

# 9 PM Current Affairs Weekly Compilation

For UPSC CSE mains examination



**2<sup>nd</sup> Week**  
**May. 2024**

**Features :**

Arranged as per syllabus Topics  
Most complete coverage of major  
News Papers editorials

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## GS Paper 1

### Subject: Indian Society

#### Topic- Salient features of Indian Society

#### Clarifying Misconceptions Regarding Hindu Marriage Validity

**Context:** This article discusses the misconceptions arising from a recent Supreme Court judgment in the case "Dolly Rani v Manish Kumar Chanchal,". Misconceptions are particularly related to the requirement of the 'saptapadi' ceremony for the validity of Hindu marriages.

#### What is the case and judgement?

The case emerged from a transfer petition in the SC, related to a divorce. In this case petitioners are pushing for divorce with the argument that even though they had been issued marriage certificate, their marriage was invalid because they didn't perform the traditional 'saptapadi'. In its judgement Supreme Court emphasized the importance of Saptapadi ceremony and held that a Hindu marriage cannot be recognized in the absence of a valid ceremony, such as saptapadi. However, it has created a doubt whether this judgment made the Saptapadi ceremony an essential practice for the validity of the marriage.

**NOTE-**Saptapadi is a custom among certain sections of Hindus which involves taking seven steps around the sacred fire. But it is not universally practiced among all denominations.

#### What are the issues with this judgement?

- 1) The judgment didn't mention other ways to validate the marriage or explore customs with simpler ceremonies like exchanging garlands.
- 2) SC didn't state any special status for saptapadi. Therefore, this cannot be understood as the only form of solemnization of marriage.
- 3) It also didn't discuss the amendment in Tamil Nadu introducing the *suya mariyadhai* form of marriage.

#### What are the requirements of the Hindu Marriage Act regarding solemnization?

- 1) The Supreme Court stated that as per Section 7 of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, a marriage is deemed complete and binding with the performance of customary rites, including 'saptapadi' where it is practiced. Read more- [Sapinda Marriage](#)
- 2) Section 7(2) says that if the rituals include saptapadi, the marriage is complete and legally binding after the seventh step. However, this cannot be understood as the only form of solemnization of marriage.

#### What was the stand of the previous judgments and amendments in this regard?

In 1967, Tamil Nadu passed an amendment to simplify marriage ceremonies. Upholding this amendment's validity, the Madras High Court ruled in **S. Nagalingam v. Sivagami (2001)** that a priest's presence is not necessary for a valid marriage. Parties can marry in front of relatives or friends, exchanging vows and performing simple rituals like garlanding or exchanging rings.

- 2) In **Balakrishnan v The Inspector of Police (2014)** case, the Madras High court held that a marriage conducted in secrecy, called *suya mariyadhai*, is not valid.

3) In **Ilavarasan v The Superintendent of Police and Others (2023)**, the court disagreed with its earlier ruling in *Balakrishnan v The Inspector of Police (2014)*. It held that a public solemnization or declaration is not required for a valid marriage under **Section 7A(1)**.

The Court argued that imposing a public declaration requirement, not mentioned in Section 7A (1), restricts the law's broader purpose and violates **Article 21** of the Constitution.

## **Topic- Role of Women and Women's Organization, Population and Associated Issues, Poverty and Developmental issues, Urbanization, their problems and their remedies.**

### **Steps to improve gender parity in India**

**Context:** The article discusses how empowering women economically is crucial for India's development by 2047. It suggests policies to increase women's employment, enhance their skills, make cities safer, provide clean cooking fuels, and promote urban care services to improve gender parity.

For details information on **Women Empowerment** [read this article here](#)

#### **What policies can a new government adopt to improve gender parity in India?**

**Increase Women's Labor Force Participation (LFP):** Only 25% of Indian women participate in the workforce, compared to 70% in China and 55% in Bangladesh. Raising the current 25% LFP to 50% by providing job opportunities in labor-intensive sectors like garments and footwear through the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme will help drive India's GDP growth to 8% by 2030.

**Expand Women's Skilling Programs:** Only 7% of Industrial Training Institute (ITI) enrollees are women. Offer more scholarships, establish women-focused training centers, and provide career counseling to improve job outcomes.

**Improve Urban Infrastructure:** Ensure safe, reliable public transport and accessible care services, freeing women from domestic duties and enabling employment.

**Promote Clean Cooking Technologies:** Provide rebates for adopting cleaner cooking fuels and equipment to reduce the 20-hour weekly burden of cooking with polluting fuels.

**Offer Financial Incentives:** Introduce credit access, stipends, and installment fee payments to incentivize women's participation in training programs.

**Leverage Mentorship Networks:** Utilize alumni networks and role models to guide women through training and job placement processes.

For details information on **The Alliance for Global Good – Gender Equity and Equality** [read this article here](#)

## Evaluation of Smart Cities Mission (SCM)

**Context-**The Smart Cities Mission (SCM), a flagship programme of the current government has taken a back seat in this year's list of poll promises and achievements. The article highlights various shortcomings in the implementation of Smart Cities Mission.

### What is a Smart City?

- 1) **Origin of the term-**The term 'Smart City' has been widely used since 2009, after the global financial crash, to describe new cities with advanced ICT and communication networks.
- 2) **Components of SCM-** The SCM had two main aspects:
  - A) Area-based development consisting of three components — redevelopment (city renewal), retrofitting (city improvement), and green field projects (city extension);
  - B) Pan-city solutions based on ICT-It comprise of some 6 categories that include e-governance, waste management, water management, energy management, urban mobility, and skill development.
- 3) **Funding-**Around ₹2 lakh crore was allocated for the mission, with public-private partnerships (PPP) as an important driver.
- 4) **SPV model-** A business-style approach to governance was taken by using Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs). These were led by government officials or representatives from multinational corporations.

Read more- [Smart city's nerve centre](#)

### What are the shortcomings and criticisms of SCM?

- 1) **Defining "Smart Cities" in Context-** The mission didn't offer a clear definition of a smart city. It pointed out that there isn't a single definition because what makes a city "smart" can differ based on factors like its development level, openness to change, resources, and what the people living there want.
- 2) **Faulty selection-**The selection of 100 cities through competition was flawed because of the diverse urban situations. The scheme didn't consider the real conditions of urban India, where growth is dynamic, unlike the more stable situation in the West.
- 3) **Exclusionary Approach-**It turned into a scheme that excluded most of the city, focusing development on less than 1% of its area. For ex- Chandigarh got ₹196 crore in the first round of funding but spent it all on various projects like smart water meters, Wi-Fi zones, and waste management, all concentrated in one area— sector 43.
- 4) **Funding Gap-** According to two big reports by McKinsey, India needs \$1.2 trillion by 2030 to improve its cities. In comparison, ₹1,67,875 crore over nine years were allocated which is only around 0.027% of what's needed.
- 5) **Issues With Governance Model-** The special purpose vehicle (SPV) model for smart cities was not aligned with the 74th Constitutional Amendment. Further, critics say the design was too centralized.
- 6) **Displacement of Weaker Sections-** In urban India, over 49% of people live in slums, as reported by the World Bank. During the implementation of smart city projects, many people from poorer areas were forced to move. For ex- Street vendors were relocated.
- 7) **Unintended Consequences of SCM -**Some towns that were historically not prone to flooding became vulnerable due to infrastructure development projects that disrupted water channels and contours.

## Subject: Geography

**Topic- Distribution of Key Natural Resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian sub-continent); factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India).**

### Undersea freshwater reserves

**Context:** The article discusses the discovery of fresh water beneath the ocean and how countries might start exploring and using this resource. It mentions international laws that govern the seas and how these might apply to fresh water. The focus is on future conflicts over water and the need for laws to manage these resources.

