India

- The Scheme for Development of Primitive Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), came into effect on April 1, 2008.
- The Scheme defines PVTGs as the most vulnerable among the Scheduled Tribes and the Scheme, therefore, seeks to prioritize their protection and development.
- It identifies 75 PVTGs. The Scheme seeks to adopt a holistic approach to the socio-economic development of PVTGs and gives state governments flexibility in planning initiatives that are geared towards the specific socio-cultural imperatives of the specific groups at hand.

- Activities supported under the scheme include housing, land distribution, land development, agricultural development, cattle development, construction of link roads, installation of non-conventional sources of energy, social security, etc.
- Funds are made available only for activities essential for the survival, protection, and development of PVTGs and are not already funded by any other Scheme of the central/state governments.
- Each state and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands administration is required to prepare a long-term Conservation-cum-Development (CCD) plan, valid for a period of five years for each PVTG within its territory, outlining the initiatives it will undertake, financial planning for the same and the agencies charged with the responsibility of undertaking the same.
- The CCD Plan is approved by an Expert Committee, appointed by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. The Scheme is then funded entirely by the Central government.

General Studies II: International relations

JAPAN-SOUTH KOREA SUMMIT

1. Context

South Korean and Japanese leaders will meet in Tokyo this week, hoping to resume regular visits after a gap of over a decade and overcome resentments that date back more than 100 years.

2. Key points

- The two major Asian economies and U.S. allies have long hoped to cooperate on shared security concerns about China and North Korea, but previous rounds of diplomacy have foundered on unresolved issues from Japan's 35-year occupation of the Korean Peninsula.
- Seoul has offered Tokyo concessions on South Korean demands for compensation over wartime forced labour, but it remains to be seen whether the South Korean public will accept reconciliation.

3. Issues

- Japan effectively colonized the Korean Peninsula between 1910 and 1945, in a regime that imposed Japanese names and language on Koreans and conscripted many into forced labour or forced prostitution in military brothels before and during World War II.
- Japan paid \$800 million in reparations to South Korea's military-run government in 1965, but this money was never distributed to victims.
- A semi-government fund offered compensation to former "**comfort women**" when the government apologized in 1995, but many South Koreans believe that the Japanese government must take more direct responsibility for the occupation.
- The two sides also have a longstanding territorial dispute over a group of islands controlled by South Korea and claimed by Japan.
- Seoul and Tokyo have attempted to establish better ties before.
- In 2004, leaders began regular visits but these ended in 2012 after South Korean President Lee Myung-bak visited the disputed islands.
- Tensions escalated in the past 10 years as conservative Japanese governments moved to rearm the country while stepping up attempts to whitewash Japan's wartime atrocities and in 2018 South Korea's Supreme Court ordered Japan's Nippon Steel and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries to compensate forced labour victims.
- In 2019, Japan, in apparent retaliation, placed export controls on chemicals used to make semiconductors and displays used in smartphones and other high-tech devices.

4. Expectations at the Summit

- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida have met in multilateral settings, including on the sidelines of a United Nations meeting in New York in September, this is the first formal bilateral summit since a meeting in Seoul in 2015.
- Kishida is expected to reaffirm Japan's past expressions of remorse over its wartime actions.
Both sides have signalled hopes that this summit will lead to a resumption of regular bilateral visits.

- Tokyo is also considering an invitation to Yoon to return to Japan as an observer at the Group of Seven Summits Kishida will host in Hiroshima in May.
- Two sides are considering establishing a separate, private fund to promote bilateral economy, security, culture and other key areas of cooperation.

5. The stake in the region

- Improved ties between South Korea and Japan could pave the way for the two U.S. allies to cooperate more closely on shared security concerns related to China and North Korea.
- Washington is eager to get its allies on the same page and appears to have worked intensively to bring about the summit.
- The U.S. and its two allies had about 40 trilateral meetings and cooperation in the process helped to build up trust.
- While Japan increasingly bolstered defence ties with the U.K., Australia, India and the Philippines, challenges in Japan-South Korea relations were obvious and their closer relationship in the larger context of strategic alignment is a very big deal.
- South Korean officials have denied direct pressure from the Biden administration to resolve the historical discord with Tokyo, but the plan is part of the South Korean efforts to strengthen alliances to counter North Korea, which has been expanding nuclear-capable missiles and issuing threats of preemptive nuclear strikes.
- While pushing to expand U.S.-South Korea joint military exercises, the Yoon government has sought Washington's stronger reassurances to swiftly and decisively use its nuclear weapons to protect its ally from North Korea.
- Seoul and Tokyo last week also announced plans for talks to restore the country's trade relations, which could relieve pressure from global high-tech supply chains.
- South Korean officials say stronger economic cooperation with Tokyo has become more crucial in the face of industrial supply chain disruptions and other global challenges.
- The need to strengthen South Korea-Japan cooperation has never been greater in the era of complex crises, brought by uncertainties in global geopolitics, North Korea's continued nuclear and missile testing activity and the disruption in industrial supply chains.

6. Japan South Korean history

- The two countries will have to find an accommodation on history if this round of diplomacy is to achieve lasting results.
- Seoul made a significant concession before the summit, announcing plans to use its funds to pay out compensation from the 2018 court order.
- South Korea will offer reparations to the plaintiffs through an existing state-run foundation that will raise money from South Korean companies that benefited from the 1965 accord accompanied by \$800 million in economic aid and loans from Tokyo to Seoul.
- It's a major relief for Tokyo, which fears that further South Korean court orders could impose massive compensation demands on hundreds of other Japanese companies that used wartime forced labour.
- The plan has met fierce opposition from surviving forced labour victims, their supporters and opposition politicians, who have demanded compensation directly from Japanese companies and a fresh apology from Tokyo.
- Only three of the 15 forced labour victims who won damages in 2018 are still alive and all three refused to accept South Korean Payments in written notes submitted to the foundation.
- South Korean law allows for third-party reimbursements and officials said that they will do their best to persuade the victims to accept the payments.
- South Korean officials say they do not expect Nippon Steel or Mitsubishi to immediately contribute to funds for the forced labour victims and Japan's Foreign Minister said it's up to Japanese companies to decide whether to contribute to the funds voluntarily.
- The future of the deal may also rest on whether Kishida's government can win over South Korean Public opinion.
- South Korean officials express hope that Yoon brings back a "**Sincere response**" from Tokyo as bilateral relations improve.

GLOBAL SOUTH

1. Context

As India assumed the presidency of the G20 group of countries for 2022 to 2023, Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said that the country would be the “voice of the Global South, which is otherwise under-represented in such forums. The term has since been used multiple times, such as ongoing global conflicts, “polarisation may occur elsewhere, the people who suffer most are the Global South”.

‘**Global North**’ refers loosely to countries like the US, Canada, Europe, Russia, Australia and New Zealand, while ‘**Global South**’ includes countries in Asia, Africa and South America.

2. The need for the ‘Global North’ and the ‘Global South

- For a long time in the study of international political systems, the method of categorising countries into broad categories for easier analysis has existed.
- The concepts of ‘**East**’ and ‘**West**’ is one example of this, with the Western countries generally signifying greater levels of economic development and prosperity among their people and Eastern countries are considered as being in the process of that transition.
- Another similar categorisation is of **First World, Second World and Third World countries**, referring to countries associated with the **Cold war-era alliances** of the US, the USSR, and non-aligned countries, respectively.
- At the centre of these concepts is the World Systems approach introduced by sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein in 1974, emphasising an interconnected perspective of looking at world politics.
- He said there are three major zones of production: **core, peripheral and semiperipheral**.
- The core zones reap profits, being the owners of cutting-edge technologies in countries like the US or Japan.
- Peripheral zones, on the other hand, engage in less sophisticated production that is more labour-intensive. In the middle are countries like India and Brazil.

3. The need for new terms

- In the **Post-Cold War world**, the **First World/Third World classification** was no longer feasible, because when the Communist USSR disintegrated in

1991, most countries had no choice but to ally at some level with the capitalist US the only remaining global superpower.

- Other classifiers have also seen criticism. The East/West binary was seen as often perpetuating stereotypical thinking about African and Asian countries.
- Categorising incredibly diverse countries into a monolith was felt to be too simplistic.

Also, the idea that some countries were '**developed**' while others were not was thought to be too wide a classification, inadequate for accurately discussing concerns.

Writing in 2014 from the perspective of his organisation's philanthropic activities, Bill Gates said of the '**developing**' tag, "Any category that lumps China and the Democratic Republic of Congo together confuses more than it clarifies. Some so-called developing countries have come so far that it's fair to say they have developed. A handful of failed states are hardly developing at all. Most countries are somewhere in the middle."

4. Importance of Global South

- What sets the terms Global North and South apart are that first, they are arguably more accurate in grouping like countries together, measuring similarly in terms of wealth, indicators of education and healthcare, etc.
- Another commonality between the South countries is that most have a history of colonisation, largely at the hands of European powers.
- Secondly, this classification trains more focus on the Global South. When leaders such as Jaishankar mentioned, they are also pointing to the region's historical exclusion from prominent international organisations such as the permanent members of the **United Nations Security Council**.
- As bodies like the **UN and the IMF** are involved in major decision-making that affects the world in terms of politics, economy and society, the exclusion is seen by these countries as contributing to their slower growth.
- As a result, the idea that the South can together advocate for common causes has come up, as underlined by the External Affairs Minister.

Interestingly, when Jaishankar criticised the expectation of India to take a stance on the Ukraine war and rebuke Russia in June this year, China's state-owned newspaper Global Times praised the comments. This is where the idea of **'SouthSouth' cooperation** comes in.

- Why the concept is being reiterated now partly because of the economic emergence of some of these South countries, such as India and China, in the last few decades.
- Many consider the world to now be multipolar rather than one where the US alone dominates international affairs.
- The progress achieved by many Asian countries is also seen as challenging the idea that the North is ideal.
- As Samuel P Huntington wrote in his 1996 book 'The Class of Civilizations and the Remaking of Global Order, "East Asians attribute their dramatic economic development not to their import of Western culture but rather to their adherence to their own culture."

5. Criticism of the classification

- Some of the earlier terms' criticisms apply here, too, such as the argument that the term is too broad.
- In the ongoing debate about North countries paying for funding green energy, having historically contributed to higher carbon emissions, many in the Global North have objected to China and India's exclusion from this, given their increasing industrialisation.
- There is also the question of whether the South simply aims to replace the North and the positions it occupies, again continuing a cycle in which a few countries accumulate crucial resources.
- Much controversy currently surrounds the question of whether elites of the global South and **'rising powers'** genuinely have the intention to challenge the dominant structures of global capitalist development.
- In the rise of Asia, the continued neglect of Africa has been questioned as well.
- China is increasingly making inroads here through the Belt and Road Initiative for developing infrastructure.
- But whether that results in a win-win situation for both parties or focuses on profit for only China remains to be seen.

HOW THE APARTHEID OF SOUTH AFRICA ENDED

1.Context

On March 17, 1992, a referendum on ending apartheid was held in South Africa. While this referendum was restricted to only white voters, there was overwhelming support to end South Africa's highly discriminatory policies towards its non-white population.

Out of the 2,804,947 valid votes counted, almost 69 per cent voted "Yes" to end the apartheid. Only one out of 15 regions recorded a majority 'No' vote Pietersburg in the strongly conservative northern Transvaal and even there it was by 49,820 votes to 37,612



2.Background

- Afrikaans word for "separateness" or "the state of being apart", the apartheid officially began in 1948
- While in principle, it did not significantly differ from long-standing policies of segregation, it instituted this segregation as law and a "fundamental truth" of South Africa, at a time when progress was being made around the world to address racism

- Classifying citizens into one of four racial groups: black, Indian, coloured (mixed race) and white apartheid made it illegal for South Africans to pursue interracial relations
- It also introduced rigorous segregation according to race, establishing residential and business sections in urban areas for each race
- This led to millions of Black South Africans being forcefully displaced from their homes and confined to tribal homelands (Bantustans) according to ethnicity
- Effectively, over 80 per cent of South African land was owned by the white minority, which comprised around 20 per cent of the total population
- Furthermore, black South Africans were denied political and economic rights, essentially being reduced to cheap labour for the Whites
- These policies were justified within the white population not just with prevailing ideologies of white supremacy, but also by playing into the fears of the white minority
- PW Botha, South Africa's last pro-apartheid prime minister: "If the principle of permanent residence for the Black man in the area of the white is accepted, then it is the beginning of the end of civilization as we know it in this country,"

3. History of Resistance

- Resistance to racism in South Africa pre-dates apartheid. As far back as the 1880s, the Imbumba ya Manyama (Union of Blacks) was formed, articulating an African identity that transcended tribalism
- However, perhaps the most famous political organisation resisting white domination was the African National Congress (ANC)
- Formed in 1912, it started as a movement led by the elite Blacks to oppose their disenfranchisement post the creation of the Union
- The ANC started off as an organisation which expressed demands through petitions and polite dialogue. But as the oppression got more brutal, their methods changed
- In 1949, the ANC introduced its Programme of Action, supporting strike action, protests and other forms of nonviolent resistance. . Nelson Mandela became an important figure at this time
- In 1952, the Defiance Campaign was started, calling people to break apartheid laws on purpose and offer themselves for arrest

- It was hoped such large-scale defiance would overwhelm government institutions and bring international censure
- In the late 1950s, a group within the ANC, including Mandela, also called upon more violent methods



- However, none of these was able to bring significant concessions for black South Africans Resistance was met with increasing repression
- In Sharpeville in 1960, during a large demonstration, the police opened fire and killed at least 69 black South Africans and wounded many more
- In the aftermath of the massacre, the government declared a state of emergency and arrested more than 18,000 people, including prominent black leaders

- Mandela was arrested in 1962 and sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of sabotage and conspiracy to violently overthrow the government. He had the next 27 years in prison.
- In 1976, students in Soweto took to the streets to protest against the imposition of Afrikaans as the only language of instruction
- Police opened fire on protestors. According to official reports, 23 people were killed, but the number of people who died is usually given as 176, with estimates of up to 700
- The Soweto Uprising was followed by a series of brutal crackdowns on resisting organisations

4. Movement for Multi-racial democracy

- By the 1980s, anti-apartheid forces were largely united around a nonviolent resistance that could achieve maximum participation among non-whites and bring international pressure on the government
- Given the sheer power imbalance military, economic and political between the whites and blacks, this was seen as the only way to bring meaningful change
- Leaders like Archbishop Desmond Tutu became very popular not just among blacks but also among white South Africans during this period
- The latter half of the 1980s saw some of the largest and most impactful protests yet, with mass non-cooperation and strikes organised
- In addition to this, resistors also created alternative community-based institutions – such as community clinics and legal resource centres – to replace discriminatory government institutions
- Through direct confrontation and effective community institution building, by the late 1980s, the South African government had lost significant authority and legitimacy
- This culminated in the 1989 Defiance Campaign with multiracial peace marches across the country, including in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban
- De Klerk came to power in 1989. A staunch conservative in his early days, people expected him to continue the apartheid, even as international pressure and internal resistance mounted
- However, in 1990, in a speech to the parliament, de Klerk announced that “the time to negotiate has arrived”

- He lifted bans on political parties such as the ANC, freed thousands of prisoners including Mandela, and lifted the state of emergency that had been imposed amidst rising protests in the 1980s
- On March 17, 1992, a referendum among the white South African population ushered in a new era in South Africa, once and for all
- While systemic disadvantages continue to impact black South Africans, an era of political freedom and legal equality was instituted in 1992

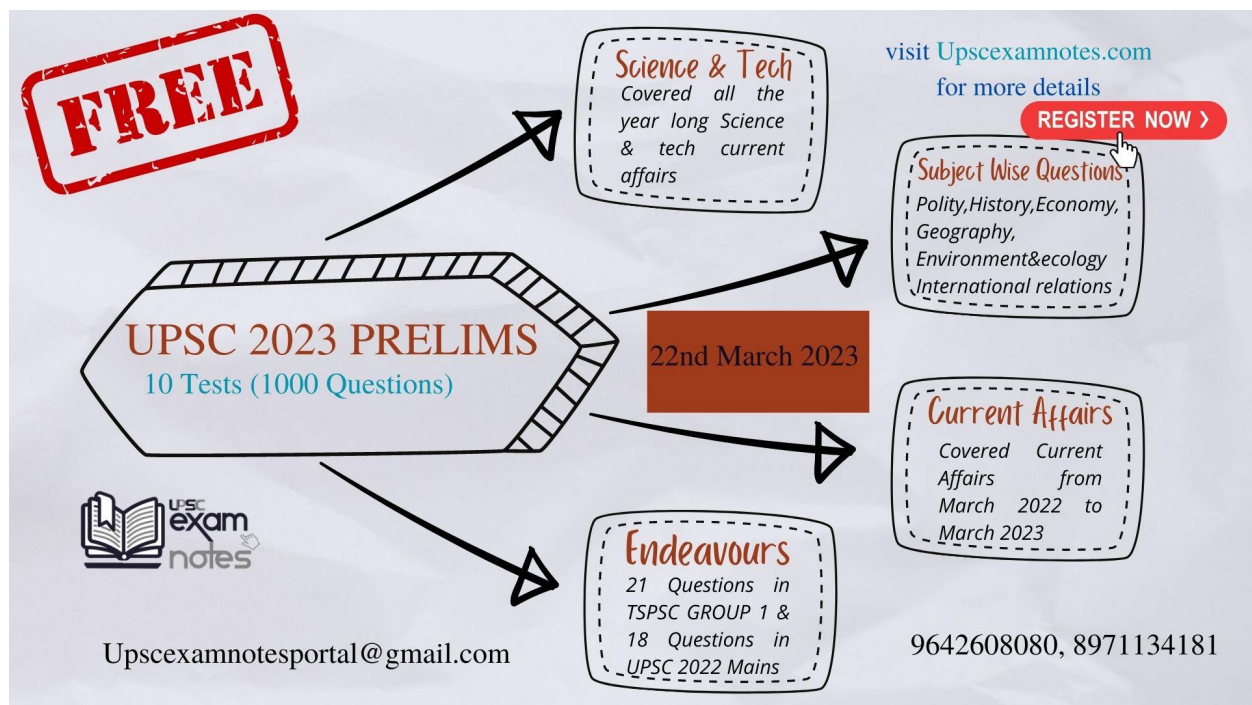
5. Conclusion

It is important to note that while de Klerk is remembered as the man who ushered in the Apartheid's end, he did it for pragmatic rather than idealistic reasons

In fact, de Klerk has been accused of overseeing some of the most horrific police excesses against protesters during his regime

But years of internal protest, often violent, had ushered in deep divisions in white South Africa, weakening the white commitment to apartheid

Furthermore, international cultural and economic sanctions continued to have a major impact on the country which was also suffering economically



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McMAHON LINE

1.Context

Two United States Senators, a Republican and a Democrat, have **introduced a bipartisan resolution** in the upper chamber of Congress reiterating that the US recognises the McMahon Line as the international boundary between China and India in Arunachal Pradesh

The resolution reaffirms India's well-known and established position that Arunachal Pradesh, which **China calls 'South Tibet'**, is an integral part of India.



