

Forum IAS

7 PM COMPILATION

16th to 30th September, 2023

Features of 7 PM compilation

- ❖ Comprehensive coverage of a given current topic
- ❖ Provide you all the information you need to frame a good answer
- ❖ Critical analysis, comparative analysis, legal/constitutional provisions, current issues and challenges and best practices around the world
- ❖ Written in lucid language and point format
- ❖ Wide use of charts, diagrams and info graphics
- ❖ Best-in class coverage, critically acclaimed by aspirants
- ❖ Out of the box thinking for value edition
- ❖ Best cost-benefit ratio according to successful aspirants

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WHO Report on Hypertension-Explained Pointwise

[Kurukshetra 2023 September] Make In India-Challenges Opportunities and Outcomes- Explained Pointwise

[Yojana September 2023 Summary]Administrative Reforms-Explained Pointwise

In the last decade India has undertaken several **transformational administrative reforms** bringing the government and citizens closer. As India celebrated its 75th year of Independence as Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Prime Minister has given a clarion call for the adoption of **next-generation administrative reforms** for Viksit Bharat.

What have been the transformational administrative reforms brought by govt in the Last Decade?

In the last decade, the administrative reforms were driven by the government's maxim of "Minimum Government-Maximum Governance".

Major Administrative reforms implemented in the last Decade	
E-Governance Models	India's public institutions have been transformed into fully digital institutions. The Central Government's e-Governance models like Ayushman Bharat, PM's Jan Arogya Yojana , PM's Jan Dhan Yojana , One Nation One Ration Card and Passport Sewa Kendras have been successful in bringing transparency and openness to government processes.
Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS)	Online web-enabled system developed by National Informatics Centre (Ministry of Electronics & IT [MeitY]) , in association with Directorate of Public Grievances (DPG) and Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) . It provides the facility to lodge a grievance online from any geographical location. It enables the citizen to track online the grievance and also enables DARPG to monitor the grievance.
e-Samiksha	A real time online system for monitoring and follow-up action on the decisions taken by the Government at the Apex level in respect of implementation of important Government programmes/projects. Govt has been using this platform to weed out inefficient Officers through premature retirement .
Good Governance Index	This index has been launched by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions . It provide quantifiable data to compare the state of governance in all States and Union Territories(UTs).
Citizen Charters	It is a written document that specifies the commitment of the organisation towards fulfilling the needs of the citizens/customers. Citizen Charters for all Ministries/Departments which are updated and reviewed on a regular basis.

National Conference on e-Governance	It provides a platform for the government to engage with experts, intellectuals from industry and academic institutions to exchange experiences relating to e-Governance initiatives.
Mission Karmayogi	Mission Karmayogi is part of National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB) . It aims to build a future-ready civil service with the right attitude, skills and knowledge which is aligned to the vision of New India .
Lateral Entry	Induction of personnel from the private sector to the administrative post of the government. Lateral Entry helps in bringing the values of economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the Government sector because the personnel are not part of the bureaucratic setup.

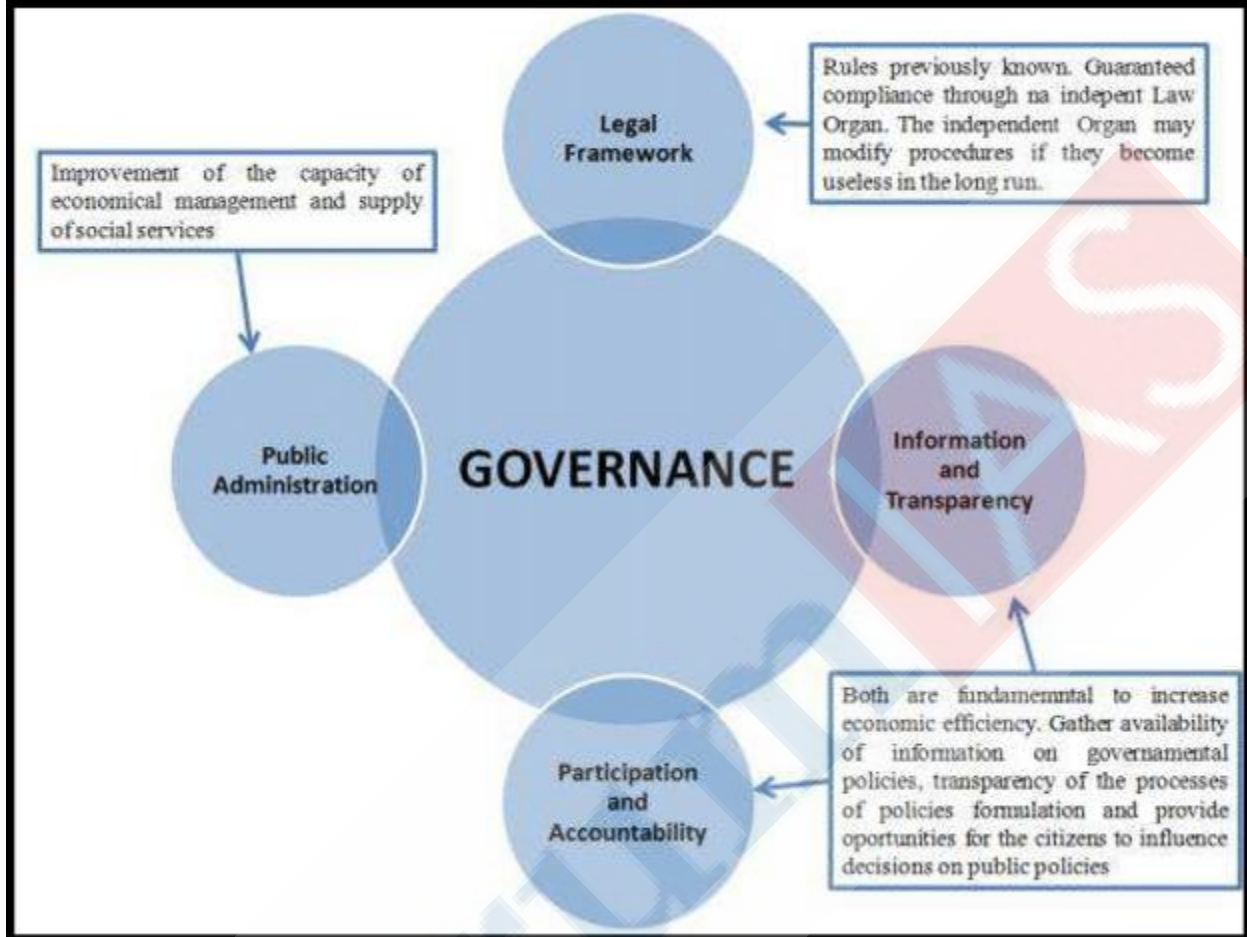
Read More-CPGRAMS Forum IAS, Lateral Entry Forum IAS

What are the next generation administrative reforms proposed for Vikshit Bharat?

Next Generation reforms are aimed at organisational reforms. These next generational organisational reforms when coupled with the already implemented reforms will make a Viksit Bharat as envisaged by the Prime Minister.

Next Generation administrative reforms	
Benchmarking Governance	All the Governance indices like the Good Governance Index(GGI), National e-governance service delivery Assessment(NeSDA) Framework must be expanded to all the states, UTs to benchmark governance.
Secretariat Reforms	Increasing efficiency in decision-making of secretariat by focussing on delaying, delegation of financial powers, adoption of e-office, swachhata campaigns for weeding out irrelevant files and minimisation of pendency.
Chintan Shivir	Every Ministry should conduct internal, in house deliberations to take a fresh look at their governance models by conducting regular Chintan Shivirs.
Restructuring of award Prime Minister's for Excellence in Administration	The restructured programme aims at inclusion of priority programs of the government. Its objective is to encourage constructive competition, innovation, replication and institutionalisation of best practices.

What is the significance of administrative reforms in India?



Source-World Bank

Efficient delivery of Government service – In recent times with the **technological advances, decentralisation and social activism** people's expectations of efficient delivery of government service has increased. These reforms help us fulfill these expectations.

Ensures transparency, accountability and rule of law-Administrative reforms ensures transparency, accountability and rule of Law. Fulfillment of these three objectives are of utmost necessity to develop a **Viksit Bharat**.

Enhancement of govt capacity – These reforms enhance the capacity of governments to carry out core government functions. This enhanced capacities are of particular importance in times of **natural calamities, hazards and COVID**.

Propels the pace of economic development-The removal of **Red Tapism, bureaucratic hurdles in clearance of licences** helps in the economic development of the country.

What are the challenges in administrative reforms in India?

Assured promotion system – Assured promotion irrespective of performance deters young officers from taking new and innovative initiatives as they have fixed hierarchy of promotions.

Prevalence of the 'transfer industry'-In most of the states, the principle of **three years regular tenure** of civil servants is not followed. These frequent transfers hamper the implementation of any comprehensive reforms.

Uneven utilisation of talent-There is **dominance of few elite services** in promotions, work allocations and assignments. Most of the coveted positions in the government are taken over by the elite services, which result in uneven utilisation of talent and adversely affect the morale of other services. For instance, specialist services like Indian Revenue Services, Indian Economic Services do not get adequate opportunities and representation in the work.

Red Tapism (Delay) and indecisiveness-This exists in many forms with the civil services. For example, regular queries by the superiors and delay in taking decisions. Sometimes it is necessary to take the opinion of the Ministry of Law or Ministry of Finance for taking an appropriate financial decision. All this delays the decision-making process.

Less Public Service Workforce – Only **4% of India's workforce** comprise public servants as compare to 22. 5% in the UK, 13.5% in the US and 28% in China.

Corruption nexuses-Corruption has become part of the bureaucratic machinery of India. The existence of corruption is a major challenge for initiating in any bureaucratic reforms.

What should be the way forward?

Mid-Career Appraisals-Mid-career appraisals should be conducted to weed out inept officers, and it should be done alongside finding **meritorious replacements** through lateral entry.

Reformation of state govt public employment policies-State governments must also reform public employment policies as combined employment of states is much more than GoI and state bureaucracy's interface with the ordinary citizen is much larger.

National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building – This is aimed at reshaping the **post recruitment training mechanisms** and **GoI's HR policies**.

Read More- [Administrative reforms The Indian Express](#)

Project Cheetah – Challenges and Significance – Explained Pointwise

India's ambitious Cheetah reintroduction programme **Project Cheetah** completed one year on 17th September 2023. Project Cheetah is India's ambitious cheetah relocation program aimed at establishing a self-sustaining population of about 35 cheetahs in the country over the next decade. However the Project has faced several criticisms with the death of 9 cheetahs (6 adults and 3 cubs) out of the 20 translocated cheetahs from Namibia and South Africa.

What is Project Cheetah?

Project Cheetah-Project Cheetah is the **world's first intercontinental large wild carnivore translocation project**. The project aimed at the reintroduction of Cheetahs in the country which had become extinct in 1950s in the country.

Status of Project-

Incoming Cheetahs	Status of Cheetahs	Future Action
First batch- 8 cheetahs from Namibia arrived on September 17, 2022 at Kuno Palpur National Park.	6 Cheetahs have died. 14 cheetahs are remaining. All the surviving 14 adult cheetahs and one cub are in captivity	There is talk of them being radio-collared again and released once the winter sets in. The project authorities are talking of additional sites being prepared for releasing the cheetahs such as the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary and Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary , both in Madhya Pradesh .
Second batch- 12 cheetahs from South Africa arrived on February 18, 2023 at Kuno Palpur National Park.		
*In late March 2023, one of the females gave birth to a litter of four cubs which were conceived in India.	*3 of the 4 cubs have died and 1 cub is being hand reared as the mother has rejected it.	

Key Facts about Cheetahs

CHEETAH FACTS:

- **Oldest** of the big cat species
- Ancestors can be traced back about **8.5 million years**
- Number of cheetahs just **under 7,500** individuals globally

IUCN's Red List recognises cheetahs as "**vulnerable**" species

- The Asiatic cheetah and the Northwest African cheetah are **critically endangered**
- Cheetahs have **lost 90%** of their global habitat
- They now live in **9%** of its historic range

Source-The Indian Express

Read More-[Difference between Asiatic and African Cheetahs](#)

Brief Historical Timeline of Project Cheetah

- **Earliest historical references of Cheetahs in India:**
- They are found in classical Greek records of India, from Strabo, about 200 years before the Common Era.
- In the **Mughal Period**, cheetahs were used very extensively for hunting. Emperor Akbar had 1,000 cheetahs in his menagerie.
- Central India, particularly the Gwalior region, had cheetahs for a very long time. Various states including **Gwalior and Jaipur** used to hunt cheetahs.
- **Extinction of Cheetahs:**
- The country's last spotted cheetah died in Sal forests of Chhattisgarh's Koriya district in 1948 and the **wild animal was declared extinct in the country in 1952**.
- Maharaja Ramanuj Pratap Singh, the ruler of a small princely state in today's Chhattisgarh shot India's last 3 surviving cheetahs.
- **1st plan to reintroduce the cheetah**-First solid steps were taken in the 1970s, during negotiations with **Iran**, then under **Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi**. Iran's cheetahs were Asiatic, like India's extinct animals. **The plan was to exchange Asiatic lions for Asiatic cheetahs.**
- **2009**-Another attempt to source **Iranian Cheetahs** was made in 2009 without success. Iran would not permit even cloning of its Cheetahs.
- **2012**-Supreme Court ordered a **stay on the reintroduction project.**
- **2020**-South African experts visited four potential sites: **Kuno-Palpur, Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary, Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary and Madhav National Park.**
- **2022**- Project Cheetah was officially launched by the Prime Minister.

What is the Significance of Project Cheetah?

Environmental Significance

Biodiversity restoration-Reintroduction of cheetahs helps in restoring the natural balance of the ecosystem by **reintroduction of a top predator** in the food chain. Cheetahs will help in the **restoration** of open forestland grassland ecosystems in India and enhances the ecosystem services like water security, carbon sequestration and soil moisture conservation.

Conservation efforts of other species-The success of Project Cheetah can serve as a **model for the reintroduction of other critically endangered species** which can motivate conservationists and governments to pursue similar efforts for other endangered species like the **Great Indian Bustard**.

Ecological research opportunities- Reintroduction of cheetahs provides unique opportunity for scientists to **study cheetah behaviour and ecology** in a new environment.

Economic Significance

Enhancement of tourism- The presence of cheetahs in Indian national parks **boosts wildlife tourism** and generates revenue. This has led to job creation like **Cheetah Mitras** and has benefited communities living around national parks and wildlife reserves by increasing their sources of income.

Social Significance

Social awareness about conservation- Debates on success of Project Cheetah has **raised public awareness** about wildlife conservation and the importance of protecting endangered species.

Socio-cultural significance- The reintroduction of cheetahs have also helped in **reviving their cultural importance** in India, as Cheetahs have historically been symbols of strength and agility in Indian mythology and folklore.

What are the possible reasons behind high cheetah mortality in Project Cheetah?

There has been death of 6 Cheetahs and 3 cubs which have highlighted the Drawbacks in the implementation of Project Cheetah.