#### What are undersea freshwater reserves?

Undersea freshwater reserves are large volumes of fresh water found beneath the ocean floor. In the 1960s, the U.S. Geological Survey discovered freshwater while drilling off the New Jersey coast. Similar discoveries have been made by scientists in Vietnam and other countries. An example includes a flowing freshwater river discovered at the bottom of the Black Sea, which is over 100 feet deep and has a flow rate of four miles per hour. These reserves are significant given that only 2.5% of Earth's 1.386 billion km<sup>3</sup> water volume is freshwater, with 97.5% being saltwater and only 2.5% freshwater. Most freshwater (about 99.7%) is in ice or underground, including under the ocean.

#### How do international laws address ocean resources?

**UNCLOS Framework:** The United Nations Law of the Sea Convention (UNCLOS) of 1982 governs ocean resources, outlining rights and responsibilities for managing the ocean and its resources within and beyond national borders.

**Resource Definition and Control:** Under UNCLOS, "resources" include all solid, liquid, or gaseous minerals on the seabed, regulated by the International Seabed Authority. This raises questions about whether freshwater qualifies under this definition.

**Exclusive Economic Zones and the "Area":** UNCLOS establishes Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) up to 200 nautical miles from the coast, where a state has special rights over marine resources. Beyond this, the "Area" is considered common heritage, governed collectively for sustainable use.

**Geneva Conventions:** Before UNCLOS, the 1958 Geneva Conventions also addressed ocean law but are less comprehensive.

#### What challenges exist in exploring and using these resources?

**Legal Ambiguities:** The definition of "resources" under UNCLOS mainly includes minerals, not clearly covering freshwater. This raises questions about the legality of exploiting underwater freshwater sources.

**Governance Issues:** Activities in the "Area" beyond national jurisdictions are governed by UNCLOS and the International Seabed Authority, but there is no specific regulation for freshwater, leading to potential governance gaps.

#### Why is freshwater exploration important for the future?



**Scarcity of Freshwater:** The article notes that only 0.3% of Earth's freshwater is available in liquid form on the surface, making underground and underwater sources critical to meet future needs.

**Avoiding Conflicts:** With freshwater becoming an increasingly scarce commodity, exploring and securing underwater sources can help prevent future conflicts over water resources.

**Sustainable Development:** Properly managed freshwater exploration aligns with Sustainable Development Goals, promoting the responsible use of natural resources for future generations.

**Topic- Important Geophysical Phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc., geographical features and their location-changes in critical geographical features (including water-bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes.**

### Impact of climate change on heatwave

**Context:** The article discusses how climate change has made extreme heat more likely in eastern and southern India. It highlights the increasing frequency and severity of heatwaves, their health impacts, and the need for better heat action plans and regulations to mitigate these effects.

For detailed information on **Heatwaves in India** [read this Article here](#)

#### What is Attribution science?

Attribution science studies the impact of climate change on specific weather events. It uses new tools and methodologies to determine if climate change made an event more or less likely. Scientists have been cautious about linking individual weather events to climate change.

However, recent advancements allow for more accurate assessments. For example, the World Weather Attribution group found that April's extreme heat in eastern and southern India was 45 times more likely due to climate change.

This field is becoming crucial for understanding climate change's effects.

#### How has climate change increased heatwaves?

This is the third consecutive year that early summer heatwaves in India have been attributed to climate change.

For example, Odisha experienced an 18-day heatwave in April, one of its longest ever.

Gangetic West Bengal recorded the most heatwave days in 15 years.

Eastern India had its warmest April ever, illustrating the growing impact of climate change on heatwaves.

#### What are the concerns of heatwaves in India?

Heat waves cause **severe health issues** like dehydration, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, and sudden deaths.

**Data on heat-related illnesses and deaths** in India is poorly maintained. In 2022, the Health Ministry reported only 33 heat-related deaths, but the NCRB reported 730 deaths. The Health Ministry reported 264 heat-related deaths in the first six months of 2023.

Early warnings and heat action plans have reduced heat-related deaths, but recent trends show an increase, possibly due to better reporting or more severe heatwaves.

## How are heatwaves mitigated?

### Heat Action Plans:

Twenty-three states in India have heat action plans to manage heatwaves. These plans help reduce the impact of extreme heat on people.

Experts emphasize the need for adequate funding for heat action plans to enhance their effectiveness.

### Public Measures:

Cool drinking water is provided at public places.

Oral rehydration solutions are distributed to prevent dehydration.

Parks and shaded places are made accessible to offer relief from the heat.

### Regulation of Activities:

Schools and colleges are closed during peak hours to protect students from the heat.

Local administrations regulate activities in unorganized sectors like construction during peak heat hours.

Office timings can be adjusted to avoid peak heat.

Organized outdoor activities, including sports, are strictly regulate

## GS Paper 2

### Subject: Indian Polity

### Topic- Indian Constitution—Historical Underpinnings, Evolution, Features, Amendments, Significant Provisions and Basic Structure.

#### Clash Between Fundamental Rights & DPSPs

**Context** - The article highlights that the Supreme Court can resolve the longstanding conflict between fundamental rights and DPSPs in Property Owners Association vs State of Maharashtra case by providing clarity on Article 31C's validity and adherence to the Constitution's basic structure.

#### What are the key questions raised in the case of Property Owners Association vs State of Maharashtra?

1) The interpretation of the term "material resources of the community" as mentioned in Article 39(b) of the Constitution.

2) Whether laws enacted to achieve the objective set forth in Article 39(b) are immunized from legal challenges based on fundamental rights to equality and liberty. This question also highlights a conflict between Part III of the Constitution, which outlines fundamental rights, and Part IV, which lists Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP).

**NOTE**-Article 39(b)-It places an obligation on the state to create policy towards securing "the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good".

#### What has been the history of conflict between fundamental rights and Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)?

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This tension between the two has existed throughout India's history. However, it has become particularly intense in the 1970s when amendments were made to exempt certain laws from judicial review.

### 1) Constitutional Provisions and Earlier Judicial Interpretations-

A) At its inception, the Constitution's bare text was clear enough. Article 13 stated that any law violating a fundamental right would be invalid. In contrast, Article 37 stated that Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP) wouldn't be enforceable in court.

B) In its early judgments, the Supreme Court clarified the hierarchy between fundamental rights and DPSPs. In *Mohd. Hanif Quareshi vs State of Bihar (1958)*, the Chief Justice stated that the state should implement DPSPs without abridging fundamental rights.

2) **Introduction of Article 31(C)**- The 25th amendment introduced Article 31C to protect laws enacted to fulfill Article 39(b) and (c) from challenges under Articles 14 and 19 of the Constitution. This provision aimed to exempt legislation promoting the common good from fundamental rights scrutiny.

3) **Kesavananda Bharati vs State of Kerala (1973)**- The court upheld the validity of Article 31C but made it subject to judicial review.

4) **42<sup>nd</sup> Constitutional Amendment**- Parliament brought the 42nd Amendment Act in 1976, which extended the scope of the Article 31C by including within its purview any law to implement any of the DPSPs specified in Part IV of the constitutional and not merely Article 39 (b) or (c).

5) **Minerva Mills vs Union of India (1980)**- 42<sup>nd</sup> CAA was subsequently challenged in this case. The court declared the amendment **unconstitutional**. The Court found that while DPSPs provided the ends of governance, fundamental rights constituted the means to such ends.

6) **Waman Rao vs Union of India**- The court upheld the validity of Article 31C by arguing that laws aligned with Articles 39(b) and (c) wouldn't violate rights under Articles 14 and 19.

Read more- [Difference between Fundamental Rights and DPSP](#)

### What are the consequences of legal ambiguity surrounding Article 31C?

1) **Potential for Abuse:** Critics argue that Article 31C, as amended, gives excessive power to the legislature, enabling it to enact laws that could infringe upon fundamental rights under the guise of achieving the objectives of the Directive Principles. In other words, it places certain laws above fundamental rights. For instance, a law nationalizing the printing press, purportedly for the common good, could suppress free speech.