2.Key takeaways

At a time when China continues to pose grave and gathering threats to the Free and Open Indo-Pacific, it is critical for the United States to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our strategic partners in the region, especially India

This bipartisan resolution expresses the Senate's support for unequivocally recognising the state of Arunachal Pradesh as an integral part of India, condemning China's military aggression to change the status quo along the **Line of Actual Control**, and further enhancing the US-India strategic partnership and the Quad in support of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific

3. What is McMahon Line

The McMahon Line serves as the de facto **boundary between China and India in the Eastern Sector**

It specifically represents the boundary between Arunachal Pradesh and Tibet, from Bhutan in the west to Myanmar in the east

China has historically disputed the boundary and claims the state of Arunachal Pradesh as part of the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR)

The McMahon Line was drawn during the Simla Convention of 1914, officially described as the Convention Between Great Britain, China, and Tibet

China was represented at the convention by the government of the Republic of China, which was in power in the mainland from 1912 to 1949, when its leaders were driven to the island of Taiwan during the civil war that established the communists in Beijing and led to the proclamation of the People's Republic

The McMahon Line delimited the respective spheres of influence of Tibet and British India in the eastern Himalayan region in what is today India's Northeast and northern Myanmar

The border in this region was undefined prior to the signing of the convention

4. History of the region

From there, the British expanded their influence outwards in the predominantly tribal lands across the Northeast

For long, these tribal lands acted as a buffer between British India and Tibet.

By the time the 20th century dawned, Chinese influence over Tibet had significantly waned and the British were wary about Tibet falling into the Russian sphere of influence

In an effort to preclude Russian influence, the British led an expedition into Tibet and signed the Convention of Lhasa in 1904

At the same time, alarmed at Britain's growing influence in the region, China, at the fag end of Qing rule, also invaded, taking control of the southeastern Kham region

Notably, the Chinese campaign encroached upon the tribal regions north of the Assam Valley, pushing British officials to advocate extending British jurisdiction into the tribal territory

5. Simla Convention (1913 - 1914)

The convention attempted to settle the question of Tibet's sovereignty and avoid further territorial disputes in the region

The Tibetan government in Lhasa was represented by its plenipotentiary Paljor Dorje Shatra, and Britain by Sir Arthur Henry McMahon, foreign secretary of British India at Delhi, The Chinese plenipotentiary was Ivan Chen

The treaty divided the Buddhist region into “**Outer Tibet**” and “**Inner Tibet**” – the former would “**remain in the hands of the Tibetan Government at Lhasa under Chinese suzerainty**”, though China was not allowed to interfere in its affairs

The latter would be under the direct jurisdiction of the newly formed Republic of China

In its annexes, it also determined the border between China proper and Tibet as well as Tibet and British India

The latter of these newly decided boundaries would later be called the McMahon Line after McMahon, the chief British negotiator

While a draft convention was agreed upon by all three countries on April 27, 1914, China immediately repudiated it.

The final convention was only signed by McMahon on behalf of the British government and Shatra on behalf of Lhasa

Ivan Chen did not consent to the convention, arguing that Tibet had no independent authority to enter into international agreements

6. Border between British India and China

The 890-km border from the corner of Bhutan to the Isu Razi Pass on the Burma border was drawn largely along the crest of the Himalayas, following the “highest watershed principle”

This principle, considered to be the most logical way of drawing borders in mountainous regions by the British, basically drew the border along the highest ridge between two river plains

However, exceptions were made. Notably, **Tawang**, which would have been a part of Tibet had this principle been uniformly implemented, was included in British India due to its proximity to the Assam Valley.

As the War of 1962 would show, capturing Tawang would give an invading Chinese army easy access to the valley in the south, affirming McMahon’s decision to include Tawang under British jurisdiction

This inclusion was contested by Tibet for years, even though the border remained porous, and Lhasa still held some sway in the region

7. Status of the McMahon Line

While there were disputes regarding the McMahon line from the very beginning, after the communists took power in 1949, they pulled China out of all international agreements and the so-called “unequal treaties” that had been imposed on it during its “century of humiliation”, and demanded a renegotiation of all its borders

During the **1962 Sino-Indian War**, China was able to quickly overpower India and make deep inroads into Indian territory across the McMahon Line

LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRY

1. Context

Bhutan, the mountainous, landlocked country that is consistently ranked one of the happiest in the world, will on December 13th of this year, become the seventh nation to graduate from the United Nations (UN) list of Least Developed Countries (LDC). While this promotion is a cause for celebration, it also raises some concerns, notably how Bhutan will compensate for the loss of certain trade privileges associated with being an LDC.

2. What is a Least Developed Country?

The LDCs are developing countries listed by the UN that exhibit the lowest indicators of socioeconomic development. The concept first originated in the late 1960s and was codified under UN resolution 2768 passed in November 1971.

3. UN definition of Least Developed Country

According to the UN, an LDC is defined as “a country that exhibits the lowest indicators of socioeconomic development, with low levels of income, human capital, and economic diversification, high levels of economic vulnerability, and a population that is disproportionately reliant on agriculture, natural resources, and primary commodities.”

- The UN identifies three criteria for a country to be classified as an LDC: First, it must have a gross national income (GNI) per capita below the threshold of USD 1,230 over a three-year average.
- Second, it must perform poorly on a composite human assets index based on indicators including nutrition, health, and education.
- Lastly, the country must demonstrate economic vulnerability such as being prone to natural disasters and possessing structural economic constraints.

4. Data of present LDC Countries

These 46 LDCs are distributed among the following regions:

Africa (33): Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia

Asia (9): Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nepal, Timor-Leste, and Yemen

Caribbean (1): Haiti

Pacific (3): Kiribati, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu.

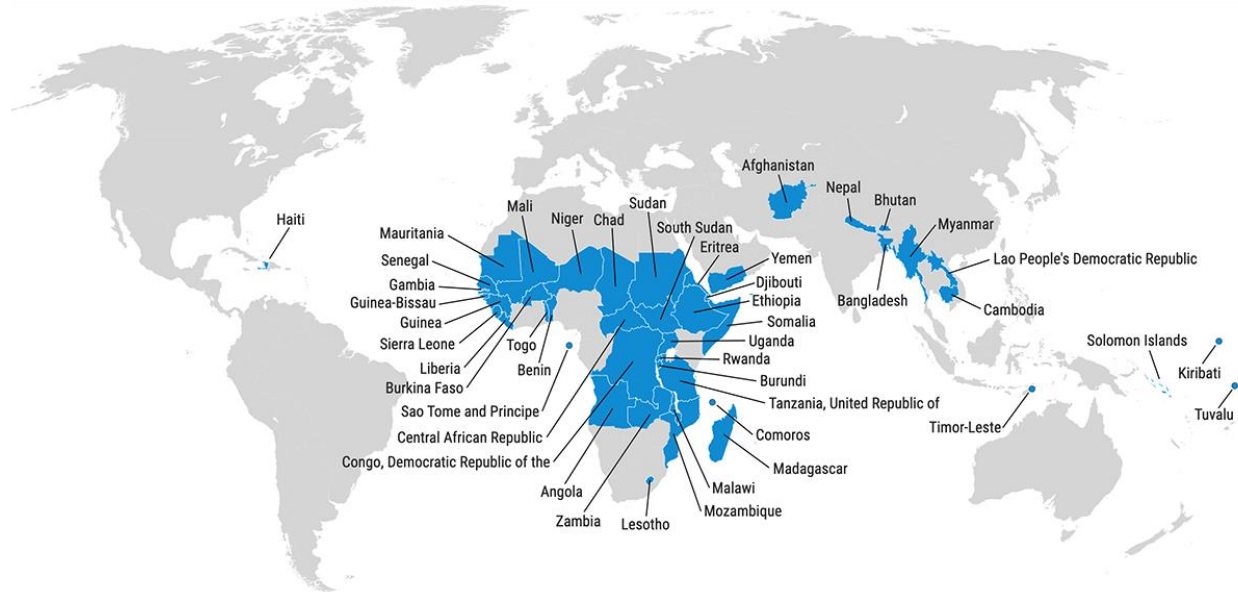


Image Source: UNCTAD

5. How does a country get off the LDC list?

- At the UN 2021 triennial review of LDC countries, the organization recommended that Bangladesh, Laos, and Nepal be removed from the list.
- To graduate from the LDC list, a country must meet certain criteria in the three areas stated before namely, income, human assets, and economic vulnerability.
- A nation must have a GNI per capita of at least USD 1,242 for two consecutive triennial reviews to meet the income requirement.
- The nation must also show that this level of income can be sustained over the long term.
- By using measures like education, health, and nutrition, a nation must show that it has improved its human capital to achieve the human assets requirement.
- This entails expanding literacy rates, lowering malnutrition rates, and enhancing access to healthcare and education.
- A nation also must show that it has improved its ability to withstand external economic shocks like natural catastrophes or shifts in commodity prices to pass the economic vulnerability test.
- To achieve these goals, a country might need to implement a combination of policies, including promoting economic growth through investment in infrastructure, improving governance and reducing corruption, diversifying the economy, addressing environmental challenges, and investing in human development.

6. Previous countries that get off the LDC list

- Botswana achieved graduation in 1994 primarily due to its strong economic performance driven by its diamond mining industry and investments in education and infrastructure.
- Similarly, Carbo Verde graduated in 2007 following investments in tourism, fisheries, and services, as well as positioning its strategic location as a hub for sea and air transportation to help attract foreign investment.

7. How did Bhutan get off the LDC list?

- Bhutan was included in the first group of LDCs in 1971.
- Over the last few decades, it has made remarkable progress on a variety of socio-economic metrics.
- Bhutan first fulfilled the requirements for graduation in 2015, and then again in 2018.
- Bhutan was therefore scheduled to graduate in 2021.
- The Un viewed Bhutan's request to match the effective graduation date with the conclusion of the nation's 12th national development plan in 2023 as a legitimate request and thus postponed the delisting.
- Bhutan has taken several measures to reach this point and the results have been significant.

8. Driving factors that led Bhutan to get off the LDC list

- Bhutan's economy increased more than eight times in the last 20 years, from just under USD 300 million in 2000 to USD 2.53 billion in 2017, with an average annual growth rate of more than 7 percent.
- Additionally, the percentage of people living in poverty, as determined by the amount of money they make each day, decreased from 17.8 percent in 2003 to 1.5 percent in 2017.
- In the same vein, the percentage of people living below the national poverty line decreased from 23.2 percent in 2007 to 8.2 percent in 2017.
- Bhutan has mostly accomplished this by increasing exports of hydropower to India, which now accounts for 20 percent of its economy.
- The nation also established Brand Bhutantoo to diversify exports while acknowledging the modest size of its local market.
- The idea was to target high-end markets with specialized exports of high-value, low-volume Bhutanese goods.
- Their goods come from sectors of the economy including textiles, tourism, handicrafts, culture, and natural resources.

9. Advantages of being an LDC

- Being an LDC confers certain economic benefits to the listed country. As such, advancing out of the list is often only the first step in overall development.

- To begin with, due to their reliance on exports of raw materials, LDCs are suffering badly from the most recent decline in raw materials prices.
- LDCs continue to be significantly more vulnerable to catastrophic natural and economic disasters, including threats from climate change, and, are significantly less prepared to handle such difficulties.
- Small island developing states, which make up 10 of the LDCs, are amongst the most affected by this.
- Importantly, LDCs also enjoy duty-free and quota-free (DFQF) access to the markets of developed countries. This means that LDCs are not restricted by trade restrictions or tariffs when exporting their goods to wealthier nations. For LDCs, this is a significant advantage because it enables them to expand their exports and get access to new markets, which can boost their economic development.
- A nation can lose access to the DFQF as it transitions from being an LDC to a middle-income developing nation. As a result, a nation that leaves the category of LDC may encounter new trade obstacles that it had not previously encountered, making it more challenging for it to expand its exports and get access to new markets.
- LDCs are also eligible for loans with special terms for development, which include loans with a lower interest rate and a longer repayment time than those given to other nations.
- The term “Official Development Assistance” (ODA) or “aid” is frequently used to describe this form of support. This money is intended to aid LDCs in their initiatives to meet their fundamental requirements, promote sustainable economic growth and development, and fight poverty.

UK POLICY ON REFUGEES

1. Context

The Conservative government of the U.K. is proposing to adopt a new, stricter policy to deal with asylum seekers who arrive on the island via boat. The government has taken this step to fulfill a promise made in January 2023 by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, to stop the boats.

2. The political context for the Bill

- Policies to regulate immigration, specifically of undocumented workers and asylum seekers, have always been a sensitive political issue in the U.K., as in other developed economies.
- With the rise of anti-immigrant sentiments fuelling some aspects of the Brexit campaign, which became a reality on January 31, 2020, the U.K. conservative party has been a strong advocate for tighter immigration policies.
- This is purportedly aimed at protecting U.K. jobs or shifting the focus to skilled workers arriving through legal routes.
- However, through the recent years of the pandemic and the economic distress it has caused across developing countries, as well as the displacement of certain communities in countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq, ever greater numbers of asylum seekers have been arriving on the shores of the U.K., prompting closer scrutiny of the policy response in this regard.

3. Proposals of the Bill

- The Bill, when passed into law by the U.K. Parliament, will require that the Home secretary detain and remove those arriving in the U.K. illegally, either to Rwanda or another "safe" third country.
- It would deny migrants the right to bail or judicial review for the first 28 days of their immigration detention.
- To block such migrants from returning to the U.K. or seeking British citizenship going forward.
- The bill would also seek to cap the number of refugees permitted to settle in the U.K. through "safe and legal routes".
- This currently only applies to people from Afghanistan and Ukraine or British National status holders in Hong Kong.

4. What was the 'UK-Rwanda Asylum Plan'?

- The UK and Rwanda Migration and Economic Development partnership or the Rwanda Deal is a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two governments.

- Under this deal, Rwanda will commit to taking in asylum seekers who arrive in the UK on or after January 1, 2022, using illegally facilitated and unlawful cross-border migration.
- Rwanda will function as the holding center where asylum applicants will wait while the Rwanda government makes decisions about their asylum and resettlement petitions in Rwanda.
- Rwanda will, on its part, accommodate anyone who is not a minor and does not have a criminal record.

5. Is the bill consistent with human rights laws?

- This is most salient in the concept of non-refoulement, an idea encapsulated in the Refugee Convention as well as the ECHR, to which the U.K. is a signatory, that refugees should not be returned to a country where they face threats to life and liberty.
- There was more than a 50% chance that the new bill is incompatible with international law.
- In this context, it is expected that the bill will be challenged in the courts and might fail on the grounds of inconsistency with human rights laws.
- However, the U.K. High Court recently ruled that the Rwanda deportation plan did not violate any human rights conventions.

6. United Nations Refugee Convention, 1951

- It is a United Nations Multilateral treaty that defines who is a refugee and sets out the rights of individuals who are granted asylum and the responsibilities of nations that grant asylum.
- It also set out which people do not qualify as refugees, such as war criminals.
- It grants certain rights to people fleeing persecution because of race, religion, nationality, affiliation to a particular social group, or political opinion.
- The Convention also provides for some visa-free travel for holders of travel documents issued under the convention.
- The 1967 protocol included refugees from all countries as opposed to the 1951 convention which only included refugees from Europe.
- India is not a member of this convention.

FINANCIAL ACTION TASK FORCE (FATF)

1.Context

The Finance Ministry's notification placing all transactions involving virtual digital assets under the purview of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) is a much-needed, even if belated, step.