Improper implementation of Livestock Importation Act 1898-According to the Livestock Importation Act 1988 the **prescribed time period of quarantine of animals is 30 days**. However there was delay in release of Cheetahs from their quarantine. Cheetahs were released after 60 days of quarantine. This **prolonged confinement of cheetahs in quarantine** has had adverse effects on their ability to adapt and has led to psychological adjustment issues.

Improper Scientific Assessment-The Action Plan of Project Cheetah mandated scientific assessment to establish the prevalence of **potential carnivore pathogens/diseases** at the release sites. Critics point to the lack of scientific assessment report in public domain. Also the three cheetah deaths have been attributed to **native pathogens**.

Improper Verification of Cheetahs selected for Translocation- Action Plan of Cheetah Relocation laid down detailed guidelines for proper verification of Cheetahs for their relocation. However critics point to the laxity in following the detailed Verification guidelines as the cause of death of the first Cheetah has been attributed to **pre-existing renal disease**.

Improper implementation of stated release procedure- The Action Plan of Cheetah reintroduction laid down proper guidelines for the **quarantine compartments of male-female, radio collaring and stated release procedure**. However the timelines prescribed and stated release procedures were not properly implemented.

What are the challenges being faced by Project Cheetah ?

Less protected area available for thriving Cheetah Population-Cheetahs are a low-density species with **1-2 Cheetahs existing in 100 sq kms**. Thus the newly introduced cheetahs will need about **5,000 sq km of good-quality habitat** to establish a viable population in India. The country currently does not have this extent of habitat for the cheetahs.

Less Prey availability- Experts have raised concerns about the cheetahs travelling **large distances to roam and hunt** which is not optimal in the current environment for their long-term survival.

Fragile Creatures-Unlike tigers and leopards, Cheetahs are comparatively fragile creatures and are more **prone to sustaining fatal injuries** in the wild.

Climate change impacts-Adapting to the impacts of climate change on the habitat and prey availability have posed challenges for the cheetah population's long-term survival.

Inter Species Competition- Tigers from the **Ranthambore Tiger Reserve** in Rajasthan, 140 km away from Kuno, migrate to the park. The proximity of these predators in the same ecosystem has also posed a serious challenge for Project Cheetah.

Genetic Differences- Many experts have expressed concerns over reintroduction of African Cheetahs instead of Asiatic cheetahs. They believe that **Asiatic cheetahs** would have been a **more suitable choice** considering historical survival of species in the region and their ability to quickly acclimatize.

What should be the way forward for Project Cheetah?

Improvement of health monitoring- Regular health checks and early detection of health issues can help prevent deaths like **Sasha's from kidney disease** and gastritis.

Strengthening collaboration- Enhancement of cooperation between Indian authorities, international conservation organizations and experts to **share knowledge and best practices** for cheetah reintroduction.

Coordination with other countries- Collaboration with countries like **South Africa and Namibia** to exchange knowledge and best practices in cheetah conservation.

Expansion of habitat area- Preparation of additional sites for release of the cheetahs such as the **Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary and Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary** so as to increase their habitat and prey areas.

Establishment of a long-term monitoring plan- Development of a **comprehensive plan** to monitor the cheetah population, track their movements and evaluate the overall success of the reintroduction project.

Encouraging community based conservation- Involvement of **local communities** in conservation efforts by providing economic incentives and opportunities for sustainable development such as ecotourism or community-led wildlife management.

Government has initiated efforts in removing the anomalies of Project Cheetah by constituting a 11 member task force under the chairmanship of **Rajesh Gopal**. Success of Project Cheetah will be a landmark success for conservation efforts in India.

Read More- [One year on, India's cheetah project shows a spotty report card](#)

Women Reservation Bill-Explained Pointwise

Women Reservation Bill has been tabled in the Lok Sabha as Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam 2023. Women Reservation Bill/Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam 2023 seeks to **reserve one-third of all seats for women** in the Lok Sabha and the state legislative assemblies.

Key Provisions of Women Reservation Bill 2023/Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam 2023

Reservation for women- The Bill reserves one-third of all seats for women in Lok Sabha, state legislative assemblies, and the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Additionally, this reservation will also extend to the seats reserved for SCs and STs in Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies.

Commencement of reservation- The reservation will be effective once the census conducted after the commencement of this Bill has been published. Based on the census, delimitation will be undertaken to reserve seats for women.

Period of Reservation- The reservation will be provided for a period of 15 years. However, it shall continue till such date as determined by a law made by Parliament.

Rotation of seats- Seats reserved for women will be rotated after each delimitation, as determined by a law made by Parliament.

What is the Historical Background of Women's Reservation Bill/Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam 2023 ?

Political reservation of woman has been a long standing demand since the pre-independence period. Various committees have favoured political reservation of women.

Political Reservation of women- A brief journey

During the National Movement- The three women bodies sent a letter to the British Prime Minister in 1931 seeking political reservation for women.

Constituent Assembly- The issue of women reservation also came up in Constituent Assembly debates. However it was rejected on the grounds that a democracy is expected to give representation to all groups.

The Committee of the Status of Women in India 1971 and The National Perspective Plan for Women in 1988- Both these committees recommended reservation of women in the local bodies. These recommendations paved the way for the **73rd and 74th amendments** to the Constitution which mandate all State governments to reserve one-third of the seats for women in the local bodies.

However, the issue of reservation in the Parliament and Legislative Assemblies still remained and the Women's Reservation Bill was brought in this regard.

Historical Background of Women's Reservation Bill

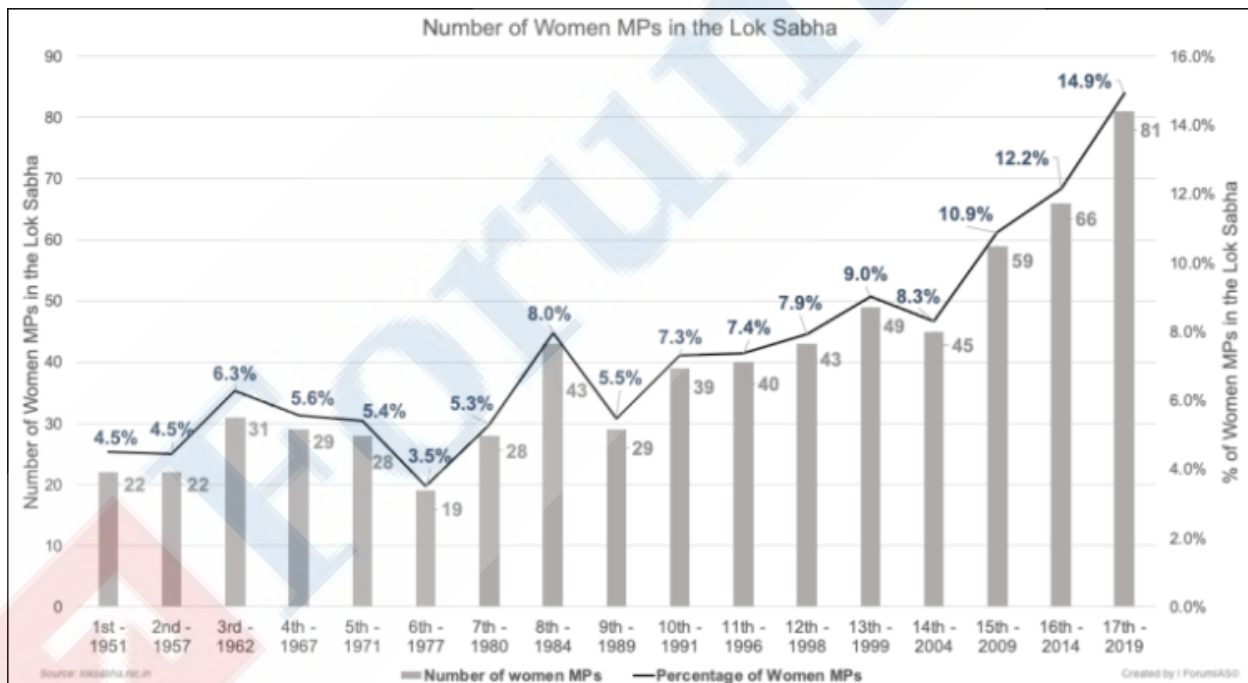
1996	The Women Reservation Bill was first introduced in 1996 as 81st Constitutional Amendment Bill by Deve Gowda Govt . The bill was referred to the select committee of parliament headed by Geeta Mukherjee . However the Bill lapsed with the dissolution of the Lok Sabha as no consensus could be formed over reservation for OBC women.
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1999	The Bill was reintroduced by the NDA government in the 13th Lok Sabha and was subsequently introduced twice in the year 2003. However the bills could not be passed and hence they lapsed.
2004	The UPA government included reservation bill in its Common Minimum Programme and tabled it in Rajya Sabha to prevent it from lapsing again.
2010	Women's Reservation Bill introduced as 108th Constitutional Amendment Bill 2008 was passed in the Rajya Sabha and lapsed in the Lok Sabha. RJD, the JD(U) and the SP were its most vocal opponents. They demanded 33% reservation for backward groups within the 33% quota for women.

Read More- [Provisions of the Women Reservation Bill 2008](#)

What are the arguments in favour of the Bill?

Increase in the political representation of women- According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) 'Women in Parliament' Report (2021), India ranks **lower than 140 other nations** in terms of the number of women serving in their national legislatures. Even though the representation of women in Lok Sabha has increased post independence (~16% in 17th lok Sabha), India is **behind a number of countries** of Africa and South Asia. (Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka).



Source-Forum IAS

Ability of Women leadership in Bringing Change- A 2003 study about the effect of reservation for women in panchayats showed that women elected under the reservation policy **invest more in the public goods** closely linked to women's concerns. Ex-**Woman Sarpanch of Dhani Mayan Khan GP in Haryana** built a training centre for women and ensured that every village child went to school. A 2004 paper by Esther Duflo and Raghavendra Chattopadhyay on panchayats in West Bengal and Rajasthan found that women leaders invest more in public goods and ensure increased women's participation in panchayat meetings.

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Step towards Decriminalisation of Politics- Reserved seats for women would help in decriminalisation of Indian Politics. In the present Lok Sabha **159 MPs have declared serious criminal cases against them** including those of rape, murder, attempt to murder, kidnapping, crimes against women.

Addressing Crime Against Women- Women Reservation Bill help in addressing crime against women in the society. **Rape cases and domestic abuse cases** will decrease with increased representation of women.

Increasing the number of seats commensurately with Vote share- Though women's vote share has increased, the number of women in positions of politics has not increased commensurately. Women In India vote at par with men but their representation is very low as compared to men. Reserved seats will bring some **parity between the vote share of women and their representation** in the parliament/assemblies.

Breaking the patriarchal Mould of Indian Politics- Indian Politics has been patriarchal with top party positions and positions of power have been occupied by male. Women reservation bill will dismantle this patriarchal nature of Indian politics by **increasing women representation in the top posts of Political Parties.**

Changing Stereotypes- Increase in women politicians will help in changing the stereotyped image of **'women as only homemakers'** and there will be gradual acceptance of **'women as lawmakers.'**

Improvement of Economic Performance and Infrastructure- According to UN University, Women legislators improve the economic performance of their constituencies 1.8 per cent more than male legislatures. **Evaluation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana** shows the share of incomplete road projects is 22 percentage points lower in female led constituencies.

Learning from International Experience- Rwanda has 61% women parliamentarians who have been doing commendable work in healing wounds from **Rwandan Genocide.** Mandating a fixed percentage of female representation leads to increase in the overall representation of women. Rwanda has provided only 30% reservation but their women parliamentarians have reached 61% in 2018.

What are the arguments against the Bill?

No separate OBC reservation- The Bill provides separate reservation to Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes women within the existing quota of one third reservation of seats. However **OBC women which constitute 60% of women population have not been provided separate reservation** within the quota.

No reservation in the Rajya Sabha and legislative Councils- The Bill does not provide reservation to women in the Rajya Sabha and the legislative Councils.

Enactment of the Bill- Reservation for women in Parliament depends on the census and delimitation process. However, the census has been delayed and delimitation could be **politically sensitive**, especially impacting southern India, which has seen slower population growth due to its development progress.

Use of Women as proxies- Panchayats have witnessed the evolution of 'Panchayat Patis' who use their wives as proxy candidates for reserved seats. They wield the real power. There are fears

that we might witness the evolution of **'MP and MLA Patis'** with extension of reservation to women in Parliament.

Against the Principles of Equality enshrined in the constitution- Opponents of women reservation argue that the idea runs counter to the principle of equality enshrined in the Constitution. The bill can **perpetuate the unequal status of women** since they would not be perceived to be competing on merit.

Women not homogeneous group like caste groups- Women are not a homogenous community unlike a caste group. As a result, the same arguments used to justify caste-based reservations cannot be used to justify reservations for women. Women's interests **cannot be isolated from other social, economic and political strata**.

Restriction of Choice of Voters- Reservation of seats for women would restrict the choice of voters. Opponents of the Bill have suggested alternate methods like **reservation for women in political parties and dual member constituencies** (where constituencies will have two MPs with one of them being a woman).

Lack of widespread consultation before the introduction of bill in the parliament- The bill was introduced through a "supplementary list" in a hastily organised Parliament session. However something as vital as a constitutional amendment for women's reservation should have been introduced after widespread discussion and analysis.

What should be the way forward?

In addition to Women's reservation Bill India needs to implement the following reforms for political empowerment of women-

Address the larger issues of electoral reforms such as **measures to check criminalisation of politics and influence of black money** to achieve the desired results of women reservation.

Institutionalisation of Intra party democracy for wider pool of women candidates.

Every Political Party **must nominate 33% women and 67% men for every election to Rajya Sabha and State legislative councils** to achieve true women representation.

Promotion of women participation at panchayat level through strengthening women self-help groups. This will ensure able women candidates for MP/MLA elections.

Strengthening women's agencies and organizations for building a progressive society with equality of opportunities among all citizens.

Promotion of girl's participation in College/Universities student political parties and political debate to increase their political prowess for future.

Read More- [PRS](#)

[Women Reservation Bill Indian Express](#)

India Canada Relations – Explained Pointwise

India Canada Relations are facing a serious downturn after Canada Prime Minister's Trudeau accused "**agents of the Government of India**" of killing of Canadian Khalistani leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar in June 2023. Mr. Trudeau's accusation has set off a **chain of events**. After Canada expelled a senior Indian diplomat, India summoned the Canadian High Commissioner and expelled Canada's Station chief for intelligence on Tuesday.

What is the history of India Canada Relations?

India Canada established diplomatic relations in 1947. This relationship was to be built upon built shared traditions of democracy, pluralism and strong interpersonal connections.

However, India Canada relations witnessed deterioration in the political domain despite economic engagement, regular high-level interactions and long-standing people-to-people ties.

Thaw in India Canada Political Relations

Canada's support for Plebiscite in Kashmir – Canada supported a plebiscite in the Indian state of Kashmir in 1948.