2) **Judicial Responses and Uncertainties:** The Supreme Court has struggled with Article 31C's implications, as seen in the *Minerva Mills* case (1980) and the *Waman Rao* judgment. **For ex-**in *Minerva Mill* case, there some of the questions were not answered like- Has Article 31C reverted to its original version from the 25th amendment, minus the parts invalidated by the majority in *Kesavananda*? Or is it in a limbo where its validity is uncertain?

These rulings questioned the amendment's alignment with the Constitution's basic structure. But did not conclusively resolve the tensions between Directive Principles and Fundamental Rights.

### The concept of democracy as a governing method and a core societal value

**Context:** This article explores the concept of democracy as a governing method and a core societal value. It examines how democracy, especially in India, is often defined more by administrative practices than by its foundational values, which face challenges in practice.

For details information on **V-Dem institute report on Democracy in India** [read this article here](#)

## What is democracy?

**Political philosopher Giorgio Agamben** describes democracy as a technique of governance, providing governments legitimacy to control the population since the French Revolution. As a societal value, democracy encompasses freedom, justice, and respect.

**Philosopher Alain Badiou** portrays democracy as a political emblem, where even critics use its language while ignoring its core values.

## What did Gandhi and Ambedkar think about democracy?

### Gandhi's View on Democracy:

Gandhi believed democracy should be a societal value, cultivated naturally. He opposed constitutionalizing democracy, preferring it to remain a part of traditional morality. According to him, democracy wasn't a natural sentiment but was externally imposed, unlike India's "real" democratic tradition of religious coexistence.

### Ambedkar's View on Democracy:

Ambedkar saw democracy as a constitutional value, necessary due to India's deep structural inequalities. He emphasized that the Constitution must guarantee and protect democracy. His views underscored the importance of equality, justice, and social reform within a democratic framework.

## What challenges does democracy face in India?

**Administrative Overemphasis:** Democracy is often reduced to administrative practices, with less focus on core values like freedom and justice. Issues around elections and parliamentary processes dominate discussions.

**Intolerance and Pluralism:** There is limited tolerance for dissent, and pluralism is not fully embraced. This is evident from the Emergency declared in 1975, which showed how easily dissent can be stifled.

**Changing Principles:** Organizations like the RSS have been legitimized, altering the character of democracy. Their influence has increased through popular means, challenging traditional values.

**Symbolic Engagement:** While democracy is a popular topic, deeper concerns over its principles and values are often ignored. Even opponents of democracy participate in discussions without upholding its foundational values.

## Affirmative Action in India- Constitutional Provisions,

**Context:** This article discusses the political conflict around reservations in India, where parties debate caste census and religious reservations. It explains constitutional affirmative action, reviews its implementation, and considers potential changes like removing the 50% cap and sub-categorizing benefits.

For detailed information on What is affirmative action? read this article here

## How does the Constitution ensure affirmative action?

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**Fundamental Rights:** The Constitution ensures social justice by guaranteeing equality in Articles 15 and 16, allowing affirmative action in educational admissions and public employment.

**Provisions for Backward Classes:** It enables special provisions for the advancement of OBCs, SCs, and STs. The 1992 Indra Sawhney case upheld a 27% reservation for **OBCs while capping total reservations at 50%**.

**Creamy Layer Exclusion:** The court mandates excluding wealthy OBC individuals, currently defined as those with incomes above ₹8 lakh.

**EWS Reservation:** The Janhit Abhiyan case in 2022 validated the 10% Economic Weaker Section (EWS) quota.

**Muslim Reservation:** Karnataka has a 4% sub-categorization for Muslims under the OBC quota, though it was briefly redistributed among Hindu OBCs. Courts later upheld this categorization.

### How does affirmative action work in other countries?

**United States:** The U.S. uses affirmative action programs that give special consideration to racial minorities like African-Americans and Latin-Americans. However, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Fair Admissions vs. Harvard (2023) that race-based admissions violate the Constitution.

**United Kingdom:** The U.K. permits voluntary “positive action” programs allowing employers to support underrepresented groups.

**France:** There is no race-based affirmative action in France. Instead, educational measures promote opportunities for low-income students.

### What is the current controversy about religious reservations?

**BJP-Congress Conflict:** The BJP and Congress conflict centers on the caste census and reservations. The BJP criticizes Congress’s push for a caste census and linking reservations to religion. Meanwhile, Congress questions the BJP’s policies on reservation, despite the BJP denying any changes to its stance.

**Muslim and Christian Quotas:** The government is exploring extending SC benefits to Dalit Muslims and Christians, given that their backwardness aligns with the constitutional definition of “socially and educationally backward classes.”

### What challenges exist in implementing affirmative action effectively?

**Concentration of Benefits:** The Rohini Commission found that 97% of reserved jobs and educational seats are taken by only 25% of OBC castes, leaving about 1,000 OBC communities unrepresented.

**Lack of Sub-Categorization:** Although 11 states implemented sub-categorization, it hasn’t been applied at the central level.

**No Creamy Layer Exclusion:** SCs and STs lack a mechanism like the OBC creamy layer to ensure equitable distribution.

**Religious Discrimination:** The Constitution includes all religions under “socially and educationally backward classes,” but the 1950 Scheduled Castes Order limits SC membership to Hinduism, Sikhism, or Buddhism. There’s no such limitation for STs.

## Topic- Issues and Challenges Pertaining to the Federal Structure, Devolution of Powers and Finances up to Local Levels and Challenges Therein.

### Issue with fiscal transfers in India

**Context:** The article discusses how some wealthier southern Indian states feel unfairly treated because their taxes are redistributed to poorer northern states. However, wealthier states still gain economic benefits through the union, despite growing disparities between richer and poorer regions.

#### What is the issue with fiscal transfers in India?

**Southern States' Perspective:** The "South Tax Movement" asserts that southern states are penalized for better economic management. Karnataka receives 15 paisa per rupee of tax paid, and Tamil Nadu gets 29 paisa.

**Northern States' Benefits:** Meanwhile, Uttar Pradesh receives ₹2.73 per rupee, and Bihar receives ₹7.06, reflecting a higher fiscal benefit than southern states.

**Not Just North-South:** Other wealthy states like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana, and Delhi also contribute more than they receive back. Eastern states like Assam, Odisha, and West Bengal are among those benefiting more.

**For details information on issue with fiscal transfers in India read Article 1, Article 2**

#### What can we learn from the European Union?

**Richer Nations Contribute More:** In the European Union (EU), richer northern nations like Germany, the Netherlands, and Denmark believe they over-contribute compared to less developed countries in Southern and Eastern Europe.

**Benefits of a Captive Market:** Despite these contributions, richer EU nations gain access to a captive market to sell their products, boosting their economic opportunities.

**Currency Advantage:** The Bertelsmann Stiftung Foundation found that Germany experienced 0.5% annual growth due to the euro. If Germany still used the stronger D-Mark, its exports would be less competitive globally.

**Migration Benefits:** Free migration within the EU increased overall income by €100-230 billion over a decade. Migrants from poorer countries find higher-paying jobs, while richer nations fill labor shortages.

#### What future challenges lie ahead?

**Parliamentary Seat Allocation:** India's parliamentary seats have not been adjusted since 1991. With northern states growing faster, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh could gain over 30 seats after 2026, leading to potential North-South conflicts.

**Representation Imbalance:** The southern states, along with Odisha and West Bengal, stand to lose seats, risking further North-South divides.

**Fiscal Allocation:** The 16th Finance Commission will decide on fiscal distribution. Addressing health, education, and infrastructure gaps in poorer states is vital for balanced growth across India by 2047.