The government has been struggling in recent years to formulate an appropriate regulatory response to deal with the pandemic-era upsurge in advertisements soliciting investment in virtual assets as well as reports of actual investment

2.Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

- The FATF is an inter-governmental body that sets international standards seeking to prevent international financial crimes that aid terrorism. The FATF was established in July 1989 by a G-7 summit in Paris to examine and develop measures to combat money laundering.
- The FATF currently comprises 37 member jurisdictions and two regional organizations European Commission and Gulf Cooperation Council, representing most major financial centers in all parts of the globe. India has been a member of the FATF since 2010. India is also a member of its regional partners, the Asia Pacific Group (APG) and the Eurasian Group (EAG).
- Its secretariat is located at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) headquarters in Paris.

After the 9/11 attacks, the FATF in October 2001 expanded its mandate to incorporate efforts to combat terrorist financing. In April 2012, it added efforts to counter the financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The FATF has developed the FATF recommendations, or FATF standards, which ensure a coordinated global response to prevent organized crime, corruption, and terrorism.

3. FATF Lists

3.1 Grey List

Countries that are considered safe heaven for supporting terror funding and money laundering are put on the FATF Grey list. This inclusion serves as a warning to the country that it may enter the Black list.

Recently Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, and Tanzania are added to the Grey List.

3.2 Black List

Countries known as Non-cooperative countries or Territories are put on the Black list. These countries support Terror funding and Money Laundering activities. The FATF revises the blacklist regularly, adding or deleting entries.

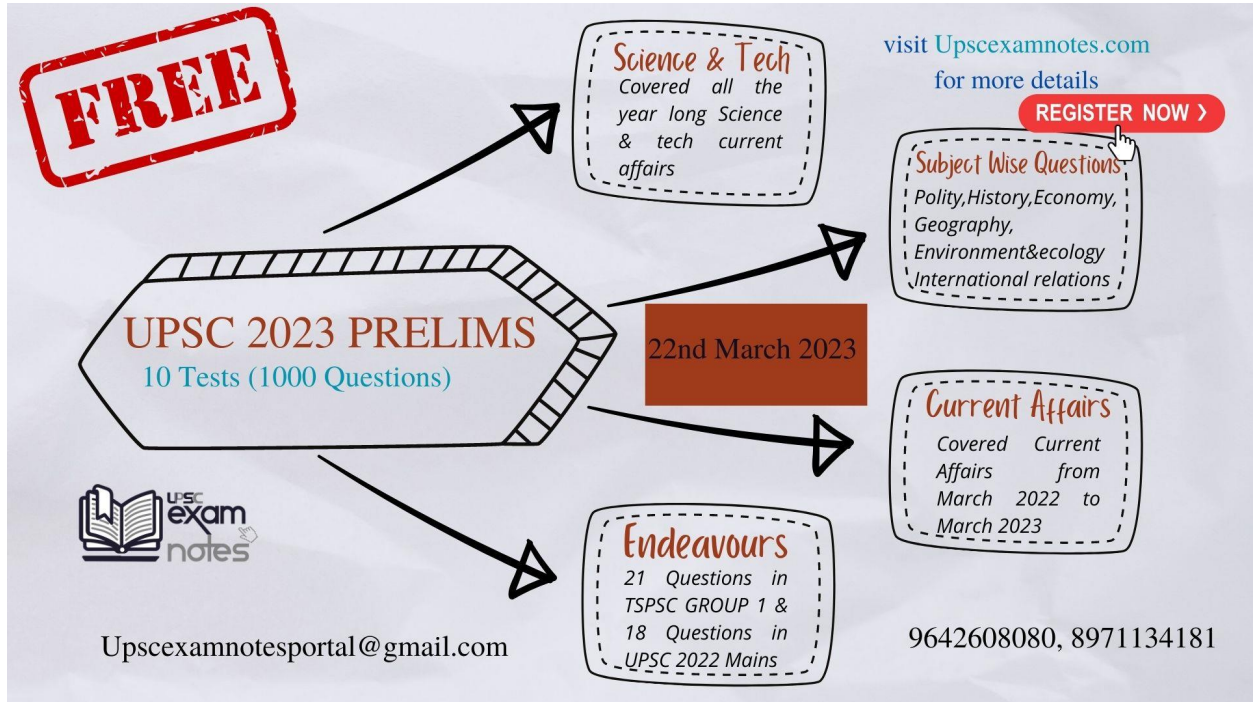
Currently, Iran and the Democratic people's Republic of Korea are under High-risk jurisdiction or Black list. Myanmar was added to the list.

Moved Myanmar is from the "grey list" taken by the military junta since they overthrew the government in a coup last February.

4.Way Forward

As it has pointed out, the fact that a few countries have moved to regulate virtual assets, and some others have banned them outright, while a majority have not taken any action has created a global system with loopholes for criminals and terrorists to abuse

India, which holds the presidency of the G-20, has been repeatedly stressing the need for a globally coordinated regulatory response to deal with crypto assets While the Centre's decision to add the PMLA monitoring requirements, following the introduction of a tax regime for virtual digital assets in last year's Budget, has been interpreted by the crypto assets sector as moves towards regulating rather than proscribing it, the RBI's consistent advocacy for a ban needs to be seriously weighed before any decision is taken on the fate of the long-delayed draft legislation on virtual assets



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General Studies I: Polity

SUSPENSION OF MPs

1. Context

Over this week, the two Houses of Parliament have suspended 27 MPs between them, the latest being two AAP MPs and an independent MP from Rajya Sabha on Thursday. Lok Sabha has suspended four Congress MPs, and Rajya Sabha 23 MPs from the Trinamool Congress, DMK, TRS, CPI, CPI(M), and AAP, besides the independent. The Rajya Sabha suspensions are for the remaining part of this week, and those from Lok Sabha are for the rest of the session.

2. Suspension of MPs

- It is the role and duty of the Presiding officer- Speaker of Lok Sabha and Chairman of Rajya Sabha to maintain order so that the House can function smoothly.
- In order to ensure that proceedings are conducted in the proper manner, the Speaker/Chairman is empowered to force a member to withdraw from the House.

3. Why do MPs disrupt Parliament?

- Over the years, the presiding officers of the legislature and political leaders have discussed and identified four broad reasons leading to disorder in the legislature.
- One reason is the lack of time available to MPs for raising important matters; a second is the "unresponsive attitude of the government and retaliatory posture by Treasury benches".
- The other two reasons are deliberate disruption by parties for political or publicity purposes, and the absence of prompt action against MPs disrupting parliamentary proceedings.

4. Rules under which the Presiding Officer/Chairman acts

4.1 For Lok Sabha

Rule number 373 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business.

- It empowers presiding officers to direct an MP to withdraw from the house for any disorderly conduct.
- This rule says that any Member so ordered to withdraw shall remain absent during the remainder of the day's sitting.

Rule Number 374 and 374A

- To deal with more recalcitrant (uncooperative)
- Rule 374 empowers the Presiding officers to name the legislators of the MP who continue disrupting the House even after repeated warnings.
- After that, the House can move a motion to suspend the MP for a period not exceeding the remainder of the session.

- Rule 374A was incorporated into the Rule book in December 2001. The intention was to circumvent the necessity of adopting a motion for suspension.
- Under this rule, the speaker can name an MP, who shall then automatically stand suspended for five days or the remaining part of the session, whichever is less.
- Provided that the House may, at any time, on a motion being made, resolve that such suspension be terminated.

4.2 For Rajya Sabha

Rule 255 of the Rule Book of Rajya Sabha

It empowers the Chairman of Rajya Sabha to direct any Member to withdraw immediately from the House for any disorderly conduct.

Rule 256

- This rule empowers the Chairman to name the members who persistently disregard the authority of the Chair or abuse the rules of the Council.
- After that, the House may adopt a motion suspending the Member for a period not exceeding the remainder of the session.
- It should be noted that, unlike Lok Sabha (under rule 374A), Rajya Sabha can not suspend its members without passing a motion for the same.

5. Can courts intervene in a matter of suspension of MPs?

- Article 122 of the Indian Constitution says parliamentary proceedings cannot be questioned before a court.
- In some cases, however, courts have intervened in the procedural functioning of legislatures.
- For example, the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly passed a resolution in its 2021 Monsoon Session suspending 12 BJP MLAs for a year.
- The matter came before the supreme court, which held that the resolution was ineffective in law beyond the remainder of the Monsoon Session.

6. What has Parliament done to address these issues?

- The government and not Parliament decides the parliamentary calendar.
- Therefore, the decision about the time available with Parliament for discussions rests with the government.
- The parliamentary procedure also prioritizes government business over other debates that take place in the legislature.
- In this regard, Parliament has not updated its rules over the last 70 years to give Opposition parties a say in deciding the agenda for discussion.
- The stance of political parties on uninterrupted parliamentary functioning depends on whether they belong to the ruling party/coalition or are in the opposition.
- In 2001, Lok Sabha amended its rules to give the speaker more powers to discipline MPs who disrupt House proceedings.

7. Other Key information

The BJP has asked Speaker Om Birla to set up a special committee of Lok Sabha to explore whether Congress leader Rahul Gandhi should be suspended for allegedly insulting the country, its democracy, and Parliament during his recent visit to the United Kingdom. Rahul has rejected the allegations and refused to apologize for his statements.

8. What is the legal basis for setting up the special committee?

- The House can set up a committee and decide its terms of reference. It is entirely within its power.
- A special committee could be formed by moving a motion for the establishment of such a committee and its terms of reference.
- The offense will have to be defined before anyone can be punished for it. A committee that was similar to the one that was set up to investigate the cash-for-votes scandal in 2008 could be formed to investigate and punish an MP.
- A mechanism to look into the “moral and ethical conduct of the members” already exists in the Ethics Committee of Lok Sabha.
- However, the BJP does not want Rahul’s case to be “one of the many issues before the committee”.
- Instead, it wants a special committee along the lines of the one constituted to look into the cash-for-query scandal in 2005.

General Studies II: Polity

ANTICIPATORY BAIL

1. Context

The Supreme Court agreed to hear a petition filed by the Karnataka Lokayukta, a state body empowered to deal with corruption complaints against public servants, challenging a Karnataka High Court order granting pre-arrest bail to the BJP MLA Madal Virupakshappa, who was also serving as the chairman of the Public Sector Undertaking Karnataka Soaps and Detergents Limited (KSDL).

2. What is pre-arrest bail?

- Black's Law Dictionary describes 'bail' as procuring "the release of a person from legal custody, by undertaking that he shall appear at the time and place designated and submit himself to the jurisdiction and judgment of the court."
- Although "bail" has not been expressly defined in Indian statutes, the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) differentiates between "bailable" and "non-bailable" offenses.
- It also defines three kinds of bail that can be granted regular bail under Sections 437 and 439; interim bail or short-term bail which is given when regular or anticipatory bail application is pending before the court; and anticipatory or pre-arrest bail.
- The provision for "anticipatory bail" was introduced under Section 438 of the CrPC after the 41st Law Commission Report in 1969 recommended the need for a measure that protects against arbitrary violation of one's personal liberty, such as when politicians detain their opponents in false cases.

3. When can anticipatory bail be granted?

- Anticipatory bail can be granted under Section 438, when "any person has reason to believe that he may be arrested on an accusation of having committed a nonbailable offense".

- It can be granted by the High Court or the Court of Session, under this section, for non-bailable offenses for which one anticipates arrest, even if the actual arrest has not happened or the FIR has not been registered.
- Non-bailable offenses are more serious offenses, punishable with at least three years imprisonment and above.
- Section 438 was amended in 2005, following which it laid down principles for consideration for the grant of anticipatory bail under subsection such as whether the accused is likely to flee, is a habitual offender, or is likely to tamper with evidence along with his antecedents, such as previously being arrested for a cognizable offense.
- However, since state legislatures are empowered to amend certain provisions of the CrPC, Maharashtra, Odisha and West Bengal follow their own, modified versions of Section 438.
- Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand did away with anticipatory bail through the CrPC (UP Amendment) Bill, 1976, during the Emergency.
- In 2019, however, this was reintroduced after then President Ram Nath Kovind approved the CrPC (Uttar Pradesh Amendment) Bill, 2018.
- Similarly, in 2019, the Uttarakhand Assembly passed an amendment Bill seeking to revive Section 438 of the CrPC.

4. What are the conditions for granting anticipatory bail?

While granting anticipatory bail, the Sessions Court or High Court can impose the conditions laid down in sub-section (2) like,

- The person shall make himself available for interrogation by a police officer as and when required.
- The person cannot make any inducement, threat, or promise, directly or indirectly, to any person acquainted with the facts of the case to dissuade him from disclosing them to the court or the police.
- The person shall not leave India without the previous permission of the court.
- Such other conditions may be imposed under sub-section (3) of section 437 “as if the bail were granted under that section”.

5. Types of Bails in India

- **Regular Bail:** It is a direction given by the Court (any Court within the country) to release a person who is already under arrest and kept in police custody. For such Bail, a person can file an application under Sections 437 and 439 of the CrPC.
- **Interim Bail:** Bail granted for a temporary and short period by the Court till the application seeking Anticipatory Bail or Regular Bail is pending before a Court.
- **Anticipatory Bail:** A direction issued to release a person on Bail even before the person is arrested. In this situation, there is an apprehension of arrest and the person is not arrested before the Bail is granted. For such Bail, a person can file an application under Sec. 438 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC). It is issued only by the Sessions Court and High Court.

6. Significance of Anticipatory Bail

- The reason for the enactment of section 438 in the code was the parliamentary acceptance of the crucial underpinning of personal liberty in a free and democratic country.
- Parliament wished to foster respect for personal liberty and accord primacy to a fundamental tenet of criminal jurisprudence, that everyone is presumed to be innocent till he or she is found guilty.
- Life and liberty are the cherished attributes of every individual. The urge for freedom is natural to each human being.
- In the 1980 Gurbaksh Singh Sibba vs State of Punjab case, a five-judge Supreme court bench led by then Chief Justice Y V Chandrachud ruled that section 438 (1) is to be interpreted in the light of Article 21 of the constitution (Protection of life and personal liberty).

General Studies I: Polity

KUKI INSURGENCY

1.Context

Manipur government on March 10 decided to withdraw from the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with two hill-based tribal militant groups, alleging they were “influencing agitation among forest encroachers”

The state government claimed that a protest rally organised recently, defying Section 144, was influenced by the two groups, Kuki National Army (KNA) and Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA)

2.About Kuki Insurgency

Naga movement is the country’s longest-running insurgency, underground Kuki groups, too, have fought the Indian government for an ‘independent Kuki homeland’, spread across Manipur

The Kuki insurgency gained momentum after ethnic clashes with the Nagas of Manipur in the early 1990s, with the Kuki arming themselves against Naga aggression

While the two tribes have shared a hostile relationship since colonial times, things came to a head in the 1990s when the Naga-Kuki clashes took place

Land that the Kukis claim to be their “homeland” in the Manipur hills overlaps with the imagined Naga homeland of Greater Nagaland or Nagalim

As many as 115 Kuki men, women and children were believed to have been killed by the NSCN-IM in Tengnoupal in 1993

3.Who are Kukis

The **Kukis are an ethnic group** including multiple tribes originally inhabiting the **North-Eastern states of India** such as Manipur, Mizoram and Assam; parts of Burma (now Myanmar), and Sylhet district and Chittagong hill tracts of Bangladesh.