Canada's opposition to India's nuclear tests – In the aftermath of the nuclear tests, India's relations with Canada deteriorated as Canada recalled its high commissioner to India following the nuclear tests. India's reluctance to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) further widened the gulf between New Delhi and Ottawa for many years.

Khalistan Issue – Relations between India and Canada have remained strained due to Canada's alleged leniency toward supporters of Khalistan.

However, during the tenure of Conservative Party's **Stephen Harper** as Canadian PM from 2006 to 2015, Canada and India enjoyed strong relations. This period was marked by 19 high-level visits from Canada to India and **the joint celebration of 2011 as the Year of India in Canada**.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Canada in 2015 was the first bilateral visit by an Indian PM since 1973. India Canada relation was **elevated from bilateral relation to a strategic partnership**. **The government** hailed the visit with the assumption that decades of mistrust over the Khalistan issue could be brushed aside.

However, India Canada diplomatic relations have **deteriorated further since 2015** due to the Khalistan protests that have increased in the recent times.

The Khalistan Shadow over India Canada Relations over the years

During Militancy In Punjab

1982- Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau (Justin Trudeau's father) declined to extradite **Talwinder Singh Parmar** accused of killing two police officers in Punjab.

1984- In the aftermath of **Operation Bluestar** (launched by the Indian army to root out militants from the Golden Temple in June 1984) bolstered the Khalistan movement among the diaspora.

1985- Babbar Khalsa(Khalistan separatist organisation) orchestrated the **bombing of Air India Kanishka** in June 1985 which resulted in 331 civilian deaths.

Post 2015 Period

2015- Justin Trudeau's **proximity to individuals sympathetic to Khalistan's** cause strained bilateral relations.

2017- The then Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh refused to meet Canadian Defence Minister **Harjit Singh Sajjan**, accusing him of associating with separatists.

2018- India got aggravated when Jaspal Atwal convicted of attempting to assassinate an Indian Cabinet minister in 1986 was invited to dine with Trudeau during his Visit to India. Trudeau got a **cool reception** during his visit to India when he was received at the airport by Minister of State for Agriculture Gajendra Singh Shekhawat instead of PM Modi.

2019- The annual '**Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada**' released in December 2018, mentioned 'Sikh extremism' and Khalistan for the first time. However, in 2019 Canada revised the report just a day before Vaisakhi, **removing all mentions of Khalistan and Sikh extremism**.

2020- India accused **Trudeau of inciting extremists** when he expressed concerns about New Delhi's response to the farmers' protest and pledging support for their rights.

2022- In March 2022, Trudeau's Liberal Party formed an alliance with the New Democratic Party (NDP), led by **Jagmeet Singh**, who openly endorsed the Khalistan Referendum on Canadian soil.

2023- During the recent G20 summit in New Delhi, PM Modi conveyed "**strong concerns**" about "**continuing anti-India activities of extremist elements**" in Canada.

What is the Significance of India-Canada Relations?

Cooperation in Indo-Pacific- Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy has listed India an important partner in the Indo-Pacific region. It has marked out China as an "increasingly disruptive global power", while referring to India as a "critical partner" with shared traditions of democracy and pluralism.

Trade and commerce – India is Canada's tenth-largest trading partner. Bilateral trade between India and Canada stands at **USD 5 billion**. More than 400 Canadian companies have a presence in India and more than 1,000 companies are actively pursuing business in the Indian market. **Canadian pension funds** have pledged over USD 55 billion in investments between 2014 and

2020. Canada and India are working toward a **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement and a Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPA)**.

[Figures in billion US Dollars]

Details	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
India's Exports	1.692	1.841	2.065	1.754	2.064	2.581
India's Imports	1.477	1.667	2.268	1.881	2.024	2.635
Total	3.169	3.508	4.333	3.635	4.088	5.216

[Source: Statistics Canada]

Source-Statistics Canada

Development Cooperation- Canada has invested nearly **\$24 million in 2018-2019** to support 75 projects in India through its Non profit organisations like Grand Challenges Canada.

Energy sector – India and Canada signed a **Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (NCA)** in 2010 for which a Joint Committee on Civil Nuclear Cooperation was constituted by both the countries. Uranium supply deal has been signed during PM Modi's visit in 2015.

S&T and Space- ISRO and CSA (Canadian Space Agency) have signed MOUs for cooperation in the field of exploration and utilisation of outer space. **ANTRIX**, the Commercial arm of ISRO, has launched many Canadian Satellites.

Education Sector – Since 2018, India has been the largest source country for international students in Canada. This has helped Canadian universities and colleges to provide **subsidised education to domestic students**.

Indian Diaspora- Canada hosts one of the largest Indian diasporas in the world numbering **1.6 million (PIOs and NRIs)** which account for more than 3% of its total population. The diaspora has done commendably well in every sector in Canada. In the field of politics, the present House of Common (total strength of 338) has 22 Members of Parliament of Indian-origin.

Read More- [Forum IAS](#)

What are the Challenges in the Relations between the two countries?

Khalistani separatist factor- It is the single most important challenge between India and Canada. The **Canadian government's Policy of balancing the Sikh assertions and its relations with India**, has jeopardised the India Canada Relations.

Attacks on Indian Consulates and Indian Diaspora- The attacks on **Non-Sikh Indian Diaspora, Indian Consulates and Temples** have further strained the India Canada Relations.

Trade Challenges- Structural impediments such as complex labour laws, market protectionism, and bureaucratic regulations have been roadblocks for Indo-Canadian trade relations. Bilateral agreements, such as the **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** and

Investment Promotion and Protection Agreements (BIPPA), have been in negotiation for long time and no progress has been reached by both the countries. Before the G20 summit, the Canadian government **independently halted trade negotiations** with India. All these have contributed to low Indo-Canadian trade.

Close relationship of China and Canada – There is a close relationship between the current federal government of Canada and the Chinese Communist Party's government. This has also strained India-China relation.

What Should be the way forward?

In recent times, Government of India has effectively conveyed to Canada that they **cannot simultaneously have** good relations with India while allowing anti-India separatist movements on their soil.

Constructive and Sustained Engagement- India will have to build a **constructive and sustained engagement** with the Sikh diaspora, **dispel the misinformation** propagated by the Khalistani separatists and showcase the sense of contentment prevailing in Punjab.

New Framework of Cooperation- There is a need to develop a **new framework of cooperation** that is more pragmatic and that emphasises on mutually beneficial areas, such as **trade, energy, infrastructure and transport**, for better Indo-Canadian relations.

Dehypenation- India and Canada must **dehypenate** their political contestations over the Khalistan issue and their trade and investment relations. Both the countries must look to be back on the trade negotiations table back soon to **finalise the Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** between the two countries.

Civil Society and Track II Diplomacy- India and Canada must encourage civil society organizations and **Track II diplomacy** initiatives to foster people-to-people connections, dialogue and conflict resolution efforts.

Media and Public Diplomacy- Promotion of **responsible reporting** to ensure that media coverage and public discourse accurately reflect the complexities of the relationship and the efforts being made to strengthen it.

Read More- [Indian Express](#), [The Hindu](#)

Delimitation Exercise- Explained Pointwise

Recently, **Delimitation exercise** which is carried out by the delimitation commission has been in news during the parliamentary debates over the passage of the Women reservation bill/Nari Shakti Vandana Adhiniyam. According to the bill, women reservation will come into effect only after **delimitation** is carried out based on the figures of the **first census** conducted after the passage of the bill.

Who conducts the Delimitation Exercise?

Delimitation is the act or process of fixing limits or boundaries of territorial constituencies in a country to reflect the changes in population. In India the task of delimitation exercise is assigned

to a **high power body**. Such a body is known as **Delimitation Commission or a Boundary Commission**.

Constitutional basis of Delimitation Commission

Article 82	Article 82 mandates the Parliament to enact a Delimitation Act and constitute Delimitation commission after every Census.
Article 170	Article 170 provides for the division of territorial constituencies of states by the Delimitation Commission after every Census.

Absolute powers to the Commission- Delimitation Act mandates that the **Delimitation Commission's orders are final and cannot be questioned before any court** as it would hold up an election indefinitely. When the orders of the Delimitation Commission are laid before the Lok Sabha or State Legislative Assembly, they cannot effect any modification in the orders. The Delimitation Commission is to work without any executive influence.

Composition of Delimitation Commission

Appointment	The Delimitation Commission is appointed by the President of India and works in collaboration with the Election Commission of India .
Members	Retired Supreme Court judge (Chairperson) Chief Election Commissioner Respective State Election Commissioners

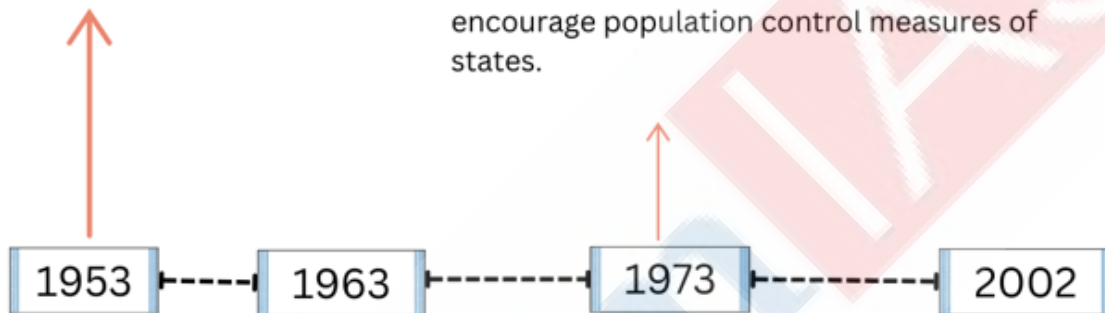
Historical Timeline of Delimitation Exercises

The Union government creates the Commission once the Delimitation Act is in effect. Under the Delimitation Acts of 1952, 1962, 1972, and 2002, **Delimitation Commissions were established four times- in 1952, 1963, 1973 and 2002**. The commission was not created after the **1981 and 1991 Censuses**.

Historical Timeline- Delimitation Commissions

1. **First delimitation commission** based on census 1951 data headed by **Justice N Chandrasekhara Aiyar**.
2. Fixed the Lok Sabha Seats at **494**.

1. **Third Delimitation** commission based on 1971 census headed by **Justice J L Kapur**
2. Increased the seats of the Lok Sabha from **522 to 543** and assembly seats from **3771 to 3997**.
3. **42nd amendment Act 1976** froze any further delimitation of constituencies for elections to Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies until the 2001 Census of India. This was to encourage population control measures of states.



1. **Second Delimitation commission** based on 1961 census.
2. Increased the Lok Sabha seats from **494 to 522**

1. There were **no delimitation exercises** after 1981 and 1991 census.
2. **Fourth Delimitation commission** was based on the 2001 census data headed by Justice Kuldeep Singh.
3. There was **only readjustment of boundaries and no increase in seats** of Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies.
4. **84th amendment 2002** froze any increase in seats till 2026.

What is the Significance of Delimitation Exercise?

Ensuring Proportional Representation- Delimitation Exercise provides **equal representation to equal segments of population**. The Delimitation Commission chooses the number and boundaries of the constituencies in such a way that the population of each seat is the same, as far as possible.

Reservation of seats for SCs and STs- Delimitation exercise conducted by the delimitation commission **specifies seats in areas with sizable scheduled castes and scheduled tribes** population which are to be reserved for those communities.

Impartial Exercise- The Delimitation Commission is a panel with legislative backing but it **operates independently of the government and political parties**. Rulings of the commission

cannot be challenged in the parliament or any courts. This ensures its impartial functioning in the delimitation exercise.

One Vote one Value- The delimitation exercise by the Commission ensures that the **sacred principle of “One Vote One Value” is followed.**

What are the criticisms of the Delimitation Exercise in India?

No change in the number of seats despite increasing population- 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act 1976 froze the number of seats of the Lok Sabha and the state legislative assemblies based on the census 1971 figures. Further the **84th Constitutional Amendment Act** also froze the number of seats based on 1971 census till 2026. Thus the delimitation exercises by the delimitation commission are **only cosmetic changes with the alteration of boundaries only.**

Skipping of the delimitation exercise- Even though the constitution mandates the conduction of delimitation exercise after each census, governments have skipped the creation of delimitation commissions after the **1981, 1991 and 2011 census.** Growing population is not reflected by these delimitation exercises.

Read More- [Delimitation in J&K](#)

What are the Challenges with Conducting Delimitation Exercise in India?

Disadvantageous for States that have controlled their population- Delimitation exercise is **disadvantageous to states that have controlled their population(Southern States).** Delimitation will benefit states that have not controlled their population as they will end up with higher number of seats in the Lok Sabha (**Like Bihar and UP**).

Disadvantageous for regional parties- Southern regional parties like **DMK, TDP, YSRCP** that have presence in their states only will be in a disadvantageous position. **Their share of seats and bargaining power will decrease** in the Lok Sabha.

Can fuel separatist movement- The delimitation exercise based on the recent census data can fuel separatist regional movements like **Dravida Nadu** and it will hamper the federal political structure of the Country.

Delay in Delimitation can delay the implementation of Women’s reservation- The Women reservation bill/Nari Shakti Vandana Adhiniyam has been linked with the delimitation process. Since delimitation is itself a contentious issue this **can delay the implementation of women Quota.**

What Should be the Way Forward for the delimitation exercise?

Development of National Consensus- Any step towards delimitation exercise must be based on National Consensus and the fears of the regional Political parties must be addressed.

Incentivising the population controlling states through Finance Commission- The Finance commission must evolve formula to reward the states which have controlled their Population financially.