## Topic-Separation of Powers between various organs Dispute Redressal Mechanisms and Institutions

### Significance of Mediation for Dispute Resolution

**Context-**In the backdrop of judicial backlog and prolonged litigations, the present Chief Justice of India emphasized the need for mediation over litigation in April 2024. The article highlights the significance and barriers in the path to mediation.

#### What is the Mediation Act, 2023?

**Aim-** To promote alternative dispute resolution by formalizing mediation.

**Definition-** The Act provides a comprehensive definition of mediation, including pre-litigation, court-annexed, online, and community mediation.

**Approach-** Mediation should not replace established legal procedures like the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) but should be a synergistic approach.

#### What is the significance of mediation?

- 1) Mediation reorients the focus from adversarial confrontation to reconciling differences and healing relationships. This is in alignment with Mahatma Gandhi's vision of lawyers as peacemakers.
- 2) Mediators foster a democratic space for open dialogue, allowing individuals to express emotions and grievances freely. This paves the way for mutual understanding and balance.

Read more- [Alternative dispute resolution](#)

#### What are the challenges?

- 1) Aspiring mediators are required to have 15 years of professional experience before practicing as mediators, which can hinder skill development.
- 2) Law students are trained to advocate strongly for their clients. This is in stark contrast with the mediator's role of neutrality and impartiality.
- 3) There is a disconnect in legal education and practice, requiring professionals to "unlearn" mediation to practice advocacy and vice versa.

#### What should be the way forward?

- 1) Innovative training methods like co-mediation and shadow mediation should be incorporated under the Mediation Act, 2023, for young lawyers-
  - A) Co-mediation pairs novice mediators with experienced ones, facilitating a dynamic learning environment.
  - B) shadow mediation allows observation of mediation sessions by novices without direct involvement.
- 2) There is a need to integrate structured mediation training into law school curricula. This helps students develop essential skills for resolving disputes with empathy and efficiency.
- 3) Improving the Mediation Act, 2023, by adding practical training and integrating it into curricula will make it more than just a law. It will become a driving force for growth and innovation in dispute resolution throughout India.

Empowering the next generation of mediators with the necessary tools will foster a robust culture of mediation, ensuring a more harmonious, efficient, and just society.

## Topic- Salient Features of the Representation of People's Act.

### Problems caused by politicians violating the Model Code of Conduct

**Context:** The article discusses the problem of politicians violating the model code of conduct during election campaigns in India. It mentions the Election Commission of India's (ECI) authority to ensure fair elections and how it can act against these violations.

#### What are the problems caused by politicians violating the Model Code of Conduct?

**Increased Communal Tension:** Politicians have been accused of making speeches that can promote hatred and division among different religious or community groups during their election campaigns.

**Degradation of Electoral Purity:** Violations of the model code, such as unverified allegations and misleading information, compromise the purity and integrity of the electoral process.

**Unequal Campaign Conditions:** By violating the model code, some candidates and parties gain an unfair advantage, disrupting the level playing field that is crucial for free and fair elections.

**Less Effective Enforcement:** Since the tenure of T.N. Seshan, enforcement of the code has been perceived as less rigorous, leading to more frequent and blatant violations.

#### How does the Election Commission of India enforce it?

**Suspension of Party Recognition:** The Election Commission of India (ECI) can suspend the recognition of a political party if it violates the model code. This means the party cannot use its reserved symbol during elections, which is a significant disadvantage.

**Withdrawal of Party Recognition:** In extreme cases, the ECI can withdraw a party's recognition entirely, further disrupting its ability to campaign effectively.

**Banning from Campaigns:** The ECI has the authority to ban politicians from campaigning temporarily. For example, it has previously taken violators off the election campaign for periods ranging from 24 to 48 hours.

#### What should be done?

The Election Commission of India should actively enforce the Model Code of Conduct as in the days of T.N. Seshan, who was known for his strict actions against violators.

The Supreme Court can instruct the ECI to commence criminal proceedings under Section 125 of the Representation of the People Act 1951 and suspend campaign privileges for violators until the elections conclude.

## Topic- Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health

### Concerns associated with Extra-pulmonary tuberculosis

**Context-** Almost one out of every five TB patients have EPTB. Many of them aren't diagnosed, and even those who are diagnosed can't get proper care unless they go to specific specialist hospitals. Thus, the article highlights the need for proper diagnosis and treatment of Extra-Pulmonary Tuberculosis (EPTB).



### What is Extra-Pulmonary Tuberculosis (EPTB)?

EPTB refers to tuberculosis infections that occur outside the lungs, affecting organs such as lymph nodes, brain, gut, eyes, and others.

A troubling aspect of EPTB infection is the prolonged presence of disease markers even after the infection is resolved with treatment.

It can affect various organs, leading to irreparable damage if left untreated. For ex- EPTB in the eyes can result in vision loss or blindness.

### What are the challenges in estimating the burden of EPTB?

1) **Detecting Extra-Pulmonary Tuberculosis**- It is difficult to detect through regular TB stain tests as it may not present with corresponding lung infections. This stain-negative nature and the ability of EPTB to imitate other non-TB conditions make its prevalence difficult to detect.

2) **Awareness**- Lack of awareness among physicians and the absence of accurate diagnostic and treatment criteria contribute to the challenge.

3) **Expert working in silos**- Because TB can affect different organs, the absence of proper protocols for doctors from various fields to share information creates separate areas of expertise. This makes it difficult to collaborate effectively.

4) **Implementing EPTB Guidelines**- Experts from various health institutions, the WHO, and the Cochrane Infectious Disease Group made guidelines called INDEX-TB for managing EPTB in India.

Unfortunately, this effort hasn't moved forward, and there are still no diagnosis and treatment plans for all affected organs.

5) **Data Collection standards**- The specialized departments in large public hospitals have different ways of collecting data, and their information isn't shared with the National TB Control Program. Therefore, it is not known how common EPTB is.

**For ex-** Ni-kshay- the national patient management portal for TB control, do not have adequate data on EPTB patients.

6) **Underexplored Aspects of EPTB Infection**- Important aspects of EPTB, such as how the infection spreads and how the TB bacterium interacts with organs, are under-explored.

Read more- [Tuberculosis- Role of private sector in Elimination](#)

### What should be the way forward?

1) It is essential to develop diagnosis and treatment protocols for all organs affected by EPTB based on high-quality data from clinical trials.

2) Advanced tools like single-cell RNA sequencing could aid in uncovering more effective treatment approaches.

3) The INDEX-TB guidelines were created more than ten years ago and should be updated with new information and knowledge. They should also involve experts from different healthcare fields to be more comprehensive.

## India's road fatality

**Context-**The article highlights the urgent need to mobilize resources for minimizing fatalities in road accident in India.

### What is the present status of road accidents and fatalities in India?

- 1) According to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, the number of fatalities rose to 168,000 in 2022 from about 150,000 the previous year.
- 2) As per the World Bank, India loses more than 5% of its GDP to road accidents, and more than 80% of those affected are in the productive age group.
- 3) As per WHO (World Health Organization) India has the highest road fatalities, despite having only 1% of the world's vehicles.

### What are the reasons for India's high road fatalities?

- 1) Reports suggest that half of those killed in accidents could not receive appropriate medical assistance in the 'golden hour'.
- 2) Trauma care emergency services are not always available along national highways.
- 3) There are lapses in terms of time taken for evacuation and quality of treatment.

A detailed article on **road accident** in India can be [read here](#).

### What measures has the government introduced to address road safety?

- 1) The government has introduced measures such as steep penalties and prison sentences for traffic violations under the Motor Vehicles Act and Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.
- 2) A committee for road safety headed by a retired Supreme Court judge was set up by the government.

### What should be the way forward?

A Johns Hopkins study (2012) concluded that victims taken to hospitals by air are more likely to survive than those transported by ground.