While Kuki is not a term coined by the ethnic group itself, the tribes associated with it came to be generically called Kuki under colonial rule

In **Manipur**, the various Kuki tribes, living mainly in the hills, currently **make up 30% of the total 28.5 lakh population of the State.**

The rest of the population of Manipur is made up mainly of two other ethnic groups: **the Meiteis or non-tribal**, Vaishnavite Hindus who live in the valley region of Manipur, and **the Naga tribes**, historically at loggerheads with the Kukis, also living in the hilly areas of the State

Of the 60 seats in the Manipur Assembly, 40 are held by Meiteis and the rest 20 seats are held by Kukis and Nagas

The people of Manipur are grouped into **three main ethnic communities** – **Meiteis** those **inhabiting the valley** and 29 major tribes in the hills dividing into two main ethno-denominations, namely Nagas and Kuki-Chins

4. What is Suspension of Operations Pact

There are nearly 30 Kuki insurgent groups in Manipur, of which 25 are under tripartite Suspension of Operations (SoO) with the Government of India and the state

As many as 17 are under the umbrella group Kuki National Organisation (KNO), and eight are under the United People's Front (UPF)

The SoO pact was signed on August 22, 2008, with the primary objective of initiating political dialogue

Talks are ongoing under AB Mathur, former special secretary of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), as the interlocutor

The Kuki outfits who were initially demanding a separate Kuki state have come down to a 'Kukiland territorial council', which would have financial and administrative powers independent of the Manipur Assembly and government

5. Terms of the Pact

While the period of the Suspension of Operation agreement is one year, it is extendable according to the progress of its implementation

To oversee the effective implementation of the SoO pact, a committee called the Joint Monitoring Group (JMG), with representatives from all the signatories, has been formed

The important terms under the pact are that security forces, including state and central forces, are not to launch any operations, nor can the underground groups

The signatories of UPF and KNO shall abide by the Constitution of India, the laws of the land and the territorial integrity of Manipur

They are prohibited from committing all kinds of atrocities, extortion, among others

The militant cadres are to be confined in designated camps identified by the Government

Arms are deposited in a safe room under a double-locking system. The groups are given arms only to guard their camps and protect their leaders

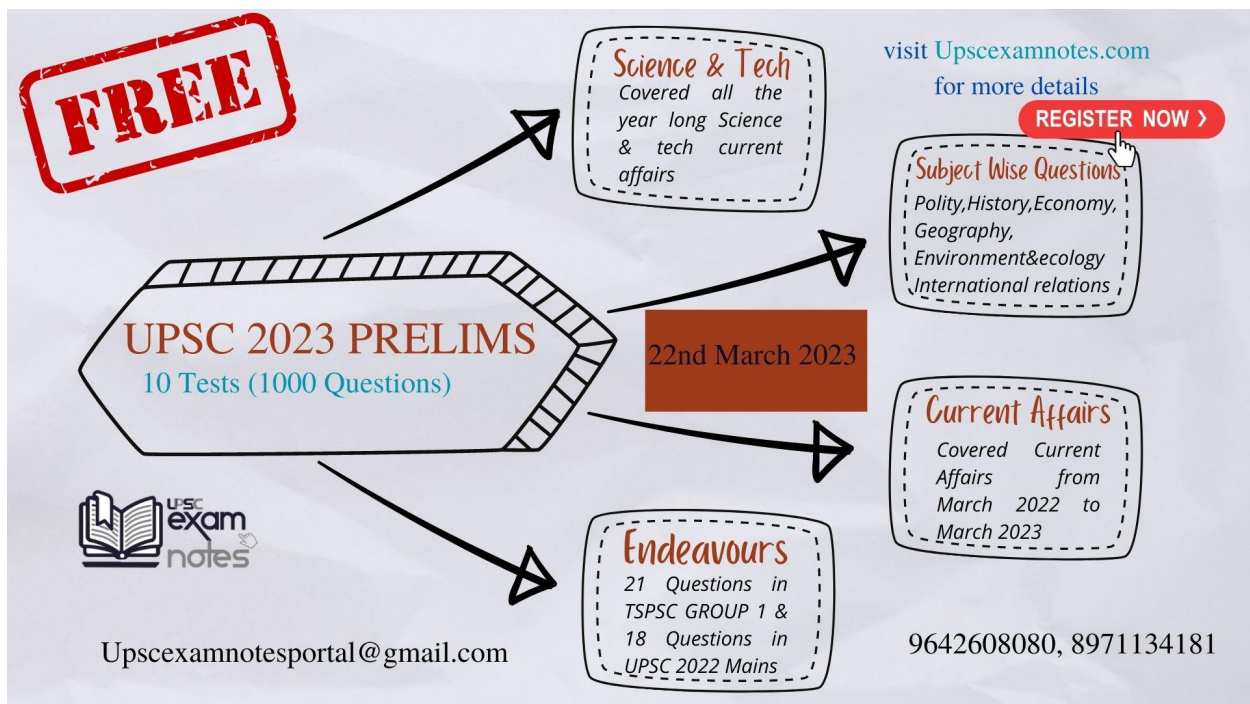
As a rehabilitation package, the UG(Underground) cadres living in the designated camps are given a monthly stipend of Rs 5000

Financial assistance is also being provided to maintain the designated camps

6. Conclusion

The SoO has been extended by the Government almost every year since 2008, with Kuki outfits threatening to breach the agreement by taking up arms again and boycotting the Government.

In 2012, the groups held a nearly eight month long blockade of highways around their area, costing the Government a couple of crores in losses each day.



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General Studies II: Governance

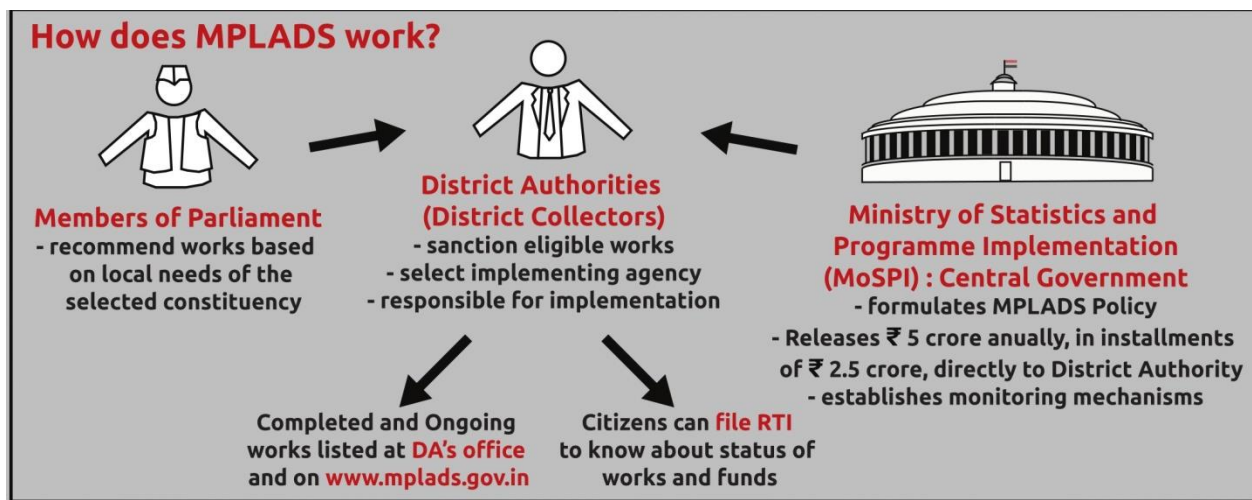
MPLAD SCHEME

1. Context

Earlier this month in 2023, the government suspended the Member of Parliament Local Area Development (MPLAD) Scheme so that these funds would be available for its COVID-19 management efforts. Following the Centre's announcement, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath suspended the state's MLALAD scheme for a year, a move that will allow the state to spend Rs 1,500 crore on COVID-related efforts.

2. What is the MPLAD Scheme?

- The MPLADS (Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme) is a constituency development scheme formulated by the Indian Government on 23 December 1993.
- It enables the members of Parliament (MPs) to recommend developmental work in their constituencies with importance accorded to creating durable community assets, based on needs locally felt by the community. The spending limit is ₹ 5 crores per year.
- States have their version of this scheme with varying amounts per MLA.
- Delhi has the highest allocation under MLALAD; each MLA can recommend works for up to Rs 10 crore each year.
- In Punjab and Kerala, the amount is Rs 5 crore per MLA per year; in Assam, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Karnataka, it is Rs. 2 crores; in Uttar Pradesh, it was recently increased from Rs 2 Crore to Rs 3 Crore.



Source: Wikimedia

3. Implementation of the MPLADS Scheme

- MPLADS was announced in December 1993, by the late Prime Minister Shri. P.V Narasimha Rao.
- Although its announcement received criticism initially, MPLADS has continued to date, with successive governments supporting the scheme by allocating budgetary funds.
- Funds Allocation for each MP was ₹ 5 lakhs in 1993-94; it increased to ₹ 2 crores in 1998-99. This was further revised to ₹ 5 Crores in 2011-12.
- MPLADS is administered by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI). MoSPI publishes an annual report on the MPLADS program operations, which provides information on the extent of work or the number of work completed for each Lok Sabha member (MP). The report helps assess how the MP has utilized their MPLADS funds, and the cumulative work undertaken under the scheme.
- At the height of the Covid pandemic, the central government suspended MPLADS to help mobilize money for priority sectors like vaccine development and health infrastructure.

4. How does the scheme work?

- MPs and MLAs do not receive any money under these schemes.
- The government transfers it directly to the respective local authorities. The legislators can only recommend works in their constituencies based on a set of guidelines.
- For the MPLAD Scheme, the guidelines focus on the creation of durable community assets like roads, school buildings, etc.
- Recommendations for non-durable assets can be made only under limited circumstances. For example, last month, the government allowed the use of MPLAD funds for the purchase of personal protection equipment, coronavirus testing kits, etc.
- The guidelines for use of MLALAD funds differ across states. For example, Delhi MLAs can recommend the operation of fogging machines (to contain dengue mosquitoes), installation of CCTV cameras, etc.
- After the legislators give the list of developmental works, they are executed by the district authorities as per the government's financial, technical, and administrative rules.

5. How long are the schemes supposed to continue?

- The central scheme has continued uninterrupted for 27 years.
- It is budgeted through the government's finances and continues as long as the government is agreeable.
- In 2018, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the scheme until the term of the 14th Finance Commission, which is March 31, 2020.
- In the recent past, there has been one example of the discontinuation of a Local Area Development scheme.
- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar discontinued the state's scheme in 2010, only to revive it before the 2014 general elections.

6. Impact of the MPLAD Scheme

- In 2018, when a continuation of the scheme was approved, the government noted that “the entire population across the country stands to benefit through the creation of durable assets of locally felt needs, namely drinking water, education, public health, sanitation, and roads, etc, under MPLAD Scheme”.
- Until 2017, nearly 19 lakh projects worth Rs 45,000 crore had been sanctioned under the MPLAD Scheme.
- Third-party evaluators appointed by the government reported that the creation of good-quality assets had a “positive impact on the local economy, social fabric, and feasible environment”.
- Further, 82% of the projects have been in rural areas, and the remaining is in urban/semi-urban areas.

7. Challenges with MPLADS

- **Inadequate citizen participation:** MPLADS was envisaged to have the character of decentralized development based on the principle of participatory development. However, citizen participation has remained lukewarm. There is no information on how locally felt needs are given primacy.
- **Insufficient monitoring of sanctioned works:** Guidelines stipulate that district authorities should monitor the sanctioned works. However, there is no indicator for monitoring. Annual reports do not throw light on

monitoring. There is no indication of monitoring of asset condition after the completion of works.

- **Tendency to use MPLADS to gain political mileage:** Research data indicate that MPs tend to go slow in the 1st half of their term. A majority of the MPLADS funds were spent during the last year of their term, just before elections, to gain political mileage.

8. Criticism

- The criticism has been on two broad grounds.
- First, it is inconsistent with the spirit of the Constitution as it co-opts legislators into executive functioning.
- The most vocal critic was a DMK ex-MP and a former Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, Era Sezhiyan. He said the workload on MPs created by the scheme diverted their attention from holding the government accountable and other legislative work.
- The National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (2000) and the Second Administrative Reforms Commission, headed by Veerappa Moily (2007), recommended the discontinuation of the scheme.
- In 2010, the Supreme Court held that the scheme was constitutional.
- The second criticism stems from allegations of corruption associated with the allocation of works. The Comptroller and Auditor General have on many occasions highlighted gaps in implementation.

POLITICAL RESERVATIONS FOR WOMEN

1. Context

A day before her appearance in front of the Enforcement Directorate in the Delhi liquor policy case, Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader K.Kavitha launched a six-hour hunger strike on March 10, 2023 seeking early passage of the long-pending Women's Reservation Bill. The protest at Jantar Mantar in Delhi was inaugurated by Communist Party of India(Marxist) leader Sitaram Yechury.

2. History of Political Reservation for women in India

- The issue of reservation for women in politics can be traced back to the Indian national movement.
- The issue of women's reservation came up in Constituent Assembly debates as well, but it was rejected as being unnecessary. It was assumed that democracy would accord representation to all groups.
- For instance, the committee on the Status of Women in India, set up in 1971, commented on the declining political representation of women in India.
- Though a majority within the committee continued to be against reservation for women in legislative bodies, all of them supported reservation for women in local bodies.
- Slowly, many state governments began announcing reservations for women in local bodies.
- The 73rd (the Panchayats) and 74th (the Municipalities) Constitutional Amendment, enacted in 1992, introduced local self-governance introduced in rural and urban India.
- According to Article 243D, One-third of the total number of seats should be reserved for women. One-third of the seats reserved for the SCs and STs should also be reserved for women. One-third of the offices of chairpersons at all levels should be reserved for women. This is a significant step towards women's empowerment in India at a grass-root level.
- The reservations under the 73rd and 74th Amendments are rotational in nature i.e., for a certain period, certain panchayats or municipalities should be reserved for women on a rotational basis.
- Currently, 14 states have 50-58% representation of women in Panchayats. Jharkhand is the highest with 58%, closely followed by Rajasthan and Uttrakhand.

3. What is the Women's Reservation Bill?

- The Women's Reservation Bill was initially introduced in parliament on September 12, 1996. The bill was introduced in Lok Sabha by the United Front Government of HD Deve Gowda.
- The main aim of this bill is to reserve 33 percent of seats in Lok Sabha and all state legislative assemblies for women.

- Reservation criteria as per the bill, the seats will be reserved on a rotational basis. The seats would be determined by a draw of lots in such a way that a seat would only be reserved once in every three consecutive general elections.
- Since 1996, three other similar Bills- introduced in the parliament in 1998, 1999 and 2008- have failed to become law.
- Only 7.7% of members in the Lok Sabha and 4% of members of state assemblies were women in 1996 when the first women's reservation bill was introduced. Women's share is now 14.4% in Lok sabha and around 8% in state assemblies.
- While there are regional variations in the share of women in state assemblies and party-wise differences in the share of candidates who are women, their representation is still far from their share in the population everywhere.
- The economic survey 2017-18 has acknowledged the abysmally low proportion of elected women's representatives in Lok sabha and the legislative assemblies. However, the survey also notes the success of women's reservations in the three-tier Panchayati Raj institutions.
- According to the Geneva-based Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), globally India ranks in the bottom quarter, 148th out of 193 UN member nations, when it comes to the proportion of elected women representatives in Parliament. Even our neighbors, Pakistan (20.7%), Bangladesh (20.3%), and Nepal (29.9%) have higher representations of women in parliament.
- The supporters of the bill argue the need to pass the bill for ensuring affirmative action, also backed by UN Women in 2017.

4. Reason for low representation in the legislative body

- Patriarchal and regressive mindset; Many think that bringing more women into politics will destroy the ideal family. They think women's main job is bringing up children and being home caretakers.
- Lack of political will among political parties.
- Experts say this is because the entry barrier for women in elections is higher than for men: only those women are made candidates who will likely win. The share of women candidates among total candidates in Lok Sabha elections, for instance, has increased only marginally: from 3.7% in 1962 to 4.3% in 1962 to 9% in 2019. At present only about 14% of the members of the Indian Parliament are women, the highest so far.

5. Arguments for the Bill

- Some argue the need for favorable action to improve the condition of women.
- Recent studies on Panchayats have shown positive outcomes of the reservation of seats for women.
- It may ensure greater representation of women in the political arena.
- It allows for the flexibility of the number of women in parliament.
- It does not discriminate against male candidates. Rather, it calls for the equal representation of their women counterparts.
- It is not a permanent setting. Rather, the Bill, when it becomes a law, would be terminated 15 years after enactment. This temporary solution can ensure women's equal representation in Indian politics.

6. Arguments against the Bill

- It is argued that it would propagate an unequal status for women since they cannot be perceived to be competing on merit.
- This policy may divert attention from larger electoral reform needs like the criminalization of politics and inner-party democracy.
- The reservation of seats to women in parliament restricts the choice of the voters to women candidates who the people may or may not prefer.
- Rotation of reserved constituencies during elections may reduce the incentive for the MP to develop his constituency as he may be ineligible to seek re-election from that constituency.
- It undermines the democratic principle of the election.
- The Joint Committee on the Constitution (81st Amendment) Bill, 1996 had recommended the provision of the reservation to women of the other backward classes (OBCs) once the constitution was amended to ensure reservation to women from the OBC community. It also called for the reservation to be extended to the Rajya Sabha and the Legislative Councils. However, these recommendations were not included in the bill.
- The political parties may assign their women candidates to a constituency that has a stronger male candidate.
- There may be public resentment of the women candidate if a constituency has a stronger male candidate.

- Those who are against this bill argue that reserving a constituency for women would mean a loss of opportunity for men who could have been better or more qualified candidates. This bill may disregard the opinions of the voters.
- Also, the Women's Reservation Bill comes with the same shortcomings as any law that renders quota for the underprivileged.

INDIAN ARMS ACT

1. Context

The Punjab government has cancelled the 813 gun licenses across the state in a bid to clamp down on the "Gun Culture" in the state.

2. Key Points

- Rules have to be followed for keeping a gun. Now there is a ban on carrying and displaying weapons in public functions, religious places, marriage ceremonies, or any other events in Punjab, Random checking will be done in different areas in the coming days.
- The hinting at a "complete ban on that glorifying violence and weapons".
- As of date, there are a total of 3, 73, 053 arms licenses in Punjab but the government is continuously taking action to end gun culture.

3. Reasons for Punjab clamping down on gun culture

- The Punjab government has been under pressure from the opposition over "**worsening**" law and order after the murders of Kabaddi Player Sandeep Nangal Ambian in March 2022, singer Sidhu Moosewala in May 2022 and November 2022 Killings of Shiv Sena leader Sudhir Suri and Dera Sacha follower Pardeep Singh.
- The state's recent move to suspend licenses is one in a series of similar measures undertaken by the state previously.
- On November 13, 2022, the Punjab government ordered a complete ban on the public display of weapons and songs glorifying violence.