Read More- [Election Commission of India](#)

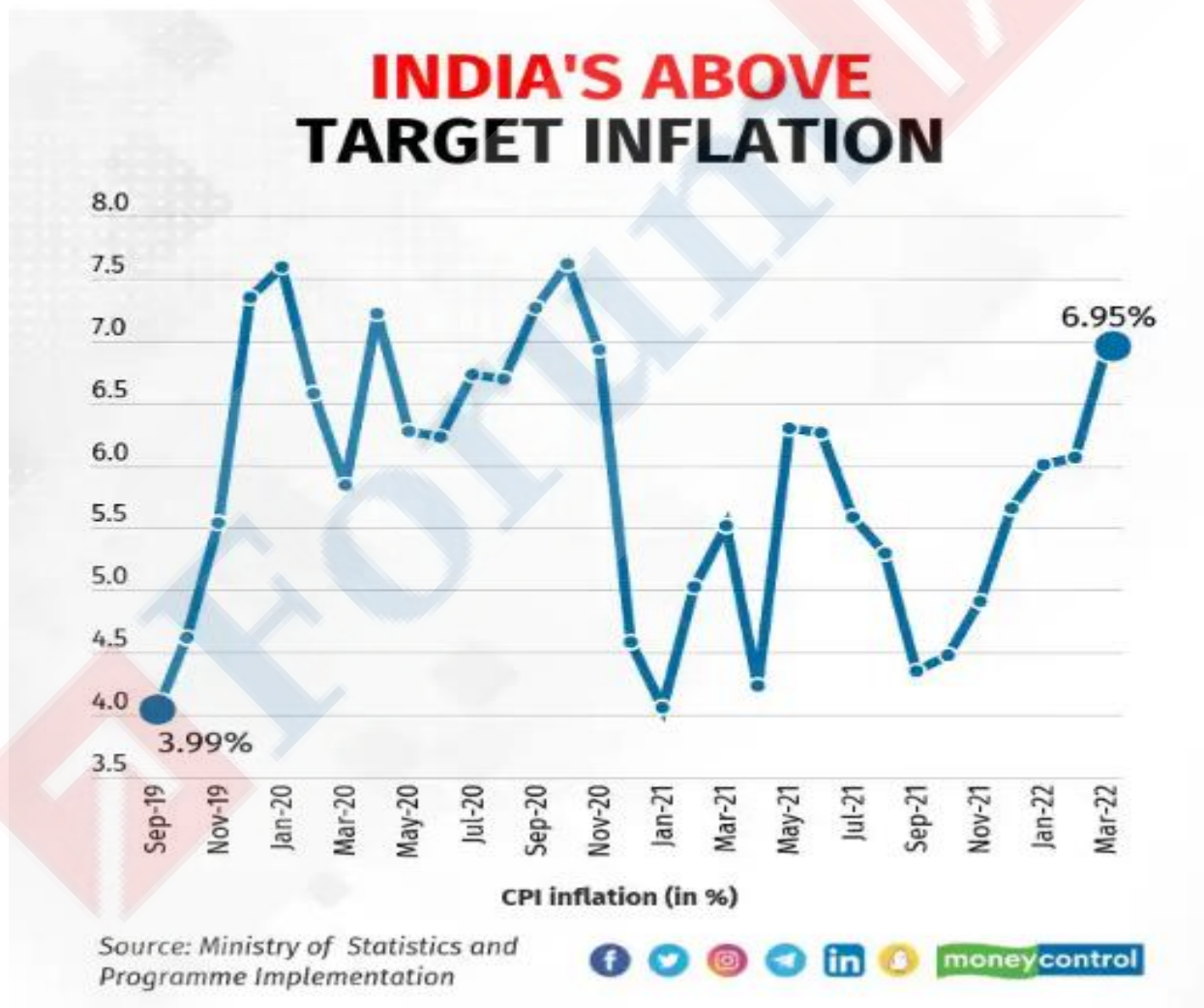
Inflation Management in India-Present Challenges- Explained Pointwise

Inflation management in India has been in the news due to rising prices of essential goods and commodities. With the failure of RBI and govt to control the spiralling inflation in the economy, economists have pointed to **explore alternative ways of Inflation Management** in the country.

What is the present level of Inflation in the Economy?

Current Inflation in the economy Consumer Price Index (CPI) estimates show that CPI Inflation moderated to **6.8% in August from 7.4% in July**. Food inflation is still high even though it has come down from a high of 11.5% in July to 9.94% in August. The dip is primarily a result of moderation in vegetable price inflation. However, two major food categories, cereals and pulses, continue to show double-digit inflation.

This present level of inflation is higher than the **upper limit of the Inflation(6%)** which has been set by the Govt.



Source-Money Control

Read More- [Inflation in wheat and rice](#)

What is Inflation?

Inflation- Inflation refers to the rise in the prices of most goods and services of daily or common use such as food, clothing, housing, recreation, transport, consumer goods. Inflation measures the average price change in a basket of commodities and services over a period of time.

Types of Inflation

Demand Side inflation	Demand Side Inflation is caused by high demand and low production which creates a demand-supply gap and it leads to a hike in prices due to increase in consumption.
Cost Pull inflation	Cost Pull Inflation is caused by shortage of factors of production like labour, land, capital etc. and also due to artificial scarcity created due to hoarding.

Inflation Target in India

The Reserve Bank of India is the authority to control inflation under **RBI Act 1934**.

Inflation Targeting Regime of RBI	
Began in 2016. Central govt fixes the target for RBI's Monetary Policy Committee for 5 years.	RBI has to retain the inflation target of 4%, with a tolerance band of +/- 2 percentage till March 2026.

Read More- [RBI Monetary Policy Committee](#)

How is Inflation Management done in India?

Inflation management is a complex task as inflation is caused by several factors such as demand-pull factors, cost push factors and structural factors. Therefore a mix of macro-economic policies are needed to manage the inflation in the economy.

Main Tools For Inflation Management	
Monetary Policy	Monetary Policy tool is employed by the RBI to control the supply of money in the economy. RBI applies the repo rate to control the supply of money in the economy. By increasing the repo rate RBI tries to bring down the rate of inflation in the economy.
Fiscal Policy	Monetary Policy tool is employed by the Govt manage inflation through public expenditure and taxation. Government tries to reduce inflation by raising the tax rates and reducing public expenditure.
Other tools for Inflation Management	
Export policy	The government can temporarily ban the export and imposes Minimum Export Price (MIP) to discourage exports of certain commodities to ensure their availability in the domestic markets. Ex-Recent rice export and onion export ban.
Price control Policy	Under the Essential Commodity Act 1955 , the government can declare a commodity as an essential commodity to ensure supplies to people at fair prices.
Anti-Hoarding and Anti-speculation Policy	The Prevention of Black Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 allows for

	detention of persons engaged in activities like hoarding, creating artificial scarcities of essential commodities in the market and rigging up of the prices.
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What are the present challenges with Inflation Management in India?

Rising Food Inflation- India's **food and oil components** of the consumer price index CPI are **about 50%**. The RBI has no control over the prices of food and oil. Therefore, it is left to squeeze less than 50% of the domestic economy to lower inflation. This is the biggest challenge for inflation management in India. **For Example-** Current CPI in India has been fuelled by the rising food and vegetable prices over which RBI's monetary policy is ineffective.

Failure in addressing supply shocks- Government has adopted a myopic vision in inflation management by focussing on **export ban of agricultural products (like wheat, rice, onions)**. Export bans induced fear and panic in the domestic market, led to rise in stock holdings which ultimately resulted in price rise. Instead government should have focused on addressing the supply shocks of agricultural products like **raising minimum procurement prices for cereals, onions** and supply of these items through PDS system.

Monetary Policy singular focus on demand side- RBI's monetary policy **targets only demand constraints**. It faces the problem of tackling Supply shocks originating from food and oil. If output is stabilised using macroeconomic policies, it can further lead to prices rise.

Flawed Model of Inflation targeting- Monetary Policy model used for Inflation management in India is **not statistically validated for Indian data**. The current model of Inflation targeting is based on the assumption that inflation means **overheating the economy-that is increased output greater than natural level output**. However, In India it is impossible to observe the actual level of output in an economy. Hence, setting policy rates based on the assumption that the economy has overheated is unscientific.

Exclusive Focus on Inflation slows down growth- RBI's current mandate of inflation management is too singularly focused on controlling inflation. **Inflation management has negatively impacted GDP growth**. High policy rates (repo) maintained to control inflation affected the cost of domestic capital. It led to a decline in investment rate thereby resulted in less GDP. **For example**, since 2016, (after inflation rate targeting was institutionalised), there has been a steady increase in repo rates, and a steady decline in GDP growth.

Adverse impact on other sectors- The cases of IL&FS, PMC Bank, PNB and YES Bank suggest that **poor management and maladministration in the financial sector can escape RBI scrutiny** as they tend to focus more on inflation management.

Global Nature of inflation- Inflation is global in nature as the price level of a good is determined by millions of producers across the world. Hence solely targeting inflation management is not good for the health of the economy as certain prices of goods are beyond our control.

What should be the way forward for inflation management in India?

Inflation management to shift from headline to core-inflation- RBI's mandate should be on managing the **core inflation (exclusion of fuel and food) rather than headline inflation**. There must be incorporation of other growth indicators such as **nominal GDP** explicitly into the framework.

Updation of the CPI Basket Weights- The weight of food and beverages in the CPI basket should be adjusted to **reflect current realities** as the weights are based on the **2011 consumption survey**.

Aligning the shut down period with global practices- **Shut down period** is the period, in which MPC members **maintain complete silence, i.e. no media coverage**. It is observed before a few days of a policy decision and till few days after the decision. It ensures no sudden volatility in the market and effective market transmission. **At present the shut period is seven-day** after the release of the monetary policy committee (MPC) resolution. The **RBI wants to reduce this to 3 days** after the resolution in line with the global practices. The RBI predicts that this will provide better monetary policy transmission (in RBI's Currency and Finance report)

Expansion in the ambit of Monetary Policy Committee(MPC)- The **inclusion of liquidity issues** like liquidity adjustment facility, changes in reverse repo, and OMOs in the MPC discussion may result in greater transparency and effective procedures.

Greater Tolerance of Higher levels of Inflation- Since Inflation is a global issue there must be greater tolerance for higher levels of inflation either by adjusting the acceptable range of inflation upwards, or by extending the period over which the MPC has to meet its inflation target.

Release Excess Buffer Stocks- The government holds more than 40 million tonnes of rice, much above the **buffer stock norms** of 13.5 MT. This excess stock should be unloaded by Food Corporation of India in the open market at reasonable prices. This will cool down the food inflation.

Enhancement of Processing Capacity- About **10-15 percent of perishable items** like tomatoes and onions should be processed. The availability of alternatives like tomato paste and onion powder will help to stabilize prices.

Adjustment of Import Duties- Import duties on items like wheat should be reduced as **cheaper imports** can help control domestic prices.

Read More- [Inflation Management Livemint](#)

Mediation Act 2023-Explained Pointwise

The **Mediation Act 2023** has been notified in the gazette of India after receiving the assent of the President of India on September 15 2023. The act **aims to promote** and facilitate **institutional mediation** for resolution of commercial and other disputes. It also seeks to encourage community mediation and to make online mediation as acceptable and cost effective process.

Key Features of Mediation Act 2023	
Settlement of Disputes through Mediation	The act requires persons to try to settle civil or commercial disputes through mediation before approaching any court or tribunal.

Pre-Litigation Mediation	The Act permits parties to a dispute (regardless of whether they have executed a mediation agreement) to voluntarily and mutually refer their dispute to mediation prior to filing a suit or instituting proceedings before any court. Pre-litigation mediation has been made voluntary(departure from earlier bill).
Time Period for completion of Mediation	Mediation proceedings under the Act must be completed within a period of 120 days from the date of the first appearance before the mediator, which may be extended for a maximum period of 60 days .
Setting up of Mediation Council of India	The act provides for the setting up of The Mediation Council of India. Its functions will include registering mediators, recognising mediation service providers and mediation institutes.
Forms of Mediation	The act aims to govern two forms of mediation- voluntary and mandatory. A voluntary mediation is where parties under a written mediation agreement seek mediation. Such an agreement may either be as part of a contract or exist independently. A Mandatory mediation is , where barring certain areas of disputes, there is a legal obligation on parties to mediate before approaching a court/tribunal.
Areas excluded from Mediation	The areas excluded from mediation include serious allegations of fraud, criminal offenses, environmental matters reserved for the National Green Tribunal , and matters relating to competition, telecom, securities and electricity law and land acquisition.
Court's Role during Mediation	The act will not prevent any court from referring any dispute to mediation relating to compoundable or matrimonial offenses connected with or arising out of civil proceedings between the parties.
Introduction of Concept of Community Mediation	Disputes likely to affect peace, harmony and tranquility amongst the residents or families of any area or locality can be mediated and settled by a panel of mediators appointed by the concerned Authority.

What is Mediation and what are other forms of alternate Dispute Mechanisms(ADR)?

Mediation- Mediation is a **voluntary process** in which parties try to settle disputes with the assistance of an independent third person (the mediator). It **does not impose a solution on the parties** but creates a conducive environment in which they can resolve their dispute. The

mediation process depends on the choice of parties and **there are no strict or binding rules of procedure.**

In India, mediation was legitimized by **Section 89 of the Civil Procedure Code, 1908** before the enactment of **Mediation Act 2023.**

Mediation is part of ADR (**Alternate Dispute Mechanism**).

Alternate Dispute Mechanism- ADR refers to means by which disputes are settled **outside the traditional court system.** In India, modes of ADR include arbitration, negotiation, mediation, and Lok Adalats.

A D R M e t h o d s	A r b i t r a t i o n	M e d i a t i o n	C o n c i l i a t i o n	N e g o t i a t i o n
N e u t r a l T h i r d P a r t y	A d j u d i c a t o r	F a c i l i t a t o r	F a c i l i t a t o r E v a l u a t o r	F a c i l i t a t o r
N a t u r	L e g a l	N o t L e g a l	N o t L e g a l	N o t L e g a l

e o f p r o c e e d i n g	y B i n d i n g	g a l l y B i n d i n g	g a l l y B i n d i n g	g a l l y B i n d i n g
L e v e l o f f o r m a l i t y	F o r m a l	I n f o r m a l	I n f o r m a l	I n f o r m a l
L e v e l o f C o n f i d e n t i a l i t y	C o n f i d e n t i a l i t y	C o n f i d e n t i a l i t y	C o n f i d e n t i a l i t y	C o n f i d e n t i a l i t y

l	e	o	e	o
i	r	n	r	n
t	m		m	
y	i	t	i	t
	n	r	n	r
	e	u	e	u
	d	s	d	s
	b	t	b	t
	y		y	
	l		l	
	a		a	
	w		w	

What is the significance of Mediation Act 2023?

Reduction of huge pendency of court cases cases- The act obligates each party to take steps to settle their dispute through **pre-litigation mediation** before approaching an Indian court. It will **reduce the filing of claims before Indian courts**. Our courts are already overburdened with 70 thousand cases in pending in Supreme Court and 60 lakh cases are pending in High Courts.

Strengthening of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)- The bill would facilitate quick disposal of disputes outside of traditional court systems. Mediation results in the amicable resolution of disputes in civil, commercial, family, and matrimonial affairs. It helps develop a **collaborative approach and protects relationships between disputants**. The act would **mitigate the risk of deterioration of the parties' relationship** due to a publicly fought dispute.

Promotion of ease of doing business- The act has the potential to have a significant positive impact on the country's economy and business environment by **avoiding delays in the standard process through the courts**.

Emergence of India as a centre of Mediation in the world- The mediation act 2023 can put India on the global map as a **dispute friendly jurisdiction and attract foreign investments**. For Ex- Singapore's robust mediation ecosystem has attracted greater foreign investments.

Promotion of peace, law and security in the country- The Act provides for provision of **community mediation** to settle any dispute likely to affect peace, harmony and tranquillity amongst the residents or families of any area. This will promote peace, law and security in the society by building consensus amongst the communities.

Faster outcomes- The Act provides a maximum time period of **180 days** for mediation settlement. The judicial courts normally dispose of civil matters within **3 years on an average**.

Mediation is a cost effective method- Mediation is a **cost-effective** dispute resolution process. For Example- According to an article published in Harvard Business Review mediation through outside counsel has an estimated cost of \$700,000 and going to courts has an estimated cost of \$2.5 million over a period of three to five years.