#### 1) Learn from best global practices-

- A) In some states in the US, the police have integrated helicopter-based traffic surveillance with medical evacuation procedures, with trained pilots and paramedics on standby.
- B) A trained team of paramedics should reach the accident site to conduct a 'stay and play' exercise, stabilizing victims before transporting them to trauma care units via well-equipped ambulances.
- C) Recipient trauma hospitals with critical care super-specialties should be pre-identified and have suitable landing facilities.
- D) In India, Madhya Pradesh government has initiated such an emergency service as a pioneering effort

2) **Standardizing Emergency Measures Nationwide-** The central government should define protocols and standard operating procedures for undertaking such measures in a systemic and coordinated manner across the country.

3) **Financial Solutions** -Innovative insurance options for accident treatment should be provided as per the financial capabilities of an individual.

4) **Dedicated Fund Allocation-** The government should allocate a small portion of the significant funds that are earmarked for road construction towards addressing the rising number of road fatalities.

5) **Reassessing reasons** -There is a common misconception about bad roads being the prominent reason

behind road accidents. However, improvements in the road quality and length of expressways and highways have led to higher vehicle speeds and recklessness, contributing to accidents. Thus, there is a need to find out correct reasons behind increasing road fatalities in India.

## Subject: Social Justice

### Topic- Welfare Schemes for Vulnerable Sections of the population by the Centre and States and the Performance of these Schemes Mechanisms, laws, institutions and bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections

#### Barriers to LPG Adoption

**Context-** The article highlights the findings of the 2014-2015 ACCESS survey (conducted by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water) which states that the high cost of LPG is the foremost barrier to its adoption and continued use in rural poor households.

Around 750 million Indians use solid cooking fuels like wood, dung, agricultural residues, coal, and charcoal every day.

#### What are the negative impacts of using solid cooking fuels?

- 1) The use of solid cooking fuels is associated with numerous health hazards, socio-economic, and environmental impacts.
- 2) It degrades forests and exposes people to risks from wild animals.

#### What were some of the government initiatives to promote the use of LPG?

- 1) The Rajiv Gandhi Gramin LPG Vitruk scheme started in 2009 aimed to expand LPG distribution in remote regions. This has resulted in about 45 million new LPG connections from 2010 to 2013.
- 2) Direct benefit transfers for LPG under the 'PAHAL' scheme were initiated in 2015.
- 3) In 2016, home-delivery of LPG refills was introduced, and about 10 million LPG users voluntarily gave up subsidies, transferring them to households below the poverty line through the 'Give it Up' program.
- 4) Then came the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), aiming to provide LPG connections to 80 million households below the poverty line by 2020. The scheme offers a subsidy of ₹200 for each 14.2-kg cylinder, raised to ₹300 in October 2023.

Read more- [PM launches Ujjwala 2.0 Scheme](#)

#### What are challenges in adoption and continued usage of LPG in India?

- 1) India had the most expensive LPG prices (about ₹300 per liter) compared to 54 other countries surveyed.
- 2) Poor people are not able to refill cylinders because of the high prices, even though they initially benefited from switching from fuelwood.

#### What are some of the suitable alternatives to fuelwood?

- 1) Planting high-fuelwood value native tree species in collaboration with local communities and forest departments.
- 2) Introducing efficient cooking stoves and optimizing shade tree density in tea plantations.
- 3) Multi-stakeholder meetings for resource governance.

### What should be the way forward?

- 1) Future governments must focus on making and keeping LPG affordable.
- 2) There is a need to protect society and the environment from the negative effects of using solid cooking fuels. One potential solution is to implement a national policy that encourages the use of smokeless cooking stoves, which require less fuelwood.

### Delhi High Court judgment on protecting minors online

**Context:** The article critiques a Delhi High Court judgment about protecting minors online. It argues that the court overlooks teenagers' knowledge and roles in online safety, misjudges the balance between protection and normal adolescent behavior, and suggests a need for better victim support systems.

For detailed information on **Child, law, and consensual sex** [read this Article here](#)

### What are the major outcomes of the Delhi High Court judgment about protecting minors online?

**Denial of Bail:** The Delhi High Court denied bail to an accused of drugging, kidnapping, and sexually exploiting a minor, met initially through a social media platform.

**Educational Emphasis on Online Safety:** The judgment stresses the need for minors to be educated about navigating online spaces safely. It introduced the concept of "**virtual touch**" to help them recognize potential dangers, similar to the "good touch/bad touch" exercise.

**Assumption of Teenager's Online Awareness:** The court frames teenagers as generally unaware of the risks posed by online interactions.

### What are the major criticisms of the Delhi High Court judgment about protecting minors online?

**Misjudgment of Teenagers' Digital Literacy:** The court assumes that teenagers are less aware of online risks. It overlooks the reality that many teenagers are more digitally proficient than adults and often educate their elders about technology.

**Overreliance on Parental Guidance:** The judgment emphasizes a parent/guardian-centric approach, neglecting the significant role that peers and siblings play in shaping teenagers' online experiences and responses to risks.

**Simplistic Framework for Complex Issues:** The introduction of "virtual touch" in the context of good touch/bad touch is critiqued for oversimplifying the complexities of online interactions and the sophisticated strategies used by perpetrators.

**Legal and Social Implications for Adolescents:** The application of the POCSO Act is criticized for stigmatizing normal adolescent behaviors. It will potentially discourage teenagers from reporting abuses or seeking help, thus perpetuating vulnerability to exploitation.

**Prolonged Legal Proceedings:** Legal proceedings related to online harassment can be excessively prolonged. It contradicts the POCSO Act's recommendation for cases to be resolved within a year to ensure swift justice and support for victims.

For detailed information on **Functioning of the POCSO Act** [read this Article here](#)

## Subject: Governance

**Topic- Important Aspects of Governance, Transparency and Accountability, E-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential; Citizens Charters, Transparency & Accountability and institutional and other measures.**

### Impacts of Changes to CSR Reporting Rules

**News:** Corporate social responsibility (CSR) spending by companies in India hit a record high of ₹15,524 crore in the financial year 2022-23. However, it has become increasingly difficult to track where companies are spending this CSR money.

#### What are the changes made to the CSR reporting system?

Companies are required to spend around 2% of their profits on CSR programs in areas like education, healthcare, sports, and technology incubators.

The government had earlier set up a CSR portal to provide granular data on CSR spending by listed and unlisted entities,

Detailed information on the sectors and locations that received CSR funding was available until 2021-22, but not for 2022-23.

In September 2022, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs allowed companies to make limited disclosures on their CSR spending. It led to many businesses to stop revealing detailed information.

#### What are the Impacts of the changes introduced to CSR reporting by the government?

- 1) Private companies have not disclosed details on around 80% of their CSR spending, while public sector companies have not provided details on around 70% of their spending.
- 2) Out of the total CSR spending, less than ₹3,500 crore has detailed disclosures on allocations across different sectors and regions.
- 3) Limited information makes it challenging to analyze how CSR money is being distributed. As per Previous data, most CSR funds for improving living standards went to richer states where companies are typically located, like Maharashtra and Gujarat. While less developed states like Bihar received only a fraction of the spending.

## Subject: International Relations

**Topic- India and its neighbourhood- relations.**

### Nepal experiencing political and economic instability

**Context:** The article discusses Nepal's current political and economic instability, its rushed transition to a secular federal republic, and the increasing influence of China at India's expense. It suggests India should support Nepal's development without interfering in its internal matters.

For detailed information on **India-Nepal Relationship** read [Article 1](#), [Article 2](#)

### Why is Nepal experiencing political and economic instability?

**Rushed Constitution:** Nepal's decision to become a secular federal democratic republic was rushed and barely debated, contributing to instability.

**Young Democracy:** As a young democracy, Nepal has faced numerous upheavals and lacks experienced leaders and institutions to handle its challenges.

**Loss of Hindu Identity:** The country transitioned from being the world's only Hindu kingdom to a secular state after the Maoist insurgency, causing confusion and dissatisfaction.