4. About the 2022 order

- On November 13, 2022, the state's Department of Home Affairs and Justice headed by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann issued a letter to the State DGP, all-district magistrates, commissioners and SSPs forbidding the public display of firearms and songs glorifying weapons.
- The order also called for a review of all licenses issued within three months and barred the issuance of new licenses for the next three months, except when authorities are personally convinced of its necessity in extraordinary circumstances.
- It required the officers to "**immediately cancel the arms license**" if found to be issued to any miscreant in their review.
- However, in a significant dilution of the order, the Punjab Police said on November 29 that there is no restriction on the issuance of new arms licenses and carrying them for self-defence.
- Before this, the Punjab government 2020 wrote to the **Union Information Technology (IT) and Information and Broadcasting (I & B)** ministries, requesting the removal of content glorifying violence, drugs and liquor from Youtube and other social media platforms.
- This came after the Punjab & Haryana High Court's July 2019 order in '**Reet Mohinder Singh vs the State of Punjab and others**' that directed the DGP of Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh to ensure that no songs glorifying liquor, wine, drugs and violence are played, even in live shows.
- "The District magistrates/ SSPs/ SPs of each district shall be personally responsible to ensure due compliance of the directions issued", the Division Bench said while observing that the glorification of violence has given rise to the culture of gangsters in Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh.

The 2019 order served as a basis for initiating action under the Indian Arms Act, 1959 and the Indian Penal Code against singers like Elly Mangat, who allegedly participated in a celebratory firing and Sippy Gill for allegedly promoting violence and weapons in his song "**Gundagardi**".

5. Possessing firearms under the Indian Arms Act

- The **Indian Arms Act of 1959** was passed after India attained Independence.
- It scrapped the erstwhile Act of 1878, passed by the British in the aftermath of the 1857 mutiny, restricting Indians from Possessing firearms.

- According to the 1959 Act, no one can acquire possess or carry any firearms in India without a license.
- The Act bars one person from carrying more than three firearms after its amendment in 1983, except if the person is a licensed dealer belonging to the armed forces of the Union or a member of a rifle club or association licensed or recognised by the Centre.
- The Arms Act allows Indian citizens aged 21 years and above to get Non-Prohibited Bore (NPB) guns.
- Bore refers to the diameter of a gun's bullets. NPB guns adhering to .35, .33, .22 and .380 are permissible for a license.
- Meanwhile, Prohibited Bore guns of bores.38. .455 and .303 can only be issued to defence personnel or persons facing imminent threats to life.
- A license can only be granted for purposes of self-defence, crop protection or sports.
- **Section 9 of the Act** prevents persons of unsound mind or those out on bond from getting a such license.
- Applications for the grant of arms license for NPB weapons are dealt with by the State Government/DM concerned, based on the report of the police authorities, prepared after a thorough background check of the applicant's antecedents and family details.
- However, the Centre is also empowered to prohibit the possession and distribution of arms in certain "disturbed areas".

6. An amendment to the Act in 2019

- An amendment to the Act in December 2019 reduced the number of permitted firearms from three to one and provided one year to deposit the excess firearms with the officer-in-charge of the nearest police station or with a licensed firearm dealer or unit armoury.
- The amendment also increased the duration of validity of a firearm license, from three to five years.

7. About the Arms Rules, 2016

- In 2016, the Centre issued new Arms Rules, 2016, superseding the Arms Rules, 1962, whereby applying for an arms license, rifle club, association or

firing range required one to complete a safety training course involving safe handling and carrying procedures.

- Provisions for granting restricted categories of arms to those living in militancy-hit areas and a decision on applications for arms licenses within two months were part of the rules issued by the Centre.

RIGHT TO HEALTH BILL

1. Context

The recently concluded Budget session of the Rajasthan Assembly revived the debate around the Right to Health Bill. The legislation, if passed, will provide mandatory free and affordable medical services in hospitals, clinics and laboratories both public and privately owned. Private hospital doctors object to the Bill citing it is hastily drafted, ignores ground realities and may tighten norms in an already over-regulated field

2. Key takeaways of the bill

- The Bill provides rights to patients and healthcare providers, places the obligation on the government to protect these legal rights and mandates the setting up of grievance redressal mechanisms
- Rajasthan residents will be entitled to free check-ups, drugs, diagnostics, emergency transport and care at all public health institutes, along with affordable surgeries
- Clause 3 of the Bill lays down 20 rights a State resident will be entitled to including the right to informed consent, to seek information (in the form of medical records and documents) regarding diagnosis and treatment, and to receive treatment without discrimination based on caste, class, age, gender, etc
- Clause 4 of the Bill shifts the burden of responsibility in providing adequate medical services to the government. The government is “obligated” to provide funds, set up institutions and constitute grievance redressal systems
- Clause 4 mandates that the government develop a Human Resource Policy for health ensuring equitable distribution of doctors, nurses and healthcare workers at all levels of the system across regions

3. Constitutional Guarantee

- The Indian Constitution does not explicitly talk about a right to health. A “right to health”, in theory, is derived from the right to life and liberty as guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution
- Previously, courts have highlighted the State’s obligation to protect and promote the health of citizens,

Constitutional provisions such as:

Article 38: Promoting the welfare of people
Article 47: Which directs the government to meet the nutrition and health requirements of the population

4. Other Fundamental Rights

Right to Equality	Article 14 - 18
Right to Freedom	Article 19 - 22
Right against exploitation	Article 23-24
Cultural and Educational rights	Article 29 - 30
Rights to Constitutional remedy	Article 32

General Studies II: Governance

PMLA

1. Context

The Finance Ministry has amended money laundering rules to incorporate more disclosures for non-governmental organisations by reporting entities like financial institutions, banking companies or intermediaries.

In addition, it has defined "**politically exposed persons**" (PEPs) under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in line with the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

2. About PMLA

- The Anti-money laundering legislation was passed by the National Democratic Alliance government in 2002 and came into force on July 1, 2005.
- The PMLA was showcased as India's commitment to the Vienna Convention on combating money, drug trafficking and countering the financing of terror (CFT).
- The law was aimed at curbing the process of converting illegally earned money into legal cash.
- The Act empowered the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to control money laundering, confiscate property and punish offenders.
- ED recorded around 5,422 cases, attached proceeds to the tune of ₹ 1,04,702 crores (approx), filed Prosecution Complaints in 992 cases resulting in the confiscation of ₹ 869.31 crores and convicted 23 accused persons under PMLA by the end of March 31, 2022.

3. Effect on crypto

- The gazette notification by the Ministry brings cryptocurrency transactions within the ambit of PMLA.
- This means that Indian crypto exchanges will have to report any suspicious activity related to buying or selling of cryptocurrency to the Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND).
- This central agency is responsible for receiving, processing, analysing and disseminating information related to suspicious financial transactions to law enforcement agencies and overseas FIUs.
- In its analysis, if the FIU-IND finds wrongdoing, it will alert the ED.
- Under Sections 5 and 8 (4) of the Act, the ED has discretionary powers to search and seize suspected property without any judicial permission.

4. Reasons for tightening the digital trade

- For a little more than a decade, cryptocurrencies, non-fungible tokens (NFT) and other digital assets enjoyed a regulation-free environment.
- But, in the past couple of years, as the use of digital assets has gone mainstream, regulators have turned hawkish.
- The value of all existing cryptocurrencies is about \$804 billion as of January 3, 2023.

- It is about twice the GDP of Singapore in 2021.
- In India, over 10 crore Indians have invested in cryptocurrencies.
- The illegal use of cryptocurrencies hit a record \$ 20.1 billion last year.
- Transactions associated with sanctioned entities jumped over 1, 00, 000-fold, making up 44 per cent of last year's illegal activity.

5. Tools used to track money laundering via crypto transactions

- Tracking money trail in cryptocurrency transactions may require new tools and approaches as such transfers differ fundamentally from traditional banking channels.
- FIUs may be familiar with Know Your Customer (KYC) or Customer Due Diligence (CDD) norms.
- But the technological nature of VDAs presents a new challenge in gathering information.
- This requires the intelligence unit to broaden its intelligence framework.

The Cooperation between FIUs to prevent money laundering and recommends the analysis of crypto wallets, their associated addresses and blockchain records and hardware identifiers like IMEI (International Mobile Equipment Identity), IMSI (International Mobile Subscriber Identity) or SEID (Secure Element Identifier) numbers, as well as MAC addresses.

6. Regulations in other Countries

- The **Global Crypto Regulations Report 2023** a large proportion of countries are at various stages of drafting regulations around crypto.
- Most countries have already brought digital assets under anti-money laundering laws.
- Singapore, Japan, Switzerland and Malaysia have legislation on the regulatory framework.
- The U.S., U.K., Australia and Canada have initiated plans for regulation.
- So far, China, Qatar and Saudi Arabia have issued a blanket ban on cryptocurrency.
- The EU is also preparing a cross-jurisdictional regulatory and supervisory framework for crypto-assets.

- The framework seeks to provide legal clarity, consumer and investor protection and market integrity while promoting innovation in digital assets.

7. The Changes imply

- The new clause in the rules for PMLA compliance defines "**Politically Exposed Persons**" as individuals who have been entrusted with prominent public functions by a foreign country, including the heads of State or Governments, Senior politicians, Senior government or judicial or military officers, senior executives of state-owned corporations and important political party officials.
- The amendment is about foreign PEPs and not domestic ones.
- The move to define politically exposed persons under PMLA is to bring uniformity with a 2008 circular of the RBI for KYC norms/Anti-money laundering standards for banks and financial institutions, which had defined PEPs in line with FATF norms.
- PEP has already been in the RBI's master circular, in line with FATF.
- The definition has now been given in the PMLA rules so that the same definition is applicable everywhere.

8. Significance of the FATF-related changes

- The amendments assume significance ahead of India's proposed FATF assessment, which is expected to be undertaken later this year.
- India's assessment is likely to come up for discussion in the plenary discussion in June, while the possible onsite assessment is slated for November.
- Due to the pandemic and the pause in the FATF's assessment process, the fourth round of mutual evaluation of India had been postponed to 2023.
- Before this, the FATF had undertaken an evaluation for India in June 2010.
- The FATF, which is the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog, has 40 recommendations.
- In its recommendations, the FATF states that financial institutions should be required to have appropriate risk-management systems to determine whether a customer or beneficial owner is a domestic PEP or a person who is or has been entrusted with a prominent function by an international organisation.

- The broader objective is to bring in legal uniformity and remove ambiguities before the FATF assessment.
- The 40 recommendations cover seven areas and provide a framework of measures.
- This is to help countries tackle illicit financial flows through laws, regulations and operational measures to ensure authorities can take action to detect and disrupt financial flows that fuel crime and terrorism.

The seven areas are anti-money laundering/ counter-terrorist financing;

1. Policies and coordination;
2. Money laundering and confiscation;
3. Terrorist financing and financing of proliferation;
4. Preventive measures;
5. Transparency and beneficial ownership of legal persons and arrangements
6. Powers and responsibilities of competent authorities and other institutional measures and
7. International cooperation.

9. Other Changes in the PMLA rules

- The Amended rules have also lowered the threshold for identifying beneficial owners by reporting entities, where the client is acting on behalf of its beneficial owner, in line with the Companies Act and Income-tax Act.
- The term "**beneficial owner**" was defined to mean ownership of or entitlement to more than 25 per cent of shares or capital or profit of the company, which has now been reduced to 10 per cent, thereby bringing more indirect participants within the reporting net.
- Also, reporting entities are now required to register details of the client if it's a non-profit organisation on the **DARPAN portal of NITI Aayog**.
- Every Banking Company or Financial Institution or intermediary, as the case may be, shall register the details of the client, in case of the client is a non-profit organisation, on the DARPAN portal of NITI Aayog, if not already registered and maintain such registration records for five years after the business relationship between a client and a reporting entity has ended or the account has been closed, whichever is later.

- The definition of a non-profit organisation has also been amended and linked to the definition of charitable purpose provided under Section 2 (15) of the **Income-tax Act 1961** to include any entity or organisation, constituted for religious or charitable purposes under I-T Act, that is registered as a trust or society under the **Societies Registration Act** or any similar state legislation or a company registered under the Companies Act.
- The due diligence documentation requirements, which were until now limited to obtaining the basic KYCs of clients such as registration certificates PAN copies and documents of officers holding an attorney to transact on behalf of the client have now been extended.
- It now includes the submission of details such as names of persons holding senior management positions, names of partners, names of beneficiaries, trustees, settlors and authors, as the case may be, depending upon the legal form of the organisation.
- Also, the details of the registered office address and principal place of business are now required to be submitted by clients to financial institutions, banking companies or intermediaries.

General Studies II: Governance

COMPASSIONATE APPOINTMENTS

1. Context

In a judgment delivered the Supreme Court rejected some applications for "compassionate appointments" that were filed by the dependents of deceased government employees in West Bengal.

A bench of Justice Krishna Murari and Justice BV Nagarathna underlined that compassionate appointment is not a vested right of such dependents of a deceased employee.

2. About Compassionate appointments

- The Concept of compassionate appointments can be traced to the Indian Constitution's **Article 39**, which is under the Directive Principles of State Policy and talks about the **right to livelihood**.

- It aims to employ on compassionate grounds the dependent family members of a government servant who dies in harness or retires on medical grounds, leaving the family without any source of sustenance.
- Multiple factors are looked at while assessing a request for compassionate appointments, such as the family's financial condition, the presence of earning members, family size, children's ages and the family's essential needs.

According to the DoPT's office memorandum dated January 16, 2023, these appointments can only be made for "Group C posts against the direct recruitment quota".

3. Eligibility for applying compassionate appointments

According to instructions on "Compassionate Appointment under Central Government" given by the DoPT, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions on August 2, 2022, Compassionate appointments can extend to dependent family members of a government servant who:

- (a) Dies while in service (including death by suicide)
- (b) Retired on Medical grounds under Rule 2 of the CCS (Medical Examination) Rules 1957 or the corresponding provision in the Central Civil Service Regulations before 55 years of age (57 years for erstwhile Group 'D' Government servants)
- (c) Retired on medical grounds under Rule 38 of the CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972 or the corresponding provision in the Central Civil Service Regulations before attaining the age of 55 years (57 years for erstwhile Group 'D' Government Servants).

The measure can also extend to the family members of an Armed Forces Employee who:

- (a) Dies during Service;
 - (b) Is Killed in action; or
 - (c) Is medically boarded out and is unfit for civil employment.
- However, the government servant must have been appointed "regularly" and not on a daily wage, casual, apprentice, ad-hoc, contract or reemployment basis.

- Moreover, the deceased's dependents can only be first-degree relations such as their spouse, son or daughter (including adopted ones), brother or sister in the case of an unmarried Government servant or member of the Armed Forces, who was wholly dependent on the government servant at the time of their death in harness or retirement on medical grounds.
- To be eligible for this, the deceased's family must be "indigent" or needy and deserving of immediate assistance for relief from financial destitution".
- The applicant should also be eligible and suitable for the post in all respects under the provisions of the relevant Recruitment Rules.

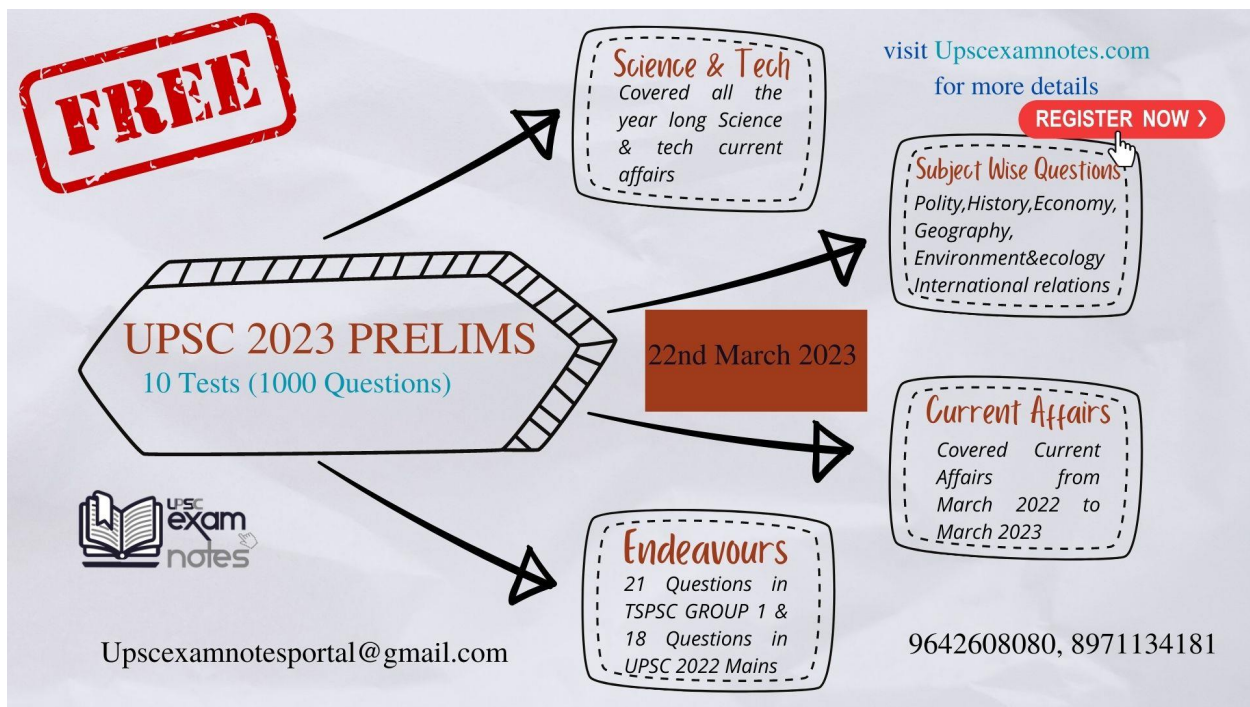
4. Empowering this appointment

- Compassionate appointments are made by either the Joint Secretary in charge of administration in the Ministry or Department concerned or the "Head of the Department under Supplementary Rule 2 (10) in the case of attached and subordinate offices".
- They can also be made by the Secretary of a Ministry or Department in special cases.