Mediation provided similar position to commercial arbitration in India- As the recent amendments to the Arbitration and Conciliation Act (A&C Act) prioritised institutional arbitration

of disputes, the Act also places emphasis on institutional mediation in India. It envisages “mediation service providers” to provide mediation services, secretarial assistance and infrastructure for the efficient conduct of mediation. This will help in **generating more avenues of employment and growth in the country.**

Fulfilment of India’s commitment to Singapore Convention on Mediation- India is a signatory to the Singapore Convention on Mediation (United Nations Convention on International Settlement). This act is an important step towards fulfilment of Singapore convention.

Read More- [Singapore Convention](#)

What are concerns with the Mediation Act 2023?

Enforcement of settlement agreement- A **settlement agreement** is essentially a contract between the parties. Sometimes, grounds for challenging are detected at a later stage. However there are **limited grounds** listed in the act to challenge the enforcement of a settlement agreement. Further **only a period of 90 days** is given to raise any challenge to the settlement agreement. The settlement agreement clause needs to be re-looked.

“Exceptional circumstances” for seeking interim relief from courts not defined- The Act entitles a party to move the Court, before the commencement or during mediation, for interim relief, only in “exceptional circumstances”. The phrase **“exceptional circumstances” is lacking in definition within the Bill.**

Challenges with the “online” and “community” mediation introduced by the Act- There are challenges to **online mediation in India.** As per recent Niti Aayog report only 55% of India have access to the internet and only 27% possess compatible devices for effective online mediation. Further the act makes it **mandatory to have a panel of three mediators** for **community mediation.** This would **impact the flexibility** that the act seeks to bring for mediation settlement.

Applicability to ‘only commercial’ govt disputes- Government is the **biggest litigant** in the country. The act limits the mediation to solely government’s “commercial disputes”. This will not bring down the pendency of cases.

Composition of the Mediation Council- The Mediation Council has three members-a retired senior judge, a person with experience of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) law and an academic who has taught ADR. However, it **doesn’t include a single mediator** with actual practical knowledge of mediation.

Excludes the Chief Justice of India from making appointments- The mediation is a form of dispute resolution and in the **judiciary’s domain,** but the bill has left the Chief Justice of India from the picture for making appointments.

Long list of disputes which cannot be mediated- The act provides for a long list of disputes which should not be mediated. For example, **Fraud, Disputes relating to claims against minors, Patents and copyright cases, proceedings before the TRAI** etc. This hampers the overall objective of alternate dispute mechanism.

Impacts cross-border mediation- The mediation act treats international mediation when conducted in India as a domestic mediation. Further, the settlement conducted in India is given the status of a judgment or decree of a court.

But, the **Singapore Convention** does not apply to settlements that already have the status of a judgment or decree. Hence, **conducting cross-border mediation in India will leave out the tremendous benefits of worldwide enforceability**. This will impact India's growth as mediation centre of the world like Singapore.

What Should be the way forward for strengthening mediation in India?

Providing Institutional Support- Establishing **well-equipped and accessible mediation centres** at various levels, from local communities to national levels. Government should facilitate opening of mediation centres. For Example: Recently, **Uttar Pradesh got its first mediation & arbitration centre** in the form of 'Centre for Excellence in Mediation and Arbitration or CEMA.

Training and Certification for Mediation- Developing **comprehensive training programs** for mediators, lawyers, and judges to ensure that there is a **pool of skilled professionals** proficient in mediation techniques.

Integration of Mediation with Legal Curriculum- Incorporating **mediation education** within law school curricula can prepare future legal professionals to consider mediation as a primary or complementary method for dispute resolution.

Ensuring proper cross border mediation- To ensure worldwide enforceability, the settlement conducted in **India should not be given a status of a judgment or decree** of a court.

Need to remove ambiguities in the Act- There are certain elements in the Act like **"exceptional circumstances" for seeking interim relief**, which are open-ended and ambiguous, which must be addressed urgently.

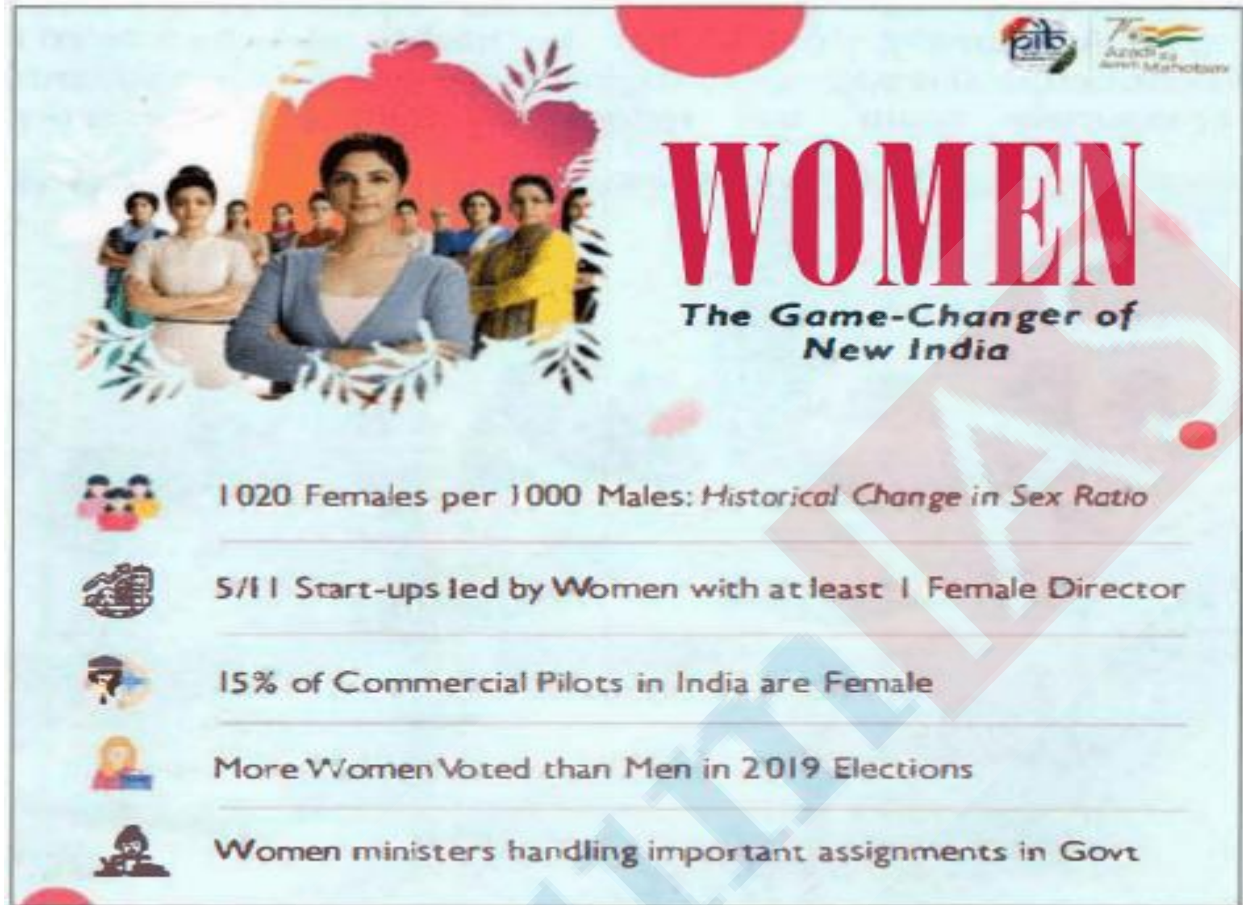
Enhancement of awareness about the Mediation Act- The National and State Legal Services Authorities should **disseminate more information regarding mediation** and ADRs, so that they become the first option explored by potential litigants.

Alternate Dispute Resolutions has proven successful in clearing the backlog of cases in various levels of the judiciary. For Ex- Lok Adalats alone has disposed more than 50 lakh cases every year on average in the last three years. A similar impact can be observed with Mediation also. Hence, the government **should address the concerns in the Mediation Act 2023** and ensure proper implementation of the same.

Read More- [The Hindu](#)

[Yojana September 2023 Summary] Women Empowerment-Explained Pointwise

Women empowerment is the promotion of women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices and their right to influence social change for themselves and others. It is rightly said that **empowering a man leads to empowering an individual but empowering a woman empowers an entire generation**. The current government has taken significant strides in the direction of women empowerment. It has fostered a culture where everyone has an equal, free, and fair opportunity to engage in social, political, and economic activities.



Source- Yojana

What are the different aspects of women empowerment?

Women empowerment is an all encompassing term. However it has different aspects to it namely- Political empowerment, economic empowerment and social empowerment.

Political Empowerment

Despite progress in several fields, women representation in the political institutions have remained low. However government has tried to address the issue of low representation at various levels.

1. **Nari Shakti Vandana Adhiniyam(Women reservation Act)**- Passed to provide 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies.
2. **73rd and 74th amendment Act**- Provided 33% reservation to women in local bodies. Some states like Bihar have increased the women reservation in the local bodies to 50%.
3. Govt has been encouraging political parties to nominate more women candidates and has been providing leadership training.

Economic Empowerment	<p>1. Governments has been promoting equal pay for equal work through the four new labour codes.</p> <p>2. Government has established maternity leave and childcare policies through the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act 2017.</p> <p>3. It has also provide access to finance and entrepreneurship training for women like the Mudra Yojana and the Mahila Udyam Nidhi Yojana.</p>
Social Empowerment	<p>1. Government has focused on ending child marriage and safeguarded sexual and reproductive health rights through The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 and Medical Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Act of 2021.</p> <p>2. Government has been protecting women's land rights through Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP) and implementing gender-responsive budgeting which are crucial steps towards achieving gender equality.</p>

Read More- [Women Empowerment NHFS data](#)

What are some recent flagship programs of Government for Women Empowerment?

Women Empowerment has been a top priority for the current Government. That is why govt has introduced many flagship programs for women development.

S.No.	Government Schemes	Launch Year	Features/objectives
1	Beti Bachao Beti Padhao	2015	Launched in 2015, this initiative aims to address the declining child sex ratio and promote the education and welfare of girls.
2	Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)	2017	Introduced in 2017, this maternity benefit scheme provides financial assistance to pregnant and lactating women for improved health and nutrition during pregnancy and childbirth.
3	Mahila e-Haat	2016	This online platform was launched in 2016 to facilitate women entrepreneurs and artisans in showcasing and selling their products. It also provides a digital marketplace for women to reach a wider customer base and promote their businesses.

4	Ujjwala Yojana	2016	Launched in 2016, this scheme provides free LPG connections to women from below-poverty-line households. It aims to improve their health, reduce indoor air pollution, and empower them by enabling clean cooking fuel access.
5	Stand Up India	2016	Introduced in 2016, this scheme encourages entrepreneurship among women and Scheduled caste or scheduled tribe individuals. It offers bank loans between Rs 10 lakh and Rs 1 crore to set up greenfield enterprises, promoting women's economic empowerment and self-employment opportunities.
6	Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)	2015	Introduced in 2015, it aims to provide industry relevant training to enhance employability. It has benefited many women by offering skill development courses in various sectors.

These are just a few examples of government schemes implemented in the last decade to promote women's empowerment, healthcare, entrepreneurship, and skill development. There are several other schemes at the central and state levels that focus on women's welfare, education, and financial inclusion.

What are some recent reforms undertaken by the Govt?

Efforts have been made across various areas, including legislation, social programs, and awareness campaigns, to promote gender equality protect women rights and for women empowerment in last 10 years.

S.No.	Government Reforms	Features/objectives
1	Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013 (Nirbhaya Act)	This amendment was passed in 2013, making significant changes to laws concerning sexual offences. The Government established the Nirbhaya Fund to support initiatives addressing women's safety and empowerment. The fund has been utilised to set up one-stop centres, women's helplines, and improve infrastructure for women's safety.
2	Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017	This amendment was enacted in 2017, extending the maternity leave period for women working in the organised sector in India from 12 weeks to 26 weeks. This reform

		recognises the importance of providing adequate time for maternal health and bonding with the child.
3	The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act, 2019	This amendment was passed in 2019, strengthening the protection of children from sexual offenses.
4	The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019	Although not specific to women as a whole, was also an important amendment passed within the last 10 years to provide legal protection to Muslim women against instant triple talaq (divorce). It criminalised the practice of instant triple talaq (divorce) among Muslim men in India. This reform aimed to protect the rights of Muslim women and ensure gender equality within personal laws.
5	Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013	This Act mandates the establishment of internal committees in workplaces to address complaints of sexual harassment and ensure a safe working environment for women.

These reforms have played a crucial role in advancing women's rights and empowerment in India, fostering gender equality, and challenging systemic inequalities. However, it is important to continue working towards creating a society that fully upholds and respects women's rights in all aspects of life.

What should be the way forward ?

We must move away from Women Development to Women Led Development. Women should be re-imagined as architects of India's progress and development, rather than being passive recipients of the fruits of development. The ripple effects of Women Led Development are undeniable as an educated and empowered woman will ensure education and empowerment for future generations.

It is only through collective efforts, involving governments, civil society and individuals, that we can create a more equitable and inclusive world for women. **The Supreme Court of India's recently released Handbook on Combating Gender Stereotypes** will give a fresh impetus to the quest towards a gender-just legal order.