**Calls for Monarchy Restoration:** Due to weak democratic institutions, there are calls to restore the monarchy to ensure stability and safeguard democracy.

**Federal Setup Concerns:** The establishment of a genuine federal setup raises fears about potential disunity within Nepal.

**Corruption and Misgovernance:** Rampant corruption and misgovernance are significant issues, making it difficult for Nepal to thrive in the post-COVID-19 world.

### How is China influencing Nepal's politics?

**Political Alliance Shift:** The coalition changed, replacing the Nepali Congress with K.P. Sharma Oli's party, known for being pro-China and anti-India.

**Foreign Policy Influence:** Nepal's Foreign Minister made his first official visit to Beijing, breaking the tradition of visiting New Delhi first.

**Belt and Road Initiative:** Nepal agreed to revive cooperation on China's Belt and Road Initiative despite warnings of a debt trap.

**Military Cooperation:** High-level military visits between Nepal and China have led to new understandings.

### What role does India play in Nepal's current situation?

1. India has been cautious, keeping a low profile and avoiding interference in Nepal's internal affairs.
2. India must carefully address sensitive issues like Nepal's identity and monarchy restoration to avoid mixed signals.
3. India can propose a transformative, sustainable development agenda focusing on health, education, food and nutrition, child development, gender, and jobs.
4. By fostering inter-linkages between industries and addressing Nepal's demographic dividend, India can support Nepal's stability and growth.

## Topic- Bilateral, Regional and Global Groupings and Agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

### India-EFTA trade deal

**Context-** The negotiations with countries like the UK and European Union (EU) are currently stalled due to the ongoing parliamentary elections. However, before the elections, India secured a historic trade deal in March with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), comprising Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland.

### What is India- European Free Trade deal?

Read more- [India-EFTA trade deal](#).

This newly minted Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) between India and EFTA is expected to boost the low levels of existing trade between the two sides.

### What is the significance of this TEPA?

- 1) **Inclusion of environment & labor**-This TEPA is significant because India has agreed to include issues like environment and labor, which it has traditionally opposed in trade agreements.
- 2) **Investment Chapter**-It is also unique as it includes a detailed investment chapter, which is missing in India's other recent TEPA with countries like Australia, UAE, and Mauritius. The investment chapter focuses on investment facilitation, not merely protection.
- 3) **Foreign Direct Investment**- India persuaded EFTA countries to try to raise foreign direct investment (FDI) to India by \$50 billion over 10 years, then another \$50 billion in the next 5 years.
- 4) **Employment Generation**-It will facilitate the generation of 1 million jobs in India.
- 5) **Obligation of conduct**- These rules codify an "obligation of conduct," which means EFTA countries must honestly try to reach these goals. However, they are not forced to achieve them. This sets a good example for negotiations with the UK, EU, and other countries.

### What is India's TEPA 2.0 approach?

India's earlier TEPA with countries like Japan, Korea, Malaysia, and Singapore included binding rules on both trade and investment. This approach demonstrated the inextricable linkage between trade and investment. However, India has changed its approach recently. Instead of combining international trade and investment laws in its TEPA, it's now separating them. For ex- with countries like Australia, Mauritius, and the UAE, India prefers to negotiate trade and investment agreements separately.

Thus India-EFTA trade deal that includes an investment chapter within the trade agreement, assumes great significance in this context.

### What should be the way forward?

India needs a clear TEPA policy, especially in dealing with international trade and foreign investment laws such as-

- 1) There is a need to negotiate trade and investment as part of one comprehensive economic treaty, rather than decoupling them.
- 2) There is a need to expand the scope of investment issues from mere facilitation to effective protection. Further, there must be an enforceable dispute settlement mechanism under international law.
- 3) In the backdrop of declining FDI levels in India, it is important to provide enforceable legal protection to foreign investors under international law. This move will boost their confidence.

## Topic- Effect of Policies and Politics of Developed and Developing Countries on India's interests, Indian Diaspora.

### Prioritizing Global Mobility in Economic Diplomacy

**Context**- The article stresses the importance of prioritizing global labor mobility in India's economic diplomacy to safeguard its interests in the backdrop of rising protectionism in some countries.

### What is the scale of Indian migration abroad, and which countries host the largest Indian diaspora?

## 9 PM Compilation May [Second Week] 2024

In 2020, approximately 18 million Indians lived outside their country of birth. Countries like the UAE, US, and Saudi Arabia have the largest Indian diaspora.

### What does the latest World Migration Report reveal about India's migration patterns?

- 1) **Migration Corridors**- According to the World Migration Report by the International Organization for Migration, the top migration corridors include India to the UAE, the US, and Saudi Arabia, as well as Bangladesh to India.
- 2) **Gender Skew**-The number of people emigrating from India remains the highest in the world, and external migration from India is gender-skewed, with nearly 65% of emigrants being male. This suggests that men migrate for work whereas women stay behind.

Read more- [A retelling of the Indian migrant worker's plight](#)

### What are the contribution and concerns regarding remittances in Indian economy?

#### 1) Contribution-

- A) Remittances are a major source of income for India. It receives over \$111 billion in 2022, making it the top remittance recipient globally.
- B) Remittances help narrow India's current account deficit and boost household consumption and domestic demand.

#### 2) Concerns-

- A) It can cultivate a culture of dependency, potentially lowering productivity and slowing economic growth.
- B) It can render the economy vulnerable to sudden changes in remittance receipts.

3) **India's Remittance Dependence**- India's dependence on remittances is fairly limited compared to other countries. While Tajikistan had a remittance-GDP ratio of 51% in 2022, the corresponding figure for India was about 3.3%.

### How does India benefit from its large migrant population?

India benefits from a vast pool of migrants, both low-skilled and high-skilled. This contributes to various sectors of the economy.

However, the migration of low-skilled workers highlights the need for India to create more productive employment opportunities domestically.

### What should be the way forward?

**Economic Diplomacy**-India must strengthen its capabilities to address problems faced by Indians living abroad that includes cases of discrimination, exploitation, repatriation, and keeping track of the whereabouts of Indians overseas.



## GS Paper 3

### Indian Economy

#### Topic- Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment.

##### Issue with wilful defaulter designations

**Context:** The article discusses the Bombay High Court's decision to strike down a rule allowing public banks to issue lookout circulars against wilful defaulters. It suggests that the concept of "wilful defaulter" needs reconsideration due to outdated processes and potential misuse by banks.

##### What is a wilful defaulter?

Wilful defaulters are borrowers who intentionally avoid repaying loans despite having the financial capacity to do so. Being labeled as a wilful defaulter prevents them from accessing more loans and restricts them from participating in credit and equity markets. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) enforce these penalties.

For information on defaulters, RBI prioritises public interest [read this article here](#)

##### What are the different court rulings regarding wilful defaulters?

**T. Takano v SEBI:** The Supreme Court ruling on inspection rights in securities law influenced later cases. It ensured that regulatory authorities follow fairness principles and allow access to relevant investigation materials.

**Jah Developers Case (2019):** The Supreme Court decision emphasized the need for proper procedural safeguards. It ensured that wilful defaulters receive fair treatment before being classified.

**Viraj Chetan Shah v Union of India:** The Bombay High Court invalidated the rule allowing public banks to request lookout circulars (LoCs) against wilful defaulters.

It held that this practice violated the fundamental rights to equality (Article 14) and life (Article 21).

**Milind Patel v Union Bank of India:** This case clarified that commercial lenders must follow natural justice principles. Borrowers should have access to all investigation material before being designated as wilful defaulters.

##### Why are wilful defaulter designations controversial?

**Lender Bias:** Banks classify borrowers as wilful defaulters despite being parties to credit contracts, leading to potential bias. This violates the principle of nemo iudex in causa sua, meaning no one should judge their own case. Banks might deflect blame for their poor credit appraisal onto borrowers.