5. Court judgments

- The apex court set aside the judgment delivered by a Division Bench of the Calcutta High Court on September 30, 2019, restoring an earlier order passed by a single judge of the Calcutta High Court on July 5, 2018.
- While the Division Bench had directed consideration of the applications for the compassionate appointments in light of circulars issued by the state government, the single-judge had rejected the applications due to delay and absence of state policy.
- In its decision, the apex court cited its rulings from 2008 and 2014 in the cases of "**Mumtaz Yunus Mulani vs, the State of Maharashtra and State Bank of India vs. Surya Narain Tripathi**" respectively, to say that "the existence of a policy issued by the State Government is a sine qua non for making appointments on the compassionate basis".
- Observing the absence of a policy governing compassionate appointments the Court refused to grant the posts under local authorities in West Bengal.
- Moreover, the Court said that even if the policy existed, it would be of no use to consider the applications several years after they were filed.

- The Court also referred to a slew of its rulings from 1989 and 1994 in "Sushma Gosain vs. Union of India" and "Umesh Kumar Nagpal vs. the State of Haryana" respectively, to say that there shouldn't be any delay in compassionate appointments and the same should be "provided immediately to redeem the family in distress", provided that the government or public authority examines the financial condition of the deceased's family and is satisfied that "but for the provision of employment, the family will not be able to meet the crisis".



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General Studies III: Science & technology

NASA's SPACE SUIT

Context

For the upcoming Artemis missions, NASA's first attempt at landing astronauts on the moon since 1972, the spacesuit used will see a significant upgrade. Unlike the

bulky and iconic suits in which Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin skipped around on the lunar surface, the new suit will be more nimble, comfortable, and designed to fit a broader array of body types.

About NASAs new Space suit

- Demonstration at the Houston Space Center, James Stein, the suit's chief engineer, showcased not just the increased mobility provided by the suit when compared to what was previously used, but also other interesting features.
- The suit comes from Axiom space, a private company based out of Houston, Texas, though it incorporates design elements used in previous suits by NASA.
- It will be worn during the Artemis III mission, the program's first moon landing, which is scheduled for 2025.
- It is called the AxEMU (Axiom Extravehicular Mobility Unit).

What does a spacesuit do?

- Without a spacesuit, humans will not survive for long in the harsh conditions of outer space or the lunar surface.
- First, spacesuits protect the human body from the extreme temperature fluctuations of space. In absence of an atmosphere, areas that receive direct sunlight become extremely hot whereas areas in the dark are frigid.
- The first job of a space suit is to insulate the astronaut inside from extreme temperatures.
- Second, spacesuits also provide astronauts with a constant supply of air and optimum air pressure around their bodies. They are pressurized to this effect, making them more like human-shaped space vehicles than a piece of clothing.
- Third, spacesuits protect astronauts from space radiation which can be extremely harmful, as well as micrometeorites and other particles moving across space, often at incredible speeds.
- On the lunar surface, suits also protect astronauts from lunar dust, considered by NASA experts as the number one environmental problem on the moon.

- Much more abrasive than dust on the earth, it tends to corrode everything it comes into contact with and can potentially cause lung diseases.
- By helping astronauts survive even in the harshest conditions of space, spacesuits allow them to perform tasks in space, carry out experiments and fulfill the objectives of their mission.

Issues with Older Space suits

- The Apollo missions (1961-72) were a landmark achievement in space exploration.
- The spacesuits worn in the mission were also revolutionary for the time.
- Unlike rudimentary spacesuits used for previous space missions, the Apollo suits had their own life support systems and did not balloon when exposed to the vacuum of space.
- They also incorporated boots ideal for walking on the lunar surface.
- Technological tweaks aside, little has changed in the fundamentals of suits for spacewalking that are used in the International Space Station.
- However, these suits are rigid and uncomfortable to be in. While rubberized bellows at the shoulders, elbows, hips, and knees allowed a degree of flexibility,
- Astronauts struggle against the stiffness. This is why Armstrong and Aldrin soon discovered that “skipping” was easier than “walking” on the lunar surface, as it did not require bending knees.
- Long handles were used in various tools as bending the waist was nearly impossible, though even holding things is difficult due to the gloves worn.
- Astronaut Kathy Thornton told Engineering and Technology that working in a space suit is like trying to adjust the carburetor on your truck while wearing baseball mittens.

Improvements made in the New Spacesuit

- During the demonstration, the most noticeable upgrade was in the mobility offered by the new spacesuits.
- Stein jumped, squatted, and performed a variety of different movements to show off AxEMU's nimbleness. He also performed a range of movements that would be impossible in the previous space suits.

- The large clear bubble around the head provides a much wider range of visibility as well as lightning, which will be important when astronauts step into shadowed craters near the lunar south pole, where NASA hopes to study water ice.
- The headpiece also has a mount for a high-definition camera.
- Another important feature of the suit is its design which fits a broader range of body types comfortably, with provisions to make more specific adjustments in fit.
- An increased sizing and adjustability accommodate a wider range of the general population, providing a superior fit for astronauts while increasing their comfort and ability to perform tasks.
- As far as protection goes, the increased mobility has not come at its cost. The AxEMU has been specifically designed to better deal with lunar dust.

GPT-4 VS Chat GPT

1.Context

AI powerhouse **OpenAI announced GPT-4**, the next big update to the technology that powers ChatGPT and Microsoft Bing, the search engine using the tech, on Tuesday. GPT-4 is supposedly bigger, faster, and more accurate than ChatGPT, so much so, that it even clears several top examinations with flying colours, like the Uniform Bar Exam for those wanting to practice as lawyers in the US

2.What is GPT-4

- GPT-4 is a large multimodal model created by OpenAI and announced on March 14, 2023
- Multimodal models can encompass more than just text – GPT-4 also accepts images as input. Meanwhile, GPT-3 and GPT-3.5 only operated in one modality, text, meaning users could only ask questions by typing them out
- Aside from the fresh ability to process images, OpenAI says that GPT-4 also “exhibits human-level performance on various professional and academic benchmarks.”

- The language model can pass a simulated bar exam with a score around the top 10 per cent of test takers and can solve difficult problems with greater accuracy thanks to its broader general knowledge and problem-solving abilities
- GPT-4 is also capable of handling over 25,000 words of text, opening up a greater number of use cases that now also include long-form content creation, document search and analysis, and extended conversations

3.How is GPT-4 is different from GPT-3

The major differences would be the following

3.1. GPT-4 can see images:

- The most noticeable change to GPT-4 is that it's multimodal, allowing it to understand more than one modality of information
- GPT-3 and ChatGPT's GPT-3.5 were limited to textual input and output, meaning they could only read and write
- However, GPT-4 can be fed images and asked to output information accordingly
- It can be looked at it as Google Lens , But Lens only searches for information related to an image
- GPT-4 is a lot more advanced in that it understands an image and analyses it
- An example provided by OpenAI showed the language model explaining the joke in an image of an absurdly large iPhone connector
- The only catch is that image inputs are still a research preview and are not publicly available

3.2.GPT is harder to trick

- One of the biggest drawbacks of generative models like ChatGPT and Bing is their propensity to occasionally go off the rails, generating prompts that raise eyebrows, or worse, downright alarm people
- They can also get facts mixed up and produce misinformation
- OpenAI mentioned that " they have spent 6 months training GPT-4 using lessons from its "adversarial testing program" as well as ChatGPT resulting in the company's "best ever results on factuality, steerability, and refusing to go outside of gaurdrails"

3.3.GPT-4 can process a lot at one time

- Large Language Models (LLMs) may have been trained on billions of parameters, which means countless amounts of data, but there are limits to how much information they can process in a conversation
- ChatGPT's GPT-3.5 model could handle 4,096 tokens or around 8,000 words but GPT-4 pumps those numbers up to 32,768 tokens or around 64,000 words
- This increase means that where ChatGPT could process 8,000 words at a time before it started to lose track of things, GPT-4 can maintain its integrity over way lengthier conversations
- It can also process lengthy documents and generate long-form content – something that was a lot more limited on GPT-3.5

3.4.GPT-4 Accuracy has been improved

- OpenAI admits that GPT-4 has similar limitations as previous versions – it's still not fully reliable and makes reasoning errors
- However, "GPT-4 significantly reduces hallucinations relative to previous models" and scores 40 per cent higher than GPT-3.5 on factuality evaluations
- It will be a lot harder to trick GPT-4 into producing undesirable outputs such as hate speech and misinformation

3.5.GPT-4 is better at understanding languages other than 'English'

- Machine learning data is mostly in English, as is most of the information on the internet today, so training LLMs in other languages can be challenging
- But GPT-4 is more multilingual and OpenAI has demonstrated that it outperforms GPT-3.5 and other LLMs by accurately answering thousands of multiple-choice across 26 languages
- It obviously handles English best with an 85.5 per cent accuracy, but Indian languages like Telugu aren't too far behind either, at 71.4 per cent
- What this means is that users will be able to use chatbots based on GPT-4 to produce outputs with greater clarity and higher accuracy in their native languages

4. Way Forward

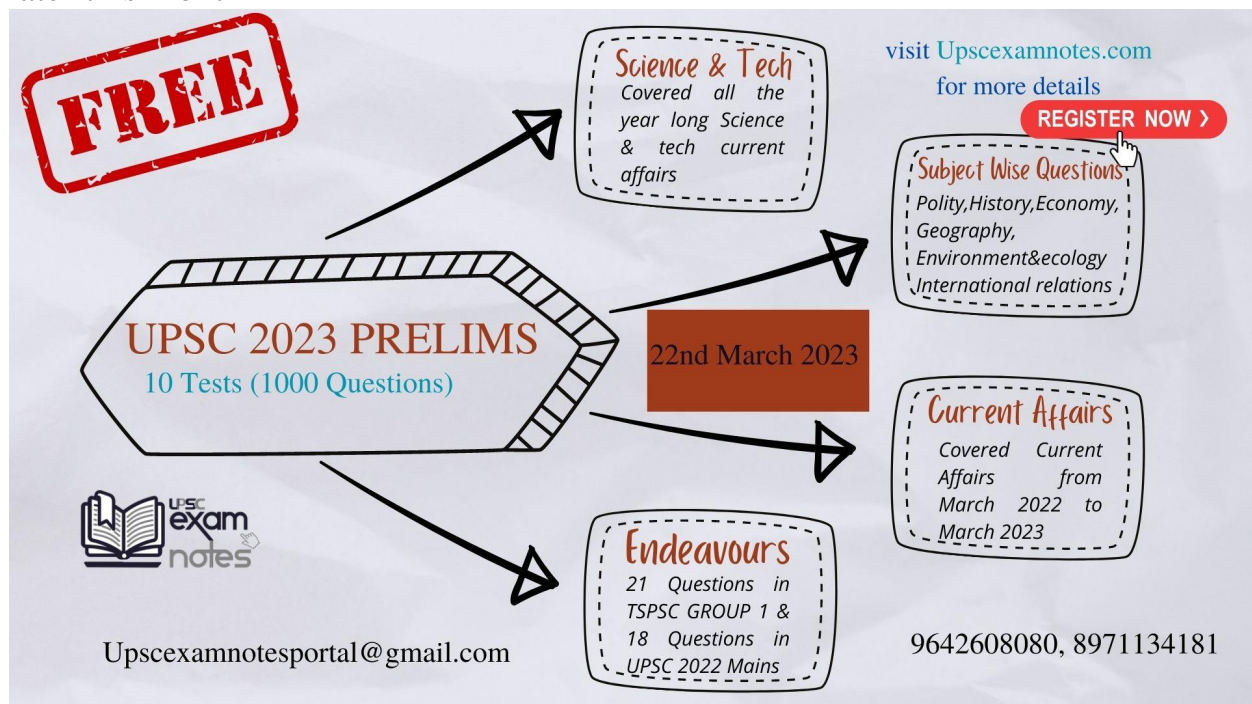
GPT-4 has already been integrated into products like Duolingo, Stripe, and Khan Academy for varying purposes

While it's yet to be made available for all for free, a \$20 per month ChatGPT Plus subscription can fetch you immediate access. The free tier of ChatGPT, meanwhile, continues to be based on GPT-3.5

However, if you don't wish to pay, then there's an 'unofficial' way to begin using GPT-4 immediately. Microsoft has confirmed that the new Bing search experience now runs on GPT-4 and you can access it from bing.com/chat right now

Meanwhile, developers will gain access to GPT-4 through its API

A waitlist has been announced for API access, and it will begin accepting users later this month



The diagram illustrates the preparation strategy for the UPSC 2023 Prelims. At the center is a box for "UPSC 2023 PRELIMS" consisting of "10 Tests (1000 Questions)" on "22nd March 2023". A red stamp labeled "FREE" is positioned above the central box. Four arrows point from the central box to four distinct study materials:

- Science & Tech:** "Covered all the year long Science & tech current affairs"
- Subject Wise Questions:** "Polity, History, Economy, Geography, Environment & ecology, International relations". A red button labeled "REGISTER NOW >" is placed above this box.
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Additional information includes the website "Upscexamnotes.com" for more details, the email "Upscexamnotesportal@gmail.com", and the phone number "9642608080, 8971134181". The Upsc exam notes logo is also present at the bottom left of the diagram.

General Studies III: Environment & Ecology

DELHI AIR POLLUTION

1. Context

The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), a Delhi-based organisation that focuses on environment-related research and advocacy, analysed data to indicate that much of the air pollution over the week (October 21 to 26, 2022) from within the City was caused by vehicular emissions.

2. Report findings

- CSE's analysis of data from October 21 to 26 found that the local sources of pollution and vehicular emissions may have contributed around 51 per cent to the PM 2.5 levels in Delhi. Local Sources refer to the sources within the city.
- Among these local sources, the next largest contribution was 13 per cent from residential sources and 11 per cent from industries.
- Construction activities contributed around 7 per cent to PM 2.5, followed by 5 per cent each from the burning of waste and the energy sector. Road dust contributed around 4 per cent to PM2.5 levels.
- The analysis also found that Delhi's local sources caused around 32.9 per cent of the pollution in the city.
- The remaining share came from NCR districts (32.8 per cent), other districts (25.8 per cent) and biomass burning in the neighbouring states (9.5 per cent).
- The analysis also used data from Google Maps to look at hourly traffic speed on 15 arterial roads in the city over the week.
- A high level of congestion was noted on all of these roads with average speeds ranging from 27 kmph to 32 kmph, speed being used as an indicator for congestion. The traffic build-up was found to be highest on October 21 and 22.

With vehicles contributing to the nitrogen dioxide levels in the city, the hourly nitrogen dioxide level was also found to peak around the time that congestion was maximum on the roads.

The analysis noted: "Hourly NO₂ levels during evenings could be high ranging between 73 µg/m³ to 86 µg/m³. This is the time when congestion is also high".

3. The usage of Data analysis

- The analysis used data from the Decision Support System (DSS) developed by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM).
- The DSS provides hourly information on the sources of PM 2.5 in Delhi the contribution of different sectors to emissions and the contribution of emissions from Delhi and 19 districts in the neighbourhood.
- The Model developed by IITM uses an emissions inventory prepared by **The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)** in 2018, data from the Central Pollution Control Board monitoring stations and data from NASA satellites to generate forecasts on emission sources for five days.

Image source: WHO

4. The Way Forward

- It asks for a "verifiable and measurable shift" to public transport by improving access, bus services, and integrating metro stations with other modes of transport, besides providing an extensive network of walking and cycling infrastructure to connect neighbourhoods.
- Delhi needs congestion, pollution pricing, and other restraint measures to control traffic volume.
- Targets set for the electrification of the new vehicle fleet should be accelerated and met.

IPCC

1. Context

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is meeting in Switzerland this week to finalize the last report of its sixth assessment cycle, which is expected to set up the tempo for a string of climate change-focused discussions over the next fortnight.

2. Synthesis Report

- The IPCC, an UN-backed scientific body whose periodic assessments of climate science form the basis of global climate action, is set to finalize what is known as the Synthesis Report, incorporating the findings of the five reports that it has released in the sixth assessment cycle since 2018.
- The Synthesis Report is supposed to be a relatively non-technical summary of the previous reports, aimed largely at policymakers around the world.
- It is meant to address a wide range of policy-relevant scientific questions related to climate change, but, like all IPCC reports, in a non-prescriptive manner.
- This will bring an end to the Sixth Assessment Report, a collective work of thousands of scientists over a period of eight years, starting in February 2015.

3. Significance of the report

- The Synthesis Report is unlikely to reveal anything new. Climate science is fairly well established, and its impacts are already visible.
- As part of the sixth assessment cycle, the IPCC published three comprehensive reports- one on scientific evidence for climate change, the other on impacts and vulnerabilities, and the third exploring mitigation options available.
- Besides these, special reports on the feasibility of keeping global temperature rise within the 1.5-degree celsius limit, and the connections between land, ocean, and cryosphere, were also released.
- Together, these form the most comprehensive understanding of the earth's climate system, the changes it is undergoing, the repercussions of these changes, and the actions that should be taken to avoid the worst impacts.