Read More- [The Hindu](#)

Cauvery Water Dispute and Interstate River Disputes in India- Explained Pointwise

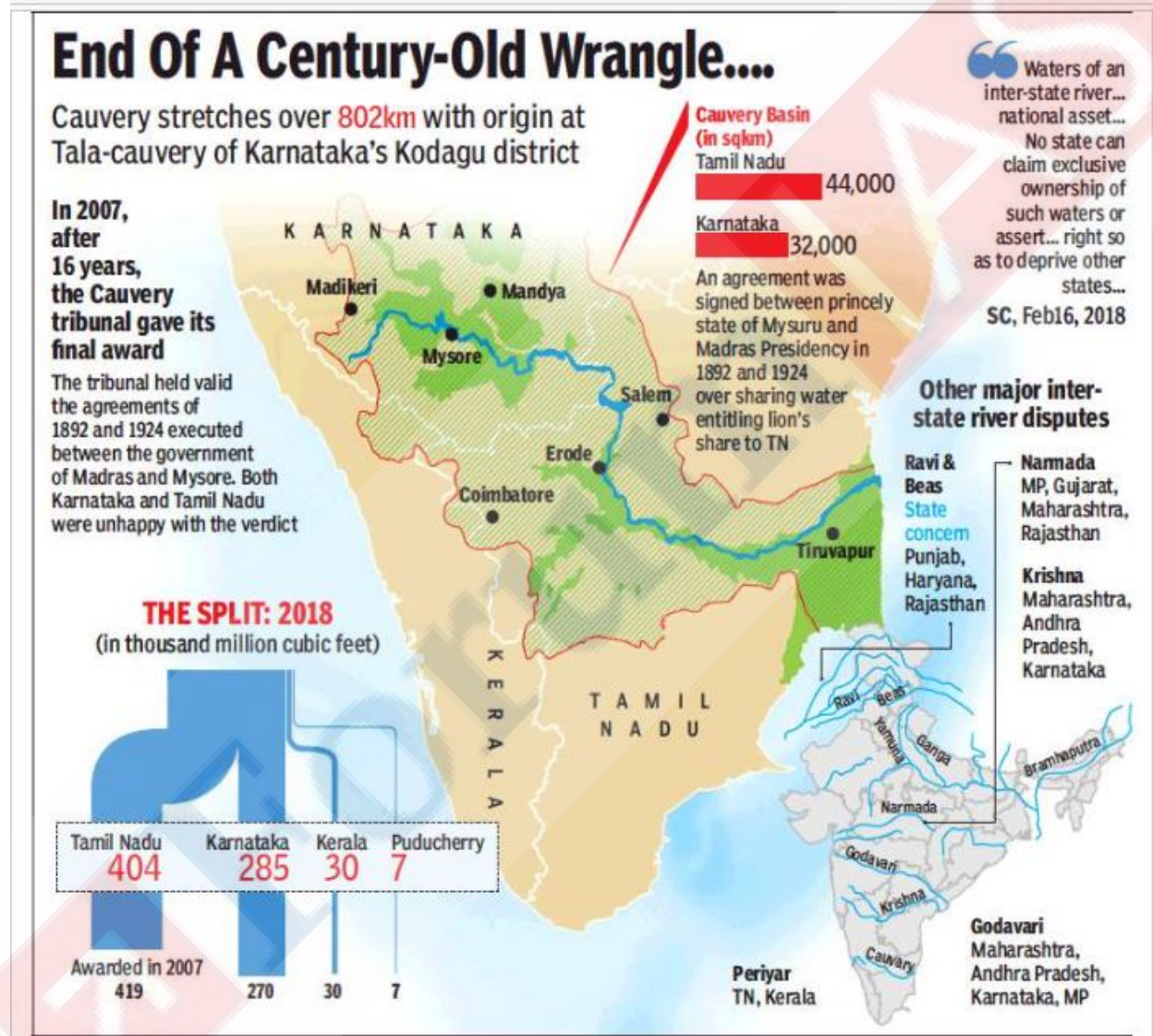
Cauvery Water Dispute is in news again and has strained the relations between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu government. The Supreme Court declined to interfere with the order of the **Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA)** which directed Karnataka to release 5,000 cubic feet of water per second (cusecs) to Tamil Nadu until September 27, 2023. This sparked off massive

protests in Karnataka. Karnataka is protesting that it will experience water scarcity as it has been a monsoon deficient season.

Read More- Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA)

What is Cauvery Water Dispute and its reasons?

The Cauvery water dispute is an inter-state water dispute between Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Puducherry.



Source- Indpaedia

Historical Timeline of Cauvery River Water Dispute	
1892	This dispute originated for the first time way back in 1892 at the time of Britishers between the Presidency of Madras and Princely state of Mysore.
1924	In 1924 Mysore and Madras reached into an agreement which will be valid for 50 years. Hence, it ceased to be enforced in 1974.

1974	Since 1974 , Karnataka started diverting water into its four newly made reservoirs, without the consent of Tamil Nadu. This resulted in dispute in post independent India.
1990	After several years, the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) was established in 1990 to resolve the issue. It took 17 years for the CWDT to reach a final order in 2007.
2007	CWDT issued its final award in February 2007 and specified water allocations among the four states in the Cauvery basin, considering the total availability of 740 TMC in a normal year. The allocation of water among the four states is as follows: Tamil Nadu – 419 TMC(which had demanded 512 TMC), Karnataka – 270 TMC(which had demanded 465 TMC), Kerala – 30 TMC and Puducherry – 7 TMC.
2018	In 2018, the Supreme Court declared the Cauvery a national asset and largely upheld the water-sharing arrangements determined by the CWDT. It made minor readjustments in the CWDT order. As per the judgement, Tamil Nadu – 404.25 TMC, Karnataka- 284.75 TMC, Kerala 30 TMC and Puducherry 7 TMC. It also directed the Centre to notify the Cauvery Management Scheme. Central government notified the ‘Cauvery Water Management Scheme’ in June 2018, constituting the ‘Cauvery Water Management Authority’ and the ‘Cauvery Water Regulation Committee’.

Even though the Water Sharing mechanism has been put in place by the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) and the subsequent SC judgement in 2018, there has been regular disputes in the water sharing arrangement.

Reasons for Cauvery Water Dispute

- 1. Deficit monsoon and unavailability of water** – Poor inflow due to reduced rainfall in Cauvery catchment, including origin point, Kodagu. Karnataka highlights a 44% rainfall deficit in Kodagu from June to August.
- 2. Water Scarcity In Tamil Nadu**- Tamil Nadu’s Mettur reservoir holds only 20 TMC, which will last ten days.
- 3. Disagreement over the water sharing agreement as per CWMA**- Both Karnataka and Tamil Nadu disagree with the water sharing agreement of Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA).
- 4. Hydropolitics and Delays** – Political parties capitalise on water disputes for mobilisation. Prolonged tribunal adjudications have also contributed to delays.

What are the other Interstate river disputes apart from the Cauvery water Dispute?

The following map and the corresponding table shows the various Interstate river disputes that have been prevailing in India.



Basin Code (CWC)	Basin Name (CWC)	Interstate or Intrastate	Total Live Storage Capacity (MCM)
1	Indus (Up to border)	Interstate	16,568.4
2 a	Ganga	Interstate	60,660.4
2 b	Brahmaputra	Interstate	11,680.6
2 c	Barak and others	Interstate	
3	Godavari	Interstate	31,330.4
4	Krishna	Interstate	49,547.5
5	Cauvery	Interstate	8,867.0
6	Subernarekha	Interstate	2,322.2
7	Brahmani and Baitarni	Interstate	5,523.7
8	Mahanadi	Interstate	14,207.8
9	Pennar	Interstate	4,820.1
10	Mahi	Interstate	4,984.0
11	Sabarnati	Interstate	1,367.5
12	Narmada	Interstate	23,604.6
13	Tapi	Interstate	10,255.8
14	West flowing rivers from Tapi to Tadri	Mostly intrastate	14,732.4
15	West flowing rivers from Tadri to Kanyakumari	Mostly intrastate	11,553.7
16	East flowing rivers between Mahanadi and Pennar	Interstate	3,026.4
17	East flowing rivers between Pennar and Kanyakumari	Interstate	1,906.9
18	West flowing rivers of Kutch and Saurashtra including Luni	Interstate	5,524.2
19	Area of inland drainage in Rajasthan	Intrastate	-
20	Minor rivers draining into Myanmar (Burma and Bangladesh)	Interstate	312.0

Source- ORF

Constitutional Arrangements to solve Interstate Water Disputes

<p>Schedule 7 of the Constitution</p>	<p>It distinguishes between the use of water within a State and the purpose of regulating interstate waters. Union List- Entry 56 gives the Union Parliament the power to formulate laws and mechanisms for regulating Interstate rivers. State List - Entry 17 gives States retain autonomy regarding water utilisation for purposes such as water supply, irrigation and canals, drainage and embankments, water storage and water power subject to provisions of Entry 56 of List 1 (Union List).</p>
<p>Article 262</p>	<p>In case of disputes relating to waters, Parliament may by law provide for the adjudication of any dispute or complaint with respect to the use, distribution or control of the waters of, or in, any inter-State rivers. Parliament may, by law also provide that neither the Supreme Court nor any other court shall exercise jurisdiction in respect of any such dispute or complaint as mentioned</p>

Statutory Arrangements to solve Interstate Water Disputes

<p>River Board Act 1956</p>	<p>The river Boards are supposed to advise on the Inter-state basin to prepare development scheme and to prevent the emergence of conflicts.</p>
<p>Inter-State Water Dispute Act 1956</p>	<p>If a particular State or States approach the Union Government for the constitution of the tribunal: (a) Central Government should try to resolve the</p>

	matter by consultation among the aggrieved States; (b) In case, consultation does not work, then the Union Government may constitute the tribunal.
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What are the reasons for persistence of Inter-State Water Disputes ?

In India, Inter-state river disputes like Cauvery water disputes have persisted due to the following reasons, which are enumerated below-

Unbalanced distribution of powers between Union and state governments- The legislative powers concerning water have been distributed between the Union and the State Governments. However, this approach of **imprecise distribution of power** between the Union and the States, has created a **Federal-Jurisdictional ambiguity**.

Limited powers of River Tribunals – The Tribunal can only make an award and cannot make it binding. The Tribunals also **lack the ability to punish for ‘contempt’**.

Institutional ambiguity in adjudication of river water disputes – Article 262 provides that the Parliament may by law prevent the Supreme Court or any other Court from exercising jurisdiction in inter-State water disputes. However, under Article 136, the Supreme Court can hear appeals against the orders of Tribunals. Thus, the Supreme Court remains the adjudicatory body along with the tribunals, creating an **institutional ambiguity regarding which body is the ultimate adjudicatory power** on inter-State water disputes in India.

Lack of technical expertise in the tribunals members – The **members** of tribunals created for adjudicating the inter-State water disputes have been **predominantly from the Judiciary**. This has led to lack of a **multi-disciplinary approach to dispute settlement**.

Excessive delays in establishing tribunals and making awards- The right to have a dispute referred to a tribunal under the IWSDA (Inter-State Water Dispute Act) is contingent on the Union Government’s determination that the matter cannot be resolved through negotiations. The **provision of negotiations inevitably delays** the constitution of a tribunal.

Political Mobilisation and electoral benefits- Inter-State disputes are exploited for political mobilization and electoral benefits. State Governments have rejected the awards of Tribunals for political gains.

Unscientific water data management – There is a **lack of data regarding water flows, seasonal variations etc.** which results in ambiguities regarding availability of water, surplus water for sharing etc. In addition, seasonal variations in monsoonal rainfall sometimes create shortage of water.

What Should be the way forward in resolving these Disputes?

These interstate river disputes and the cauvery water disputes must be resolved in the following ways to reach amicable solutions at the earliest.

Provide mutually accepted water sharing/ deficit formula- Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) should find a mutually accepted water sharing/ deficit formula. Water Allocation **should be based on the basis of monsoon** and availability of water

Transparency in the proceedings of CWRC- The CWMA and Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) should **publish their meeting proceedings** online.

Rejuvenation of Inter state Councils – Article 263 of the Indian Constitution provides for the establishment of Interstate council to resolve interstate differences. Inter-State Council should be rejuvenated to enable it to play a more active role in settlement of interstate river disputes. To solve interstate water disputes, economic survey has suggested for **cooperative federalism just like GST**.

Fixed time frame for adjudication- There is a need to establish a time frame for constituting the Tribunal by the Union Government. Tribunals should also try to avoid unnecessary delays in giving the award.

Simplification of Judicial process of dispute resolution – The Government's inability to properly handle water-related disputes is reflected in the high number of appeals to the Supreme Court. Some experts suggest that the **appeal to the Supreme Court should only on procedural aspects**. The awards based on expert opinions shouldn't be questioned in the Court. The **Sarkaria Commission** has suggested that the **awards of the tribunals be given the same weight as a Supreme Court Judgement**.

Exploration of Mediation route to solve the inter state river disputes – Mediation can also be explored as a possible option for successful resolution of disputes. The example of the role of the **World Bank as a mediator** in the Indus Water Treaty between India and Pakistan is quoted as a success of this model.

Better water data management- Infrastructure should be created for **better collection of the data related to inter-State river basins**. Better data will provide clear picture regarding availability of waters, seasonal variations and help in the equitable distribution of water among the States.

Read More- [Cauvery water Dispute The Hindu](#)

Aadhaar Project- Are Moody's Concerns Valid?- Explained Pointwise

Recently, released report of global rating agency Moody' has highlighted Moody's concerns regarding the Aadhaar project of India. In its recently released report **"Decentralized Finance and Digital Assets"**, Moody's has highlighted some grave concerns regarding India's ambitious digital identification (ID) programme for residents- the **Aadhaar Project**. The Comptroller and Auditor General (**CAG**) of India has also previously raised concerns about the Aadhaar Project.

Key Highlights of Moody's concerns on Aadhaar Project

1. Biometric issues- According to the report, Aadhaar has been resulting in denial of services. The report has questioned the reliability of biometric technologies especially for manual labourers in hot, humid climates, as there are risks of change in their fingerprint patterns.

2. Risk of data breaches due to the Centralized Identification system – Aadhaar is a centralized identification system. This leads to the concentration of sensitive information with specific entities, which increases the risks of data breaches.

Low rating

Moody's Investors Service has cautioned against centralised digital ID systems such as Aadhaar as they pose security and privacy vulnerabilities. Here are a few warnings from the firm which offers credit ratings, research, and risk analysis:

- A single entity controlling users' ID credentials can dispose of user data for internal or third-party profiling purposes
- Aadhaar system faces hurdles, including the burden of establishing authorisation
- Reliability of biometric technologies, especially for manual labourers, in hot, humid climates is questionable

■ All digital IDs can have negative social repercussions

Source- The Hindu

Read More- [Moody's concerns on Aadhaar-Forum IAS](#)

What is Aadhaar Project?

Aadhaar Project – Under Aadhaar Project, a Unique **Identification Number** is issued by the Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), to every resident of India. It is a **twelve-digit number** which is linked to the **resident's demographic and biometric information**.

Aadhaar collection authority – The data is collected by the **Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)**, a statutory authority established in January 2009 by the Government of India, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, under the provisions of the **Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and other Subsidies, benefits and services) Act, 2016**.

What are the advantages of the Aadhaar Project?

Identification of the beneficiaries of the government's welfare schemes – Aadhaar has helped to remove fake and duplicate identities of beneficiaries. It **has been used to filter the list of beneficiaries and stop the leakage** of public money.

Targeted delivery of subsidies directly to the bank account – JAM trinity (Jan Dhan Yojana, Aadhaar and Mobile numbers) has been employed for targeted delivery of subsidies. Use of Aadhaar Card for distributing social welfare schemes has led to better targeting of poor which were suffering by leakages. It has led to savings of Rs 50,000 crore per year by plugging the leakages in most schemes. . In the form of DBT scheme for LPG, government has saved Rs 10,000 crore in two years.

Aadhaar has helped in mapping development parameters – In critical sectors of the country like **healthcare and education, Aadhaar has been used to map the development processes** and parameters. It has also been used to map skilled manpower, based on the vocational training acquired by the individual with the suitable job vacancies/ skill requirements.

Ease in filing of Income tax return and opening of bank accounts – Use of Aadhaar in income tax filing has reduced the number of documents needed for filing income tax. It has made the process more **efficient and cost-effective**.

Helped to tackle the black money issue – The use of Aadhaar in financial transactions has **reduced the menace of black money** in the country.

Has been helpful for the geriatric population in accessing benefits- Aadhaar project has been used to transfer **pension money** on time, issuance of **digital Life certificate** and easy **Provident Fund disbursement**.

What has been other issues with the Aadhaar project apart from Moody's concerns ?

CAG in its report has highlighted several concerns with the functioning of UIDAI and the Aadhaar project.

1. Deficient data management system of UIDAI- UIDAI manages the Aadhaar project in the country. There are issues in the functioning of UIDAI like issues of **data-matching, errors in authentication, and shortfall in archiving**.