**Institutional Misalignment:** Initially, the designation was for information sharing but has evolved into a blacklist system, preventing access to loans and markets. This shift occurred without adapting the safeguards required for fair treatment.

**Alternatives Exist:** The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016, provides a more structured process for handling defaults. With this code in place, the article questions the practicality of the wilful defaulter framework.

For details information on **the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code** [read this article here](#)

### Adopting a living wage approach

**News-** The Indian government has chosen to substitute the minimum wage with a living wage, determined through scientific methods, by the year 2025, with guidance from the International Labour Organization (ILO). As per ILO, living wage considers expenses on food, transport, housing, education, healthcare, etc., for a decent standard of living.

#### What is the current situation regarding minimum wage in India compared to other countries?

India's National Floor Level Minimum Wage (NFLMW) of ₹176 (\$2.1) per day, last updated in 2017, is one of the lowest in the Asia-Pacific region. It's lower than countries like China, Vietnam, and even Bangladesh. Brazil's minimum wage is closer to that of developed economies like Australia, the UK, and the US.

#### What are the issues with the current minimum wage in India?

- 1) **Addressing Disparity-** While the government regularly updates dearness allowance (DA) for central government employees to compensate for inflation, the minimum wage remains unchanged. This leads to a disparity between the minimum wage and the cost of living.
- 2) **Discrepancies in Minimum Wages across States-** Indian states have their own minimum wage mechanisms, usually higher than the national floor. For ex- the minimum wage for a security guard ranges from ₹521-580 per day in Karnataka to ₹176 in Nagaland.
- 3) **Insufficient Minimum Wages Across States** -The current monthly minimum wages ranging from ₹7,000 to ₹20,000 across states are not adequate for a family to maintain a decent standard of living, especially with inflation.

Read more- [Employment status in India](#)

#### What is the Importance of Adopting Minimum Wage or Living Wage?

- 1) **Social Importance-**Increasing the minimum wage or transitioning to a living wage could alleviate poverty, reduce inequality, and improve living standards.
- 2) **Economic Importance-**Increased incomes will boost spending and stimulate the Indian economy. This may also enhance the demand for affordable housing and home ownership over time.

#### What are the concerns raised about minimum wage hikes?

- 1) **Concerns vs. Mixed International Evidence** -Opponents of minimum wage hikes fear negative impacts on hiring, especially by smaller enterprises. However, studies from other countries show mixed results, indicating uncertainty about the impact in India.
- 2) **Implementing a Fair Living Wage** -Introducing a mandatory fair living wage requires strict enforcement of wage regulations. Ensuring compliance across different employment statuses, genders, and skill levels would be challenging.

#### What should be the way forward?

- 1) **Governmental Support-**Government support, such as tax waivers, could ease the economic strain on smaller businesses during the initial phase of strict enforcement.
- 2) **Reforms in Social Security Contributions-** Enhancing minimum wages should not be accompanied by

increased salary deductions for social security benefits like provident fund and ESIC (Employees' State Insurance Corporation).

Instead, the government must abolish ESIC contributions by employees and reduce the employer's ESIC contribution from 3.2% to 1.5%.

3) **Adjusting Provident Fund Contributions Based on Income** -For the Employees' Provident Fund Organization, employees earning monthly wages below ₹15,000 should have their contribution reduced from 12% to 8%. However, for those earning more, the contribution should remain at 12%.

4) **Regular Inflation Adjustments**-Once established scientifically, the minimum or living wage should be adjusted for inflation every two years.

Strict implementation could help more individuals transition to formal employment while raising living standards and supporting economic growth.

### Factors responsible for the increase in employment in India

**Context:** The article discusses the growth of employment in India from 1983 to 2023, using NSSO data. It notes increases in jobs across all sectors and highlights significant growth among women and older people. It also points out the rise in self-employment, influenced by government schemes and financial support.

For detailed information on **Employment status in India** [read this article here](#)

#### What is the status of employment in India?

**Consistent Growth in Employment:** Employment in India has consistently grown since 1983, with no periods of jobless growth. Notably, from 2017-18 to 2022-23, employment increased by about 80 million, marking a 3.3% annual growth rate.

**Significant Inclusion:** Women and older individuals have seen significant employment gains, with annual growth rates of 8% and 4.5%, respectively.

**Sectoral Expansion:** The agriculture and services sectors have experienced the highest employment growth, particularly in non-cropping areas like livestock and fisheries.

**Rise in Self-Employment:** There's been a substantial increase in self-employment, supported by government schemes such as the PMMY scheme (Mudra), which disbursed nearly Rs 23 lakh crore up to 2022.

**Wage Stagnation:** Despite job growth, real wage growth has stagnated, with an average annual increase of just 1.2% after adjusting for inflation from 2017-18 to 2022-23, indicating potential issues with labor supply and productivity.

#### What factors are responsible for the increase in employment in India?

**Government Initiatives:** The PMMY (Mudra) scheme significantly contributed to self-employment by disbursing nearly Rs 23 lakh crore into 380 million accounts from 2015-16 to 2022. This financial support helped spur entrepreneurial activities, especially among own-account workers and unpaid family workers.

**Demographic Changes:** Employment among women and older individuals has increased notably. For women, employment grew by more than 8% annually and for older people (age 60+), by about 4.5% annually. This change is possibly driven by improved access to resources like water and energy, allowing more flexibility to enter the workforce.

**Sectoral Growth:** The agriculture and services sectors saw the most significant employment gains. Within agriculture, non-cropping sectors like livestock and fisheries experienced the highest growth, suggesting a diversification in agricultural activities beyond traditional farming.

## Consequences of Changes to exchange rate System In India

**Context:** The article discusses how a flexible exchange rate can help absorb economic shocks by adjusting when bad news occurs.

For detailed information on **Exchange rate flexibility is a key shock absorber for India** [read this article here](#)

### What is the role of exchange rate flexibility?

**Absorbs Economic Shocks:** Exchange rate flexibility allows the currency value to adjust during economic disturbances, reducing impacts on other areas like stock prices and real estate.

**Supports Export Competitiveness:** When the rupee weakens due to bad news, it makes Indian exports cheaper and more attractive on the global market, helping businesses involved in international trade.

**Mitigates Pressure on Financial Markets:** By adjusting the currency value, other financial elements like stock and real estate prices face less volatility during economic downturns.

**Historical Example:** Since late 2022, the rupee has been more controlled, impacting its role as a shock absorber. Before this change, fluctuations in the rupee could respond to international incidents, such as disruptions in the Red Sea, benefiting export sectors.

### What are the various policy decisions that have impacted the exchange rate?

**Fixed Exchange Rate Implementation:** In late 2022, the exchange rate was largely fixed at \$82.8 to the dollar, significantly reducing the rupee's flexibility to respond to economic changes.

**Restrictions on Exchange-Traded Derivatives:** Starting in early 2024, derivatives could only be used for hedging purposes, limiting speculative activities that affect currency valuation.

**Changes to the Liberalised Remittance Scheme:** Adjustments in August 2022 and July 2023 tightened controls over capital outflows, impacting the volume and flow of foreign exchange and thus influencing the exchange rate stability.

### What are the consequences of recent Indian monetary policies?

**Loss of Flexibility:** Since fixing the exchange rate at approximately \$82.8 to the dollar in late 2022, India has lost a crucial economic shock absorber, leading to less adaptability in handling financial disturbances.

**Increased Market Volatility:** A controlled exchange rate has exacerbated volatility in financial markets. Notable examples include significant swings in stock prices following the election wins by the Congress party in 2004 and 2009, as the exchange rate remained stable during these times, amplifying the impact on stock prices.

**Stagnation in Export Growth:** The shift to a more controlled exchange rate regime coincided with a halt in the growth of exports. Specifically, non-oil non-gold exports have been flat at around \$55 billion a month starting from 2022, reflecting the challenges of a less flexible exchange system.