4. The upcoming meetings

- The release of the synthesis report on March 20 would be immediately followed by a ministerial-level meeting in Copenhagen.
- This will discuss ways to implement the decisions taken at last year's climate meeting in Sharm el-sheikh, especially the one related to the creation of a new fund to help countries hit by climate-related disasters.

- This meeting is aimed at building the atmosphere for more ambitious agreements at this year's climate conference, scheduled in Dubai towards the end of the year.
- Later next week, the UN 2023 Water Conference will take place, with climate change as one of the most important agendas.
- Two G-20 meetings around the climate change theme are also scheduled towards the end of this month, one in Udaipur, Rajasthan, and the other in Gandhinagar, Gujrat.

5. About IPCC

- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change.
- IPCC was created in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the objective of the IPCC is to provide governments at all levels with scientific information that they can use to develop climate policies.
- IPCC reports are also a key input into international climate change negotiations. The IPCC is an organisation of governments that are members of the United Nations or WMO.
- The IPCC has currently 195 members. Thousands of people from all over the world contribute to the work of the IPCC.
- For the assessment reports, experts volunteer their time as IPCC authors to assess the thousands of scientific papers published each year to provide a comprehensive summary of what is known about the drivers of climate change, its impacts, and future risks, and how adaptation and mitigation can reduce those risks.
- An open and transparent review by experts and governments around the world is an essential part of the IPCC process, to ensure an objective and complete assessment and to reflect a diverse range of views and expertise.
- Through its assessments, the IPCC identifies the strength of scientific agreement in different areas and indicates where further research is needed. The IPCC does not conduct its own research.

6. Working Groups and Task Force of IPCC

- The IPCC is divided into three working Groups and a task force.

- Working group I deals with the physical science basis of climate change, working group II with Climate change impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability, and Working group III with the Mitigation of Climate Change.
- The main objective of the Taskforce on National greenhouse gas inventories is to develop and refine a methodology for the calculation and reporting of national greenhouse gas emissions and removals.
- Alongside the working Groups and the Taskforce, other Task Groups may be established by the panel for a set time period to consider a specific topic or question.
- One example is the decision at the 47th Session of the IPCC in Paris in March 2018 to establish a Task Group to improve gender balance and address gender-related issues within the IPCC.
- That Task Group completed its work and their work was fundamental to the Panel Adoption and Gender Policy and Implementation Plan.

7. Structure of IPCC

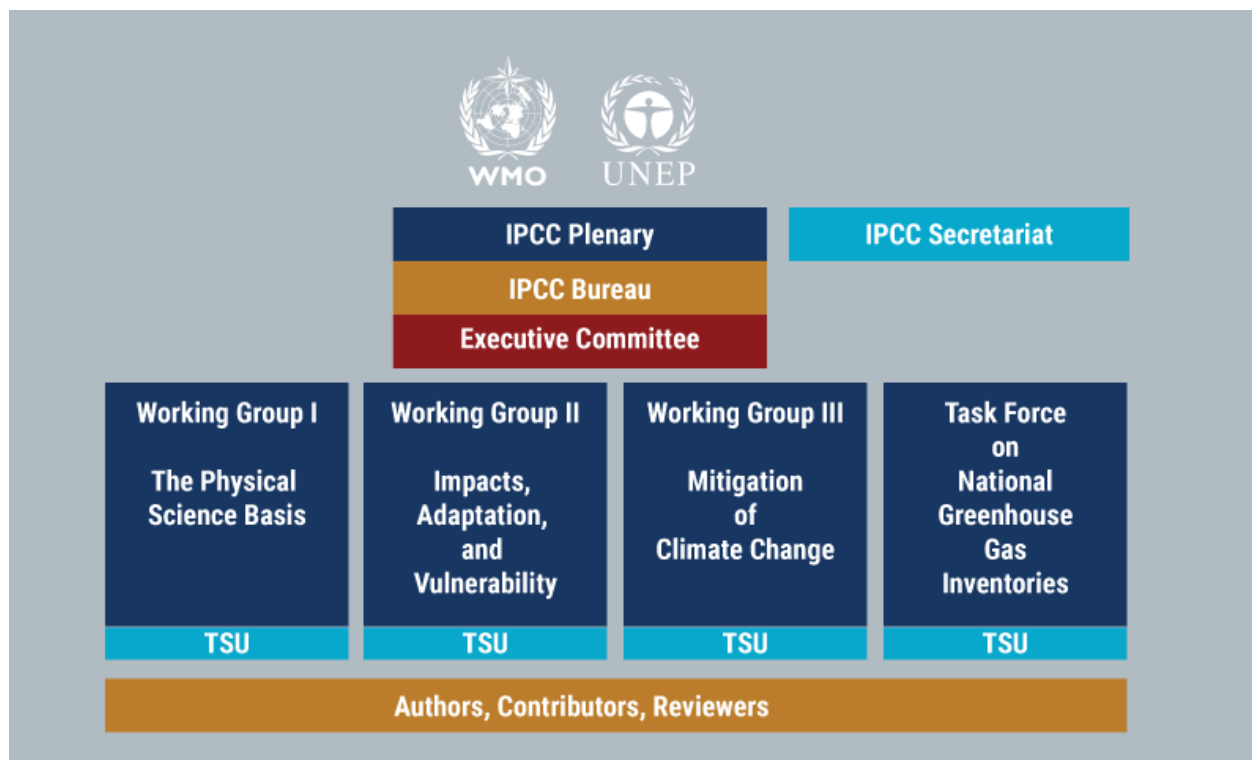


Image Source: IPCC

8. The Reports by IPCC

Since the creation of the IPCC, each Assessment Report has fed directly into international climate policymaking.

- In 1990, the First IPCC Assessment Report (FAR) underlined the importance of climate change as a challenge with global consequences and requiring international cooperation. It played a decisive role in the creation of the UNFCCC, the key international treaty to reduce global warming and cope with the consequences of climate change.
- The Second Assessment Report (SAR) 1995 provided important material for governments to draw from in the run-up to the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997.
- The Third Assessment Report (TAR) 2001 focused attention on the impacts of climate change and the need for adaptation.
- The Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) 2007 laid the groundwork for a post-Kyoto agreement, focusing on limiting warming to 2 degrees Celsius.
- The Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) was finalized between 2013 and 2014. It provided scientific input into the Paris Agreement.
- The IPCC is currently in its sixth Assessment cycle where it will prepare three special reports, a Methodology Report, and the Sixth Assessment Report.
- The First of these Special Reports, Global Warming of 1.5°C (SR15), was requested by world governments under the Paris Agreement.
- In May 2019, the IPCC finalised the 2019 Refinement an update to the 2006 IPCC Guidelines on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories.
- The Special Report on Climate Change and Land (SRCCL) will be finalized in August 2019 and the Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (SROCC) will be finalized in September 2019.
- The Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) is expected to be finalized in 2022 in time for the first global stocktake the following year.

9. Nobel Prize for IPCC

In 2007, the IPCC and U.S. Vice-President Al Gore were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measure that

are needed to counteract such things. The Prize was awarded at the end of the year which saw the IPCC bring out its Fourth Assessment Report (AR4).

LANDFILLS

1. Context

The Kochi landfill site around Brahmapuram that caught fire earlier this month is a stark reminder that Indian cities need to be prepared for more such incidents as summer approaches. Preventing such fires require long-term measures, including thorough and sustained interventions from municipalities.

2. What is a Landfill?

- A landfill site, also known as a rubbish dump, garbage dump, or dumping ground, is a site for the disposal of waste material. It is the oldest and most common form of waste disposal.
- US Environment Protection Agency (EPA) has established specific guidelines regarding the creation and management of Landfills.
- In India, landfills are managed under the new solid waste management rules (SWM), 2016.
- However, many of the guidelines have not been adhered to e.g., the Bhalswa landfill is right next to the Bhalswa lake. However, the SWM Rules 2016 mandate that the landfill site shall be 100 metres away from a river, 200 metres from a pond, 500 metres away from highways, habitations, public parks and water supply wells and 20 km away from airports/airbases.

3. How do landfills catch fire?

- India's municipalities have been collecting more than 95% of the waste generated in cities but the efficiency of waste processing is 30-40% at best.
- The municipal solid waste consists of about 60% biodegradable material, 25% non-biodegradable material and 15% inert materials, like slit and stone.

- Municipalities are expected to process the wet and dry waste separately and to have the recovered byproducts recycled.
- Unfortunately, the rate of processing in India's cities is far lower than the rate of waste generation, so unprocessed waste remains in open landfills for long periods of time.
- This openly disposed of waste includes flammable material like low-quality plastics, which have a relatively higher calorific value of about 2,500-3,000 kcal/kg, and rags and clothes.
- In summer, the biodegradable fraction composts much faster, increasing the temperature of the heap beyond 70-80 degrees celsius.
- A higher temperature coupled with flammable materials is the perfect situation for a landfill to catch fire. Some fires go on for months.

4. Reasons behind frequent landfill fires

- Landfills are the largest source of methane emissions which are highly flammable in nature and play a large role in the ignition of landfill fires.
- The decomposition of waste is largely anaerobic in a landfill, which results in the production of large quantities of methane and carbon dioxide.
- The surface fires at dumpsites are also caused by equipment-related factors. This includes debris trapped under machines, heat from equipment (exhaust pipes) and welding.
- These fires are also a result of human factors. Waste pickers who scavenge the waste may inadvertently start a fire by smoking in the landfill.
- The temperature of a region also aids in fire generation. For instance, the ongoing heat wave in Delhi enhanced the probability of fire in a landfill.

5. Impacts of Landfill fires

- Fore at the Bhalswa landfill site churned out dense plumes of smoke and turned the sky hazy grey leading to air pollution. Further, there is a release of a large amount of GHG gases.
- It causes health ailments in residents living nearby the landfill like sore throat, itchy eyes and breathing problems.
- A thick layer of smoke caused by fire impairs the visibility of commuters. For instance, vehicles travelling on the Pallavaram-Thoraipakkam 200 feet

radial road (near the perungudi dump yard) have been experiencing poor visibility since the onset of the fire.

- It also impacts the nearby schools in the vicinity which are forced to shut down temporarily in wake of children's health.

6. Solutions to manage landfill fires

- There are two possible permanent solutions to manage landfill fires.
- The first solution is to completely cap the material using soil, and close landfills in a scientific manner. This solution is unsuitable in the Indian context, as the land can't be used again for other purposes. Closed landfills have specific standard operating procedures, including managing methane emissions.
- The second solution is to clear the piles of waste through bioremediation excavate old waste and use automated sieving machines to segregate the flammable refuse-derived fuel (RDF) (plastics, rags, clothes, etc.) from biodegradable material.
- The recovered RDF can be sent to cement kilns as fuel, while the soil can be distributed to farmers to enrich the soil. The inert fraction will have to be landfilled. However, implementing a bioremediation project usually takes up to two or three years, necessitating a short-term solution for summertime landfill fires.

7. Government initiatives to control landfill fires

- The government of India has undertaken multiple large-scale national initiatives such as 'The Swachh Bharat Mission', 'The National Water Mission' and the Waste to wealth mission as a part of its commitment to effective waste & pollution management in India.
- Emphasis has also been laid on the approach of setting up Decentralised Waste processing sites within Cities to cater problem of fresh MSW and legacy waste management (Solid waste in landfills).

OLIVE RIDLEY TURTLES

1. Context

The mass nesting of Olive Ridley sea turtles, an annual phenomenon called 'arribada', began in Odisha's Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary on March 9, 2023 more than 10 days sooner than last year. As many as 503,719 turtles laid eggs in the last four days on the tranquil beaches of the sanctuary in Kendrapara district, the world's largest rookery of sea turtles.

2. Olive Ridley Turtles

- The Olive ridley turtles are the smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles found in the world.
- These turtles are carnivores and get their name from their olive-colored carapace.
- They are best known for their unique mass nesting called Arribada, where thousands of females come together on the same beach to lay eggs.
- They are found in warm waters of the Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian oceans.
- Odisha's Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary is known as the world's largest rookery of sea turtles.



Image Source: Down to Earth

3. Conservation of Olive Ridley Turtles

- Conservation of the Olive Ridley turtles in Odisha began with the discovery and worldwide recognition of the Gahirmatha rookery close to the mouth of the Brahmani-Baitarani (Dharma) River, in 1974.
- A second mass nesting was discovered in 1981 at the Devi River mouth, about 55 nautical miles south of Gahirmatha.
- In 1994, a third mass nesting area was also discovered at the Rushkulya river mouth, 162 nautical miles south of Gahirmatha.
- The Olive Ridley Turtles come to the beaches of the Odisha coast annually between November and December and stay on until April and May for nesting.
- Off late, nesting has been observed to start from late January to early February. The turtles choose the narrow beaches near estuaries and bays for laying their eggs.
- Each adult female lays approximately a hundred to hundred and forty eggs at a time.

4. Threats faced by Olive Ridley Turtles

- The Olive Ridleys face serious threats across their migratory route, habitat, and nesting beaches, due to human activities such as turtle-unfriendly fishing practices, and the development and exploitation of nesting beaches for ports, and tourist centers.
- Though international trade in these turtles and their products is banned, they are still extensively poached for their meat, shell, and leather.
- Turtles eggs, though illegal to harvest, have a significantly large market around the coastal regions.
- The most severe threat faced by the Olive Ridleys is the accidental killing of adult turtles through entanglement in trawl nets and gill nets due to uncontrolled fishing around nesting beaches during their mating season.
- Over 1.3 lakh turtles are believed to have been killed after being entangled in the nets of mechanized fishing trawlers in the last thirteen years.

5. Legislation for the Protection of Olive Ridley Turtles

- All five species of sea turtles occurring in India, including the Olive Ridley Turtles, are legally protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection

Act, 1972, and Appendix I of the CITES convention which prohibits trade in turtle products.

- The mass nesting beach of Gahirmatha is a part of Bhitarkanika Wildlife sanctuary and the waters around Bhitarkanika was declared as Gahirmatha (Marine) Wildlife Sanctuary in September 1997, to protect the nesting and breeding habitat of the Olive Ridley.
- The coastal waters off Devi and Rushikulya rookery are declared as a no-fishing zone during the sea turtle breeding season under the Odisha Marine.
- Fisheries Regulation Act (OMFRA), 1982, and Odisha Marine Fisheries Regulation Rules, 1983. The Coast Guard is empowered to enforce the provisions of the Act.
- To reduce accidental entrapment and death of turtles, the Odisha government has made it mandatory for the mechanized fishing trawlers to use Turtle Excluder Devices or TEDs, which is a specially designed net with an exit cover that retains the catch while allowing the turtles to escape.

6. Operation Olivia, 2014

- As the nesting period stretched over six months, the Indian Coast Guard undertakes the Olive Ridley Turtle protection program under the code name 'Operation Olivia' every year.
- Coast Guard District No.7 (Odisha) commenced Operation Olivia 2014 on 08 Nov 2014 under the coordination and control of Commander Coast Guard Region (North East).
- As part of the operation, fishing boats found close to the marine reserve area were regularly checked by the ship's boarding party for confirming the usage of turtle excluder devices (TEDs).
- Offenders were warned and reported to the Assistant Director of Fisheries. Close coordination was maintained with the fisheries and forest department during the entire operation.

7. Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary

- Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary is a marine wildlife sanctuary located in Odisha.
- It extends from the Dhamra River mouth in the north to the Mahanadi river mouth in the south.

- It is very famous for its nesting beach for olive ridley sea turtles.
- It is the one of world's most important nesting beaches for turtles.
- The olive ridley turtles turn up in millions for mass nesting along the Odisha coast every year. This phenomenon is referred to as 'arribada'.
- Apart from Gahirmatha, these aquatic animals turn up at the Rushikulya river mouth and Devi river mouth for mass nesting.
- Rushikulya river mouth is considered the second-biggest nesting site for

SILICON VALLEY BANK FAILURE

1. Background

- India remained a haven during the global financial crisis triggered by the collapse of investment bank Lehman Brothers in 2008, with domestic banks, backed by sound regulatory practices, showing strength and resilience.
- A decade and a half on, Indian banks remained unaffected by the failure of **Silicon Valley Bank (SVB)** and Signature Bank in the US last week, despite the global interconnectedness in the financial sector.
- Indian banks, especially the **domestic systemically important banks (D-SIBs)** that have operations overseas, are in the ear of startups and digitalisation.
- They are truly "**Too big to fail**" as is often assumed especially as ratings major Moody's issues a fresh warning of more pain ahead for the US banking system after the collapse of SVB.

2. Confidence in the resilience of Indian Banks

- A reason why an SVB-like failure is unlikely in India is that domestic banks have a different balance sheet structure.
- In India, we do not have a system where deposits are withdrawn in bulk quantities.
- Household savings constitute a major part of bank deposits in India this is different from the US, where a large portion of the bank deposits is from corporates.
- A large chunk of Indian deposits is with public sector banks and most of the rest is with very strong private sectors lenders such as **HDFC Bank, ICICI**

Bank and Axis Bank.

Customers need not worry about their savings and the government has always stepped in when banks have faced difficulties.