2. Privacy at risk- UIDAI has not ensured that the applications or devices used by agencies or companies for authentication “were not capable of storing the personal information of the residents, which **put the privacy of residents at risk**”.

3. Lack of data archiving Policy- UIDAI has lack of data archiving policy and there have been **widespread cases of duplication of Aadhaar**.

4. UIDAI Charging Fees for Voluntary Update – Initially, poor quality data was fed in during enrolment. However, now, for rectification of that data, UIDAI appeared to have **charged people for biometric updates**.

5. Authentication failures – Aadhaar project has **experienced high rates of failures in authentication**, leading to delays in the disbursal of benefits in remote areas with poor internet connectivity. Many Aadhaar cardholders are facing authentication issue while accessing the Public Distribution System.

6. Identity Theft and KYC fraud – Aadhaar data have been used by fraudsters for criminal purposes such as identity theft, Know Your Customer (KYC)-related fraud etc. **Ex- Loan scams**.

7. Last-mile delivery in rural areas faces issues of lesser Bank penetration- The last-mile delivery is a significant challenge with the problem of lesser banking infrastructure in rural areas and the failure of the banking correspondent model to take off.

8. Concerns about the effectiveness of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) application to all schemes – Blanket application of DBT to all government schemes has caused troubles. For example: Application of DBT for fertiliser scheme is being criticised by the farmers as they are finding it difficult to pay high upfront costs for fertiliser and then wait for payments through banks.

9. Issuance of Aadhaar to Minor Children – Issue of Aadhaar numbers to minor children below the age of five, based on the biometrics of their parents without confirming the uniqueness of biometric identity, goes against the basic tenet of the Aadhaar Act.

Read More- [CAG concerns on Aadhaar-Forum IAS](#)

What should be the way forward?

Decentralisation of Aadhaar data – In **decentralized ID (DID) systems**, personal data is saved in a user's digital wallet and identity verification takes place not via a single, centralized institution but on a decentralized digital ledger such as a blockchain. This **increases privacy and reduces the amount of personal information** held by intermediaries. **For example, Estonia**, known for its fully digitalized public services has **embraced SSI [Self-Sovereign Identity] to grant citizens complete control over their digital identities**.

Increase in banking penetration- There should be an increase in penetration of banks and financial institutions in rural areas. Further, Banking Corresponding agents can be used to educate farmers not to fall into traps of moneylenders.

Better Internet infrastructure to support Aadhaar Project- There is need for infrastructure like cellular towers, cheap mobile plans because without mobile connectivity JAM trinity and aadhaar are meaningless.

Aadhaar has now evolved as one of the primary identity documents and a vital instrument for the targeted delivery of various government scheme benefits. However, Aadhaar number can be misused by some malicious actors. In this light, UIDAI to offer the **Masked Aadhaar Card Service** which is a significant step.

Read More- [Moody's report on Aadhaar](#)

Present Status of Unemployment In India – Explained Pointwise

Recently released report **“State of Working India 2023”** has highlighted the present status of unemployment in India. The report has been prepared by Azim Premji University's Centre for Sustainable Employment. The report highlights the trends of Unemployment in India over the decade.

Present Status of Unemployment in India according to “State of Working India 2023” report

Rate of Unemployment- The overall unemployment rate has reduced to **6.6 per cent in 2021-22 from 8.7 per cent in 2017-18.**

Unemployment based on education and age group – Over **42 per cent** of India’s **graduates under 25** were unemployed in 2021-22. Unemployment figure stands at **21.4 per cent** for those who have completed higher secondary education under the age of 25. Notably, with lower educational qualifications, the rate of unemployment also decreased.

Women Employment scenario – After the coronavirus pandemic, **60 per cent** of women are **self-employed**, as compared to **50 per cent** before the pandemic. However, there has been **decrease in the earnings** of Women, as their earnings in 2022 was only 85% of what they were earning before the pandemic.

Inter generational mobility in employment – There has been **inter-generational mobility of employment** in the casual labour generation. But more number of general castes have moved out of casual labour as compared to SCs/STs. In 2021, **40 per cent of SC workers** were involved in casual employment, as compared to **13 per cent of general caste workers**. Furthermore, around **22 per cent of SC workers** were regular wage workers as opposed to **32% of general caste workers**.

Nature of economic growth in India – Economic growth has not guaranteed employment in India. **With every percentage increase in GDP, the capacity to generate formal sector jobs has systematically declined.** Even though the workers have moved out of the agricultural sector, they have been absorbed in the informal and contractual employment as opposed to formal employment.

What is Unemployment, and what are the different types of Unemployment?

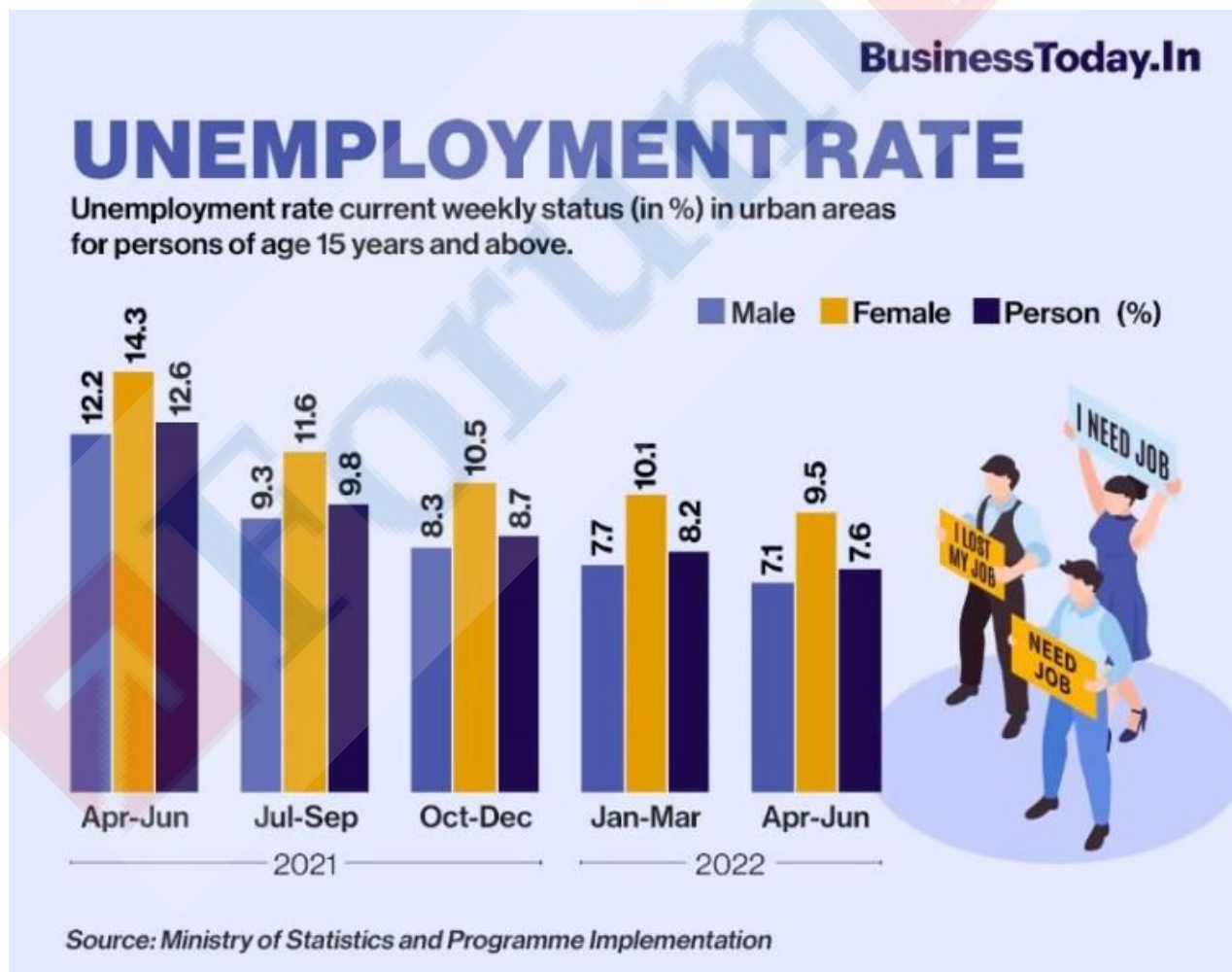
Definition- Unemployment refers to a situation where a person **who is able and willing to work is not able to find a job**. It is often used as a measure of the health of an economy, as high levels of unemployment can indicate a lack of available jobs, which in turn can lead to reduced economic growth and increased social and economic inequality.

Types of Unemployment

<p>Frictional unemployment</p>	<p>This type of unemployment occurs when workers are in between jobs or are searching for a job. It is a temporary and natural part of the labour market.</p>
<p>Structural unemployment</p>	<p>This occurs when there is a mismatch between the skills that workers have and the skills required for available jobs. Structural unemployment can be caused by changes in the economy, such as the decline of certain industries or technological advancements.</p>

Cyclical unemployment	This type of unemployment is caused by changes in the business cycle , such as recessions or economic downturns. When the economy slows down, companies may cut jobs to reduce costs, leading to increased unemployment.
Seasonal unemployment	Seasonal unemployment occurs when workers are employed only during certain times of the year, such as during the holiday season or during harvest time in agricultural sectors.
Technological unemployment	This occurs when technological advancements make certain jobs obsolete , leading to job losses in those sectors.
Underemployment	This refers to a situation where workers are employed but are not able to work as much as they would like, or are working in jobs that are below their skill levels .

Read More- [Unemployment Forum IAS](#)



Source- MoSPI and Business Today

What are the reasons for present high unemployment in India?

The reasons behind the present status of unemployment in India are the following-

Education and Skills Reasons

Failure of Indian Education system – Although literacy rates have risen in the last few decades, there still remains a fundamental flaw in the education system in India. **The degree-oriented system** fails when it comes to producing skilled human resources for specific job profiles in the economy.

Higher educational level among youth – Youth unemployment has increased significantly from 2011-12 to 2021-22, nearly doubling during this period. **As educational attainment improves**, more educated individuals are **less inclined to accept unskilled and informal jobs**. This is the reason behind high unemployment among graduate youth.

Social Reasons

Joint Family System – It has **encouraged disguised unemployment**. In big families having large business establishments, many persons don't do any work and are dependent on the joint income of the family. The joint family system is more prevalent in rural areas, with families employed in the agricultural sector.

Rush for government jobs for social prestige and security – Many educated youth are running behind government jobs due to **social pressure, socially respected job profile and social security**. This has to a situation where many students choose to remain unemployed during preparation for government jobs.

Low mobility of Labour due to social reasons – People generally avoid migrating to far-off areas of work due to factors like **diversity of language, religion, customs and family loyalty**. This low labour mobility has contributed to the high unemployment in India.

Expansion of social security measures – The government has increased the distribution of food under the National Food Security Act. This has reduced the pressure on individuals to immediately seek employment. **It allows them more time to “search for work,”** which has also contributed to the increase in the unemployment rate.

Economic Structure reasons

Economic growth model promoting informal job creation like Gig Economy – Economic growth model of India has been **tilted towards gig economy which is based on informal and contractual jobs**. Thus, even though the workers have moved out of the agricultural sector, they have been absorbed in the informal and contractual employment as opposed to formal employment. **Ex- Delivery boys, service providers.**

The decline of Small Scale and Cottage Industries- Independent India's **preference to large scale industry and new industrial policy of the 1990s** has resulted in the decline of small scale industries. This has resulted in high unemployment in rural areas.

Huge dependence on agricultural sector- Agriculture remains the biggest employer in the country. The seasonal nature of employment in the agricultural sector has led to **recurring cycles of unemployment** for the rural population.

Why addressing the present status of unemployment is crucial for India's development?

Reaping the demographic dividend – India could get old before it becomes rich if the present status of unemployment is not addressed. The high unemployment in India will prevent us from reaping the benefits that our demographic dividend may provide.

Women's Empowerment- Increasing the female formal job opportunities will lead to **socio-economic upliftment of women** in different fields.

Poverty alleviation- Increasing formal employment and addressing the flaws in the informal sector jobs will help India alleviate poverty. This will **improve the socio-economic position of the vulnerable sections** of the society.

Lead India into the league of developed nations – Addressing the present status of unemployment is indispensable for leveraging the contribution of women and the youth. Both are crucial population segments which will propel India towards becoming a **developed economy**.

What should be the way forward for addressing the present status of unemployment in India?

Need for National Employment Policy (NEP)- There is a need for formulation of **National Employment Policy (NEP)** that would encompass a set of multidimensional interventions ranging from social to economic issues.

Special packages for Labour Intensive Industries – Government must provide **special packages for labour intensive industries like leather and footwear**, food processing, furniture and home decor, textiles and apparel. These industries have high potential for generating more jobs per capital spent.

Focus on resource based development- Decentralisation of Industrial activities based on resources will address the problem of labour mobility and provide employment opportunities in backward regions of the country like Jharkhand, Odisha.

Proper Implementation of New Education Policy – The proper implementation of New Education Policy will **reduce the distance between Industry and academia**. Incubation centers need to be promoted to cultivate original business ideas that will be financially viable for employment generation.

Removal of social barriers for more women participation- SHGs led women employment schemes like Kudumbashree must be promoted to break the social barriers for entry of women in job market.