## Topic- Effects of Liberalization on the Economy, Changes in Industrial Policy and their Effects on Industrial Growth.

### An Analysis of PLI scheme for Electronics

**News:** The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology wants to boost the electronics-component manufacturing industry through a PLI scheme.

For details information on **an analysis of PLI (production-linked incentive) scheme** [read this article here](#)

#### Why does India want to boost the electronics-component manufacturing industry through a PLI scheme?

**Enhance Production Capacity:** The Ministry aims to create a \$75 billion component ecosystem over five years to increase production capacity and make electronics manufacturing cost-effective.

**Global Strategy Alignment:** Amid rising US-China tensions, India seeks to be part of the China-plus-One strategy, offering a manufacturing alternative for global corporations.

**Subsidies as Incentive:** The PLI scheme offers subsidies of 4-6% to attract investment and expand domestic manufacturing.

**Mixed Success:** While mobile phone manufacturing, particularly Apple's iPhones, has seen some success, most components are still produced abroad. Companies like Wistron and Pegatron have exited the market.

#### What are the issues with the PLI scheme?

**Limited Investment:** Investment hasn't met expectations in sectors like solar panels, automobiles, and textiles, which were expected to benefit from the PLI scheme.

**Failure to Create Jobs:** The scheme hasn't generated the required employment in labor-intensive industries like textiles, which still struggle with slow investment growth.

**Import Dependence:** Even for successful mobile phone assembly (e.g., Apple's iPhones), most components are still imported, reducing domestic production benefits.

**Market Interference:** The scheme's subsidies interfere with market operations and raise bureaucratic control.

**Low Utilization:** Actual spending on the PLI scheme remains a fraction of the planned budget.

#### What should be done?

**Avoid Over-Reliance on Subsidies:** As economist Arvind Panagariya pointed out, PLI isn't suitable for all sectors. Instead, subsidies should be more focused.

For details information on **PLI scheme alone would not be enough** [read this article here](#)

**Strengthen Infrastructure and Policy:** Improving infrastructure, maintaining low tariffs, and building a skilled workforce are essential for long-term success.

**Study Past Results:** The government should analyze the effectiveness of the PLI scheme before expanding it to new sectors.

## Factors behind growth of India's public sector enterprises (PSEs)

**Context:** The article discusses that successful management and growth of India's public sector enterprises (PSEs), has led to their improved performance.

### What improvements have been made in the public sector under the present government?

**Increased Production and Profits:** Key public sector enterprises like Oil India Ltd, IOCL, and BPCL have reached record levels in production and profits. For example, Oil India Ltd posted its highest-ever crude and natural gas output.

**Banking Sector Recovery:** Public sector banks have shown significant improvement, in the fiscal year 2022-23, these banks achieved their highest-ever profits and lowest-ever levels of NPAs.

**Strategic Divestment:** The government's divestment strategy includes the privatization of Air India due to its inefficiencies, while holding back on selling its stake in BPCL due to its strategic importance and significant profitability.

**Stability in Crisis:** During the crisis when international crude prices soared, the government-owned oil marketing companies (OMCs) kept fuel prices unchanged to control inflation, a fact clearly stated in the article. This helped manage economic pressures without sacrificing the financial health of the OMCs.

### How has the present government influenced the operation of PSEs?

**Professional Autonomy:** The government has provided PSEs with the freedom to make business decisions. This has resulted in enhanced performance metrics such as IOCL achieving its best refinery throughput and BPCL reporting its highest-ever profits.

**Strategic Investment and Expansion:** The government has enabled PSEs to undertake large capital expenditure projects. Oil and gas PSEs are currently implementing 275 projects with a total investment of over Rs 5.67 lakh crore, demonstrating significant commitment to strategic growth and national development.

**Selective Divestment:** The government's calibrated approach to divestment, like privatizing Air India while retaining BPCL, shows strategic influence in decision-making to optimize national economic benefits.

## U.S. increasing tariffs on Chinese imports, especially electric vehicles

**Context:** The article discusses the U.S. increasing tariffs on Chinese imports, especially electric vehicles, to 100%. This move aims to win industrial workers' support for Biden's re-election. It also covers global reactions, India's tariff policies, and the need for innovation and investment in the EV sector.

### Why is the U.S. increasing tariffs on Chinese imports, especially electric vehicles?

The U.S. increased tariffs on Chinese imports, including a fourfold rise to 100% on electric vehicles (EVs), to support President Biden's re-election campaign.

Biden is trailing in battleground state polls and aims to win back industrial workers to the Democratic Party.

Former President Trump proposed even higher tariffs of 200% on EVs.

The previous 25% tariff effectively limited Chinese EVs in the U.S. market.

Chinese EV manufacturers, like BYD, have become innovation leaders, producing advanced vehicles.

The tariff increase aims to protect American car manufacturers and their market share.

### What has been the reaction from other countries?

The European Union (EU) is uncomfortable with setting tariffs at levels similar to the U.S.

The EU has launched an investigation into whether "unfair subsidies" are given to Chinese EV manufacturers by Beijing.

This investigation could enable the European Commission to impose tariffs or other restrictions later this year.

India has high tariffs on cars, particularly high-end EVs.

### What is India's policy on EV tariffs?

Recently, the Indian government announced it would reduce these tariffs on a case-by-case basis for companies planning to set up manufacturing units in India.

This policy is widely interpreted as an incentive for the American manufacturer Tesla.

The top Chinese EV company, BYD, has long sought to increase manufacturing in India. However, BYD has not received clearance for its proposed billion-dollar investment.

Indian policy aims to balance promoting domestic manufacturing with providing efficient cars to consumers.

The government seeks to attract investment and innovation in the EV sector to meet domestic and international demand.

## Subject: Agriculture

**Topic- Major Crops - Cropping Patterns in various parts of the country, - Different Types of Irrigation and Irrigation Systems; Storage, Transport and Marketing of Agricultural Produce and Issues and Related Constraints; E-technology in the aid of farmers.**

### How India's agricultural exports fell

**Context:** This article discusses how India's agricultural exports fell by 8.2% in the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024, mainly due to government restrictions on exporting key items like sugar, non-basmati rice, wheat, and onions to protect domestic supply and control inflation.

### What is the current state of India's agricultural exports?

The target for agricultural exports set by the Indian government was \$60 billion in 2022. However, in 2023-24, exports only reached \$48.9 billion, marking an 8% decline from \$53.2 billion in the previous year. Between 2004-05 to 2013-14, agricultural exports grew by almost 500%, from \$8.7 billion to \$43.3 billion. However, growth has slowed significantly Between 2014-15 to 2023-24, with only a 1.9% annual growth rate. The main exports include rice (\$10.4 billion), marine products (\$7.3 billion), spices (\$4.25 billion), bovine meat (\$3.7 billion), and sugar (\$2.8 billion).

### What Factors Affect India's Agricultural Exports?

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**Global Market Prices:** When global prices rise, Indian exports increase. For example, during the high growth phase, high global prices led to a surge in exports.

**Domestic Export Policies:** Restrictions and bans on commodities like wheat, rice, sugar, and onions affect exports. For instance, after banning wheat exports in May 2022 and imposing restrictions on rice and sugar, there was a notable impact on trade volumes and values.

**Economic Measures:** Imposing duties such as the 20% duty on non-basmati rice exports affects the export competitiveness and pricing in international markets.

### Why did agricultural exports fall?

Reasons for the Decline in Agricultural Exports:

#### Bans on Key Commodities:

Government bans on sugar exports starting October 2023 reduced their value from \$5.77 billion to \$2.82 billion. Non-basmati rice exports dropped from \$6.36 billion to \$4.57 billion due to restrictions imposed in July 2023. Wheat exports were banned in May 2022, causing