- In banking, confidence is important. You don't need any capital if the trust is 100 per cent and no amount of capital will save you if the trust is lost.
- In India, the approach of the regulator has generally been that depositors' money should be protected at any cost.
- The best example is the rescue of **Yes Bank** where a lot of liquidity support was provided.
- However, the failure of SVB did trigger nervousness in the stock markets, with bank shares taking a hit and investors losing money in the process.

2.1. ICICI Bank Crisis

- On September 30, 2008, as the benchmark Sensex fell 3.5 per cent to its lowest level in two years and panicked ICICI Bank Customers queued up outside ATMs in certain cities to withdraw their deposits, then Finance Minister P Chidambaram and the regulators SEBI and the RBI stepped in to calm the financial markets.
- Their assurances helped and the market closed 2.1 per cent up.
- In a rate statement, the RBI said the country's largest Private bank (ICICI Bank) was safe and had enough liquidity in its current account with the central bank to meet depositors' requirements.
- The RBI has arranged to provide adequate cash to ICICI Bank to meet the demands of its customers at its branches and ATMs.
- ICICI Bank closed 8.4 per cent higher, rebounding from a two-year low.

3. Classification of D-SIBs

- RBI has classified SBI, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank as D-SIBs.
- The additional Common Equity Tier 1 (CET 1) requirement for D-SIBs was phased in from April 1, 2016, and became fully effective from April 1, 2019.
- The additional CET 1 requirement was in addition to the capital conservation buffer.
- It means that these banks have to earmark additional capital and provisions to safeguard their operations.

- Under the D-SIB framework announced by RBI on July 22, 2014, the central bank was required, from 2015, to disclose the names of banks designated as D-SIBs and to place them in appropriate buckets depending on their Systemic Importance Scores (SISs).
- Depending on the bucket in which a D-SIB is placed, an additional common equity requirement applies to it.
- Based on data collected from banks as on March 31, 2017, HDFC Bank was classified as a D-SIB along with SBI and ICICI Bank.
The current update is based on data collected from banks as on March 31, 2022.

4. It's not the 2008 financial crisis again

- The Basel, Switzerland-based Financial Stability Board (FSB) an initiative of G20 nations has identified, in consultation with the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS) and Swiss national authorities, a list of global systemically important banks (G-SIBs).
- There are 30 G-SIBs currently including JP Morgan, Citibank, HSBC, Bank of America, Bank of China, Barclays, BNP Paribas, Deutsche Bank and Goldman Sachs. No Indian Bank is on the list.

5. RBI's selection of D-SIBs

- The RBI follows a two-step process to assess the systemic importance of banks.
- First, a sample of banks to be assessed for their systemic importance is decided.
- All banks are not considered many smaller banks would be of lower systemic importance and burdening them with onerous data requirements regularly may not be prudent.
- Banks are selected for the computation of systemic importance based on an analysis of their size (based on Basel-III Leverage Ratio Exposure Measure) as a percentage of GDP.
- Banks having a size beyond 2 per cent of GDP will be selected in the sample.
- Once the sample of banks is selected a detailed study to compute their systemic importance is initiated.

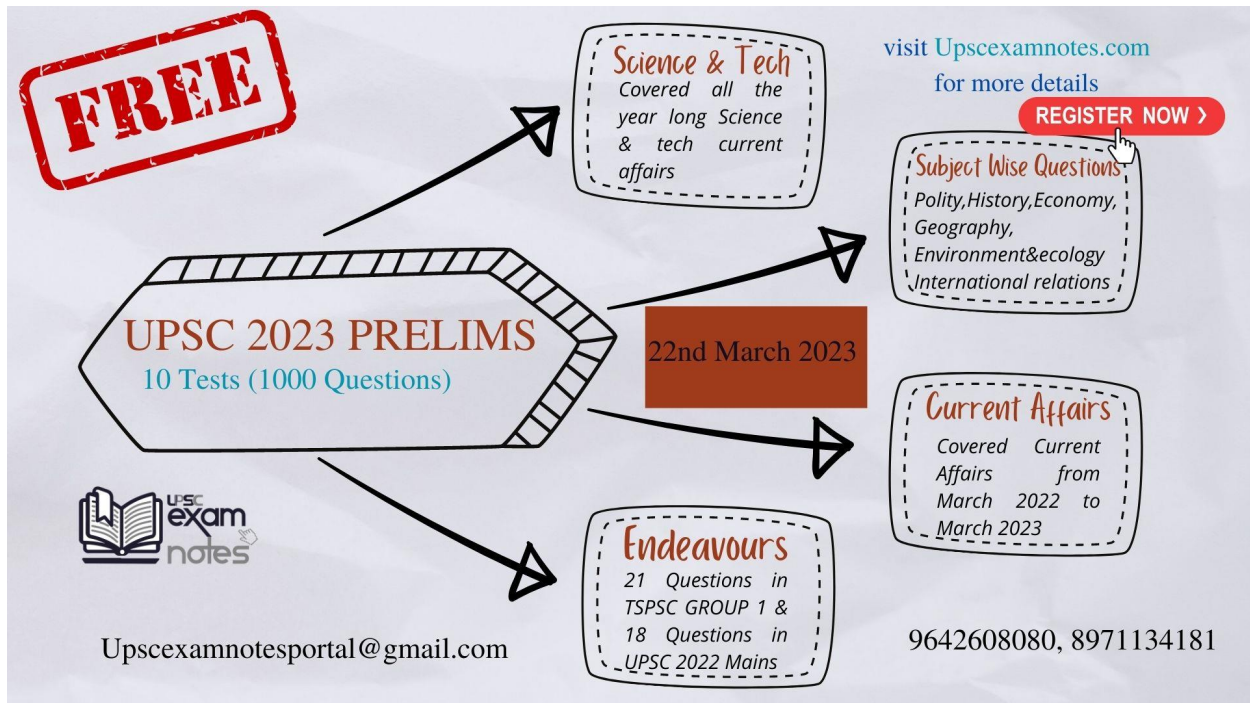
- Based on a range of indicators, a composite score of systemic importance is computed for each bank.
- Banks that have systemic importance above a certain threshold are designated as D-SIBs.
- Next, the D-SIBs are segregated into buckets based on their systemic importance scores and subject to a graded loss absorbency capital surcharge, depending on the buckets in which they are placed.
- A D-SIB in the lower bucket will attract a lower capital charge and a D-SIB in the higher bucket will attract a higher capital charge.

6. Importance for the creation of SIBs

- During the 2008 crisis, problems faced by certain large and highly interconnected financial institutions hampered the orderly functioning of the global financial system, which negatively impacted the real economy.
- Government intervention was considered necessary to ensure financial stability in many jurisdictions.
- The cost of public sector intervention and the consequential increase in moral hazard required that future regulatory policies should aim at reducing the probability and the impact of the failure of SIBs.
- In October 2010, the FSB recommended that all member countries should put in place a framework to reduce risks attributable to **Systemically Important Financial Institutions** (SIFIs) in their jurisdictions.
- SIBs are perceived as banks that are "**Too Big To Fail** (TBTF) due to which these banks enjoy certain advantages in the funding markets.
- However, this perception creates an expectation of government support at times of distress, which encourages risk-taking, reduces market discipline, creates competitive distortions and increases the probability of distress in the future.
- It is therefore felt that SIBs should be subjected to additional policy measures to guard against systemic risks and moral hazard issues.
- While the **Basel-III Norms** prescribe a capital adequacy ratio (CAR) of the bank's ratio of capital to risk of 8 per cent, the RBI has been more cautious and mandated a CAR of 9 per cent for scheduled commercial banks and 12 per cent for public sector banks.

7. Need to take precautions

- The failure of a large bank anywhere can have a contagion effect around the world.
- The impairment or failure of a bank will likely cause greater damage to the domestic real economy if its activities constitute a significantly large share of domestic banking activities.
- The impairment or failure of a large bank is also likely to damage confidence in the banking system as a whole.
- As a measure of systemic importance, size is more important than any other indicator and size indicators are assigned greater weight.
- The impairment or failure of one bank could potentially increase the probability of impairment or failure of other banks if there is a high degree of interconnectedness (Contractual obligations) between them.
- This chain effect operates on both sides of the balance sheet there may be interconnections on the funding side as well as the asset side.
- The larger the number of linkages and the size of individual exposures, the greater the potential for the systemic risk to get magnified, which can lead to nervousness in the financial sector.
- The greater the role of a bank as a service provider in the underlying market infrastructure like payment systems, the larger the disruption it is likely to cause in terms of availability and range of services and infrastructure liquidity in case of failure.
- Also, the costs for customers of a failed bank for the same service at another bank would be much higher if the failed bank had a greater market share in providing that particular service.



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General Studies III: Economy

CONSUMER RIGHTS

1. Context

The Department of Consumer Affairs will be celebrating World Consumer Rights Day, 2023 on Wednesday, 15th March 2023. In this regard, the Additional Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs, Mrs. Nidhi Khare interacted with media persons today and shared that the theme of World Consumer Rights Day, 2023 is “Empowering consumers through clean energy transitions”.

2. Significance of the Day

World consumer day is to raise the awareness about consumer rights and needs. It is a day to celebrate Consumers' power and demand that their rights be respected and protected.

The Inspiration behind World consumer Day was John F Kennedy, the former US President . He was the first world leader to address the issue of consumer rights in a special message to the US Congress on March 1961

These four important consumer rights are:

- Right to safety
- Right to be informed
- Right to choose
- Right to be heard.

3. Consumer rights

The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 outlines some basic consumer rights in India The basic consumer rights is the right to be informed, the right to choose, the right to safety, the right to be heard, the right to redress, and the right to consumer education

The first ever World Consumer Rights Day was started by the Consumer International, a membership organisation for consumer groups around the world It is a global organisation that ensures the protection and right use of consumer rights all around the world.

Consumer International was founded in the year 1960 as an independent and influential voice for consumers

CHIP 4 ALLIANCE

1. Context

US to reboot India's chip ambitions will help plug-in into global alliances. The deal between India and the United States on fostering private-sector cooperation in semiconductor manufacturing could have three main upsides from New Delhi's perspective.

2. What are semiconductor chips?

- Semiconductors are materials that have a conductivity between conductors and insulators. They can be pure elements, silicon or germanium or compounds, gallium, arsenide, or cadmium selenide.
- They are the basic building blocks that serve as the heart and brain of all modern electronics and information and communications technology products.
- These chips are now an integral part of contemporary automobiles, household gadgets, and essential medical devices such as ECG machines.

3. Importance of semiconductors

- Semiconductors are essential to almost all sectors of the economy including aerospace, automobiles, communications, clean energy, information technology, medical devices, etc.
- Demand for these critical components has outstripped supply, creating a global chip shortage and resulting in lost growth and jobs in the economy.
- In December 2021, the central government sanctioned ₹76,000 crores under the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme to encourage the manufacturing of various semiconductor goods within India.
- Semiconductors and displays are the foundation of modern electronics driving the next phase of digital transformation under Industry 4.0.

4. Indian Government steps

- In the year 2021, a 10 billion dollar production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme to encourage semiconductor and display manufacturing in the country.
- Fiscal support for a design-linked initiative (DLI) scheme to drive global and domestic investment related to design software, IP rights, etc.
- Modification in "Programme for Development of semiconductors and Display Manufacturing Ecosystem in India. The union cabinet has approved a uniform incentive of 50% of the project cost for setting up semiconductor, display, and compound semiconductor fabrication units.
- India semiconductor Mission (ISM) will be set up.
- Scheme for setting up compound semiconductors facilities.
- Vedanta and Taiwanese chip market Foxconn will set up a ₹1,54,000 crore semiconductor plant in Gujrat.

5. About Chip 4 Alliance

- The Chip 4 or Fab 4 alliance includes four of the world's top producers of semiconductors.
- The members of the chip 4 alliance include the U.S., Japan, Taiwan, and Korea.
- It represents more than 70 percent of the value of the global semiconductor industry.
- It was first proposed by the US in March 2022 as part of wider plans aimed at enhancing the "security" and "resilience" of semiconductor supply chains, including by reducing the world's reliance on chips made in China.
- It is intended to cooperate on policy implementation that would support sustainable semiconductor manufacturing in the member states home countries.

6. Goals

- Support industry efforts to diversify their manufacturing base in semiconductor production.
- Protect the Intellectual Property (IP) of companies in member countries.
- Develop policies regarding the export of the most advanced semiconductors and equipment.

7. Challenges

- The US has initiated discussions with India on aligning export controls and a new trade dialogue focused on these issues has been launched with the US Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security from Washington's side.
- Compliance with labor and other standards is also likely to be part of the commercial and strategic deals, especially in light of India's continued import of Russian oil.
- The G-7 countries led by the US, Australia, and the European Union had slapped price caps on Russian oil products to restrict Moscow's access to a potential funding source for its war on Ukraine, while still maintaining an incentive for the country to supply oil to the global market.

- As against greater engagement on the Indo-Pacific economic framework and strategic objectives such as manufacturing of chips etc, the trade-off for countries such as India could involve signing up on government-to-government level agreements on labor standards, environmental benchmarks, and anti-corruption yardsticks, etc.
- Apart from the Russian Oil issue, there could also be a nudge for New Delhi to join the trade pillar of the IPEF, given that, from Washington's perspective, the political appetite for a full-scale free trade agreement with India is simply not there in the US congress level at this point in time and that the IPEF is being pushed by Washington as a more practical substitute for any bilateral deals.
- Incidentally, New Delhi had opted out of the trade pillar of the IPEF citing reservations about commitments required on the environment, labor, digital trade, public procurement, etc.

Mains Corner

1. The Indian Constitution has provisions for holding joint session of the two houses of the Parliament. Enumerate the occasions when this would normally happen and also the occasions when it cannot, with reasons thereof (250 Words)

2. Who are PVTGs? Discuss the criteria followed for the determination of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). What are the issues faced by them? (250 Words)

3. What is Anticipatory Bail? Discuss the conditions for granting Anticipatory Bail (250 Words)

4. Critically examine whether MPLADS has helped in bridging the gaps in the provisioning of public services (250 Words)

5. There has been a prominent shift in India's Tibet Policy. Discuss (250 Words)

Prelims Corner

1. With reference to H3N2 virus, consider the following statements:

1. Influenza virus type A is further classified into different subtypes and one of them is the H3N2.
2. This virus usually preys on individuals below the age of 15 years or above 50 years of age.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- A. Only 1 B. Only 2 C. Both 1 and 2 D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer (C)

Both statements are correct

2. With reference to the recent amendments in the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) consider the following statements:

1. The Finance Ministry has amended money laundering rules to incorporate more disclosures for non-governmental organisations by reporting entities like financial institutions, banking companies or intermediaries.
2. It has defined “politically exposed persons” (PEPs) under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in line with the recommendations of the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- A. Only 1 B. Only 2 C. Both 1 and 2 D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer (A)

The Finance Ministry has amended money laundering rules to incorporate more disclosures for non-governmental organisations by reporting entities like financial institutions, banking companies or intermediaries. In addition, it has defined “politically exposed persons” (PEPs) under the Prevention of Money

Laundering Act (PMLA) in line with the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

3. Which of the following statements with reference to ‘safe harbour’, recently seen in news, is/are correct?

1. It is prescribed under Section 79 of the IT Act, 2000 as a legal immunity that online intermediaries enjoy against content posted by users on their platforms.

2. The concept originally came from Section 230 of the United States’ Communications Decency Act, which has been termed “one of the foundational laws behind the modern Internet”.

A. Only 1 B. Only 2 C. Both 1 and 2 D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer (C)

Both Statements are correct

4. Consider the following pairs recently seen in news:

1. David Chipperfield : Pritzker Laureate 2023

2. Greg Becker : former England football player

3. Gary Lineker : the chief executive officer who presided over the collapsed Silicon Valley Bank

How many pairs above are not correctly match?

A. Only one of the three pairs

B. Only two of the above pairs

C. All three of the above pairs

D. None of the above three pairs

Answer (B)

British architect and urban planner Sir David Chipperfield, 69, is the 2023 Laureate of The Pritzker Architecture Prize, the highest international honour for architects. The prize, which will be conferred on him at a ceremony in Athens in May, is in recognition of his four-decade practice in Europe, North America, and Asia.

Gary Lineker, former England football star and beloved pundit, on Friday (March 10) was asked to step back from presenting ‘Match of the Day’, BBC’s flagship football show, following backlash to his tweets on migration. “The BBC has decided that he will step back from presenting ‘Match of the Day’ until we’ve got an agreed and clear position on his use of social media,” the media organisation said in a statement.

Greg Becker, the chief executive officer who presided over the collapsed Silicon Valley Bank, joined the company three decades ago as a loan officer. The executive cut his teeth during the dotcom bubble and later steered the startup-focused lender in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis. He became president and CEO of SVB Financial Group in 2011.

5. With reference to Least Developed Countries (LDC), which of the following statements is not true?

- A. Bhutan will on December 13th, become the seventh nation to graduate from the United Nations’ (UN) list of Least Developed Countries (LDC).
- B. The UN identifies three criteria for a country to be classified as an LDC.
- C. LDCs are restricted by trade restrictions or tariffs when exporting their goods to wealthier nations.
- D. Currently, as per the UN lists the maximum LDCs are from Africa

Answer (C)

Statement C is wrong , There are no such restrictions exporting goods to only wealthier nations



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