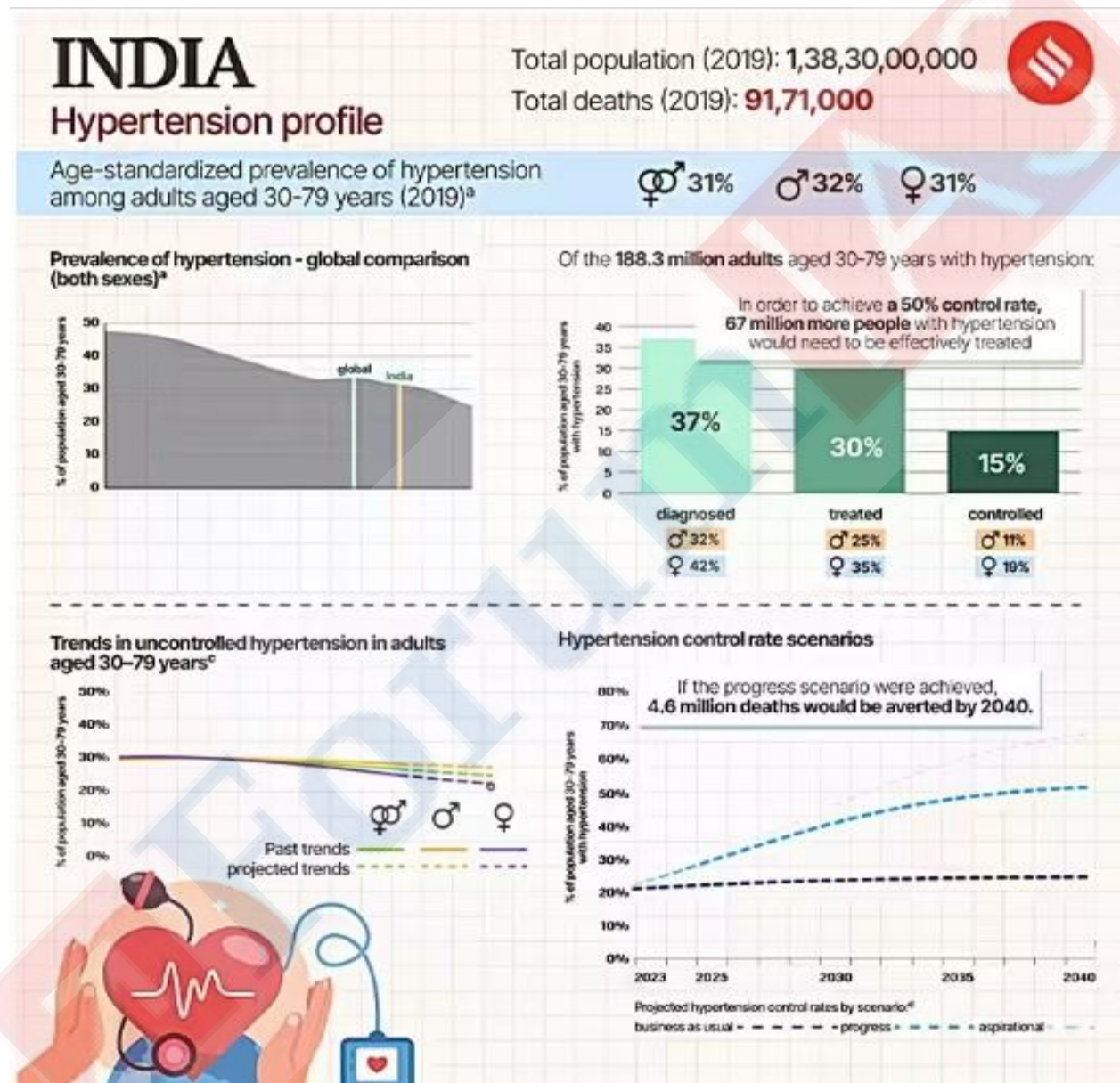
Greater public investment – The government must make greater public investment in **sectors like health, education, police and judiciary** to create many government jobs and associated employment opportunities.

Proper Implementation of the government employment schemes – Government schemes like **Atma Nirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY), Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)** etc. must be properly implemented for reducing the present levels of unemployment in India.

Source- [Indian Express](#)

WHO Report on Hypertension-Explained Pointwise

Recently, the World Health Organisation (**WHO**) has released its first report on hypertension. According to the first-ever report released by WHO on the global impact of hypertension, at least **4.6 million deaths in India can be prevented by 2040** if half its hypertensive population controls its blood pressure.



Source- The Indian Express

What is hypertension?

Blood pressure is the **force exerted by circulating blood** against the walls of the body's arteries, the major blood vessels in the body. Hypertension occurs when blood pressure is too high.

Definition- It is defined as having systolic blood pressure level **greater than or equal to 140 mmHg or diastolic blood pressure level greater than or equal to 90 mmHg** or/and taking anti-hypertensive medication to lower his/her blood pressure.

Read More- [Hypertension Forum IAS](#)

What are the causes and consequences of hypertension according to the report?

Causes of Hypertension – High-salt diets, lack of physical activity, and excessive alcohol consumption are significant contributors to hypertension. **Genetics** is believed to play a role in high blood pressure as well.

Symptoms of Hypertension – Most people with hypertension don't feel any symptoms. Very high blood pressure can cause **headaches, blurred vision, chest pain** and other symptoms.

Treatment of Hypertension – Lifestyle changes like adopting a **low-salt diet, weight loss, physical activity, and quitting tobacco** etc. and medications.

Consequences of Uncontrolled Hypertension –

1. Severe **heart issues, including chest pain, heart attacks, heart failure, and irregular heartbeats, as well as increase the risk of stroke** by affecting blood flow to the brain.
2. Hypertension can lead to **disability, reduced quality of life, and premature death.**
3. The **socioeconomic costs** associated with hypertension are substantial which include both **direct costs** related to healthcare, as well as **indirect costs** related to lost productivity and reduced economic growth.
4. Hypertension cuts down people's most **economically productive years.**

What are the observations of the WHO report on hypertension?

WHO report on hypertension has made the following observations regarding hypertension globally and with respect to India.

Global Hypertension burden

Global Impact- One in three adults across the world suffers from hypertension.
Growing problem- The number of hypertension cases has doubled from 650 million to 1.3 billion between 1990 and 2019.
Impact on young generation- Hypertension affects approximately 33% of adults aged 30-79 worldwide.
Under treatment- Approximately four out of every five people with hypertension are not adequately treated. If countries can scale up coverage, 76 million deaths could be averted between 2023 and 2050.
Disparities in Treatment Coverage- Treatment coverage for hypertension exhibits significant disparities among countries, with high-income nations having a more favourable coverage rate. More than three-quarters of adults with hypertension live in low- and middle-income countries.

Indian Hypertension Burden

Hypertension is the **most important non communicable disease** risk factor in India.

India has an estimated **188.3 million adults aged 30–79 years** grappling with hypertension.

Southern States have a **higher prevalence of hypertension** than the national average. **Kerala (32.8% men and 30.9% women)** has the highest number followed by Telangana.

To reach a 50% control rate, India needs to ensure that an **additional 67 million people with hypertension receive effective treatment. If the progress scenario were achieved, 4.6 million deaths due to high blood pressure would be averted by 2040.**

What are the initiatives undertaken for controlling Hypertension?

National Initiatives

India Hypertension Control Initiative (IHCI)- India Hypertension Control Initiative(IHCI) focuses on controlling hypertension by screening people, ensuring protocol-based treatment, and providing medicines. Through India Hypertension Control Initiative(IHCI) and the government's push towards non-communicable disease screening and treatment at the primary healthcare level, India aims to **put 75 million patients with hypertension or diabetes on standard care by 2025.**

National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS) which is being implemented under the **National Health Mission.**

Ayushman Bharat Health Wellness Centre scheme- Preventive aspect of hypertension and NCDs is being strengthened under Comprehensive Primary Health Care by promotion of wellness activities and targeted communication at the community level.

Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for Treatment (AMRIT) Deendayal outlets- These have been opened at 159 Institutions/Hospitals with an objective to make Cardiovascular Diseases drugs and implants at discounted prices to the patients.

Global Initiatives

Global Hearts Initiative – WHO and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention launched the **Global Hearts Initiative in 2016** to achieve the global target to reduce the prevalence of hypertension by 25% by 2025.

WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2013–2020- This action plan aims to **reduce premature mortality from Non Communicable disease(NCDs)** by 25% by 2025 and includes a set of nine global targets.

The NCD Alliance- This is a global network of civil society organizations working to prevent and control NCDs. It advocates for **policy change and increased investment in NCD** prevention and management.

WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control- This international treaty aims to **reduce tobacco consumption** and the related harm to health.

United Nations High-Level Meeting on NCDs- This meeting, held in 2018, focused on accelerating progress on the prevention and control of NCDs and called for increased political commitment and action to combat NCDs.

SDG-3 – The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG 3) aims **to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all**. This goal has reduction of hypertension as one of its main targets.

What are the recommendations of the WHO report on Hypertension?

Following recommendations of the WHO report on Hypertension must be followed so as to reduce mortality due to hypertension.

Scaling Up Coverage of Hypertension treatment- Countries are urged to scale up coverage of hypertension treatment to reach more individuals with high blood pressure.

Integration with Primary Healthcare systems- Effective hypertension management should be integrated into primary healthcare systems, making it accessible to a broad population.

Using WHO's HEARTS Package- WHO's HEARTS technical package for cardiovascular disease management in primary healthcare and guidelines for the pharmacological treatment of hypertension in adults should be implemented for proven and practical steps for hypertension care.

Affordable Medication- Simple, low-cost medication should be made available and affordable to those with hypertension.

Team-Based Care- Collaboration among healthcare teams is encouraged to adjust and intensify blood pressure medication regimens per doctor orders and protocols.

Patient-Centered Service- Reduction of barriers to care through easy-to-take medication regimens, free medications, close-to-home follow-up visits, and accessible blood pressure monitoring can improve patient outcomes.

Development of Information Systems- Simple information systems should be developed to facilitate rapid recording of essential patient-level data and reducing healthcare worker data entry burden.

Read More- [WHO report on Hypertension Indian Express](#)

[Kurukshetra 2023 September] Make In India-Challenges Opportunities and Outcomes- Explained Pointwise

'Make in India' launched on 25 September 2014 is one of the game-changing economic initiatives of the Government of India. This timely and appropriate international marketing slogan is aimed at **encouraging companies and individuals across the globe** to facilitate, foster innovation, build world-class infrastructure and build a hub for manufacturing, design, and innovation in India.

What is the scope and Sectoral Coverage of Make In India?

Make in India is an initiative by the Government of India to **create and encourage companies to develop, manufacture and assemble products made in India** and incentivize dedicated investments into manufacturing.

Scope and Objectives



Source-Kuruksheetra

Sectoral Coverage

A total of **27 economic sectors** were identified to give a big push during the entire life cycle of business activities within the respective sector.

Manufacturing Sector(15 sectors)	Aerospace and Defence, Automotive and Auto Components, Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices, Bio-Technology, Capital Goods, Textile and Apparels, Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM), Leather & Footwear, Food Processing, Gems and Jewellery, Shipping, Railways, Construction, New and Renewable Energy.
Service Sector(12 sectors)	Information Technology & Information Technology enabled Services (IT & ITeS), Tourism and Hospitality Services, Medical Value Travel, Transport and Logistics Services, Accounting and Finance Services, Audio Visual Services, Legal Services,

	Communication Services, Construction and Related Engineering Services, Environmental Services, Financial Services, Education Services.
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Pillars

New Processes	The Government of India introduced several reform measures aligned with positive parameters of the World Bank's 'Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) with a view to enhance India's ranking on business facilitation through process reforms.
New Infrastructure	Make in India intends to develop well-equipped industrial corridors, smart cities, world class infrastructure with state-of-the-art technology, and high-speed communication network amenities.
New Sectors	Make in India identified 25 sectors. Investment gaps were removed in certain sectors, restrictions for expansion were either removed or relaxed for some other sectors, considering their growth potential and their share in national economic development.
New Mindset	Attempts were made to transform the Government's outlook towards the industrial growth by making it a partner in the economic development of the country along with the development of the corporate sector.

Reforms

- Guaranteeing basic production inputs – power, minerals and water at competitive prices.
- Making modern transport, logistic, and communication infrastructure accessible.
- Ensuring accessibility to domestic and international markets.
- Developing entrepreneurship and improving the capacity of entrepreneurs.
- Extending support for bringing in EoDB through access to venture capital, strong industrial delicensing and deregulating environment, etc.

What are the advantages of Make in India?

Make in India has the following advantages-

Promotes export oriented Growth- The export oriented growth model of the program will positively impact the balance of payments position and support in accumulating foreign exchange reserves. A positive balance of payments will **address volatility in the global economy**, especially in the post-COVID economic scenario.

India's growth as global manufacturing hub- The holistic developmental approach under this initiative will help in **achieving higher credit ratings for the country**, and making India a global manufacturing hub so as to attract more and more investors to invest in India.

Increase in employment opportunities- A massive increase in employment will enhance the purchasing power of the citizen, will expand the consumer base for companies and **address the problem of poverty.**

Address the problem of Brain Drain- Emphasis on improved education and training infrastructure as part of **'Make in India' program will ensure a skilled workforce** for each of the focused sectors will help reduce brain drain.

What has been the impact of 'make in India'?

The 'Make in India' initiative has had a positive impact on the economy. The following are some of the major achievements of the last 8 years:

Increase in Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) rankings- EoDB parameters have gone in favour of India during the last eight years. The industrial environment has become positive and progressive. The country's rank in the World Bank's **EoDB ranking was 142 in 2014**. As per the latest report, the World Bank has accorded **India a rank 63 in 2022**, indicating a rank improvement of 79 positions.

Increased FDI flows in India- FDI inflows in India which stood at **US \$ 45.15 billion** in 2014-15 have increased continuously since then. The highest ever annual FDI inflow of **84.84 billion US\$** was recorded in the financial year 2022.

Growth of Indian Agricultural Sector- Indian agriculture sector has been growing at an average annual growth rate of 4.6 per cent during 2014-15 and 2021-22. **India has emerged as the net exporter of agri-products**. In 2020-21, exports of agriculture and allied products from India grew by 18% over 2019-20, and agricultural exports reached a high of US \$ 50.2 bn in 2021-22.

Increase in employment and GVA in manufacturing sector- As per the **Eco survey 2021-22 there has been positive GVA in the manufacturing sector**. The total employment in this sector has increased from 57 million in the year 2017-18 to 62.4 million in the year 2019-20, inspite of the disruptions caused by COVID-19.

Resilience of service sector- There is a resilient performance of service trade, where the total services exports grew by **48.4 billion US \$ in 2021-22** over 2020-21 from **206.1 US\$ billion to 254.5 US \$ billion**.

What are the Challenges in 'Make in India'?

Complex Labour Laws- The biggest challenge is the labour laws and reforms in the country. The **Global Rights Index (2016)**, published annually by the **International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)**, ranked India as one of the 10 worst countries for working people. Large-scale exclusions of workers from labour law, violence and arrests are the reasons for India's poor performance.

Complex Taxation System- The **complex taxation system**, a huge amount of paperwork and corruption have posed challenges to Make in India.

Stringent land acquisition laws- Stringent land acquisition laws and inflexible labour regulations have made it difficult for India to attract investors in the manufacturing sector. India's **benchmark land acquisition law must be amended** to make it easier to buy land for defence and development projects in the fast-growing economy, while also ensuring the rights of farmers.

Availability of Power for Industry- India is running short of power with a **deficit of 5.1%**. **The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has also recently claimed a loss of \$37 billion** due

to lack of transparency in the allocation of the coal blocks. Greater availability of power is needed to realise the dream of the scheme.

Low Productivity- The productivity of Indian factories is low and workers have insufficient skills. **McKinsey report** states that Indian workers in the manufacturing sector are, on average, almost **four and five times less productive** than their counterparts in Thailand and China.

Read More- [Make in India 2.0](#)

What Should be the way forward?

More Labour reforms- India must introduce labour reforms at earliest like raising minimum wages, providing better social security for the labour.

Simplification of Tax system- The complex taxation system, a huge amount of paperwork and corruption is a main cause of worries among the investors. An overly complex GST, which has dampened investor sentiment and created compliance burdens on SMEs need to be simplified.

Land reforms- India's benchmark land acquisition law can be amended to make it easier to buy land for defence and development projects in the fast-growing economy, while also ensuring the rights of farmers.

Skill training- Encouraging youth to join government missions **like Skill India initiative, Yuva Kaushal Kendra mission** to make them available for industrial needs.

Co-operative federalism- To make the a success, a common consensus among the states is needed. There is a need to bring the less performing states at par with the better performing ones through **collaborative efforts**.

Read More- [Make in India The Hindu](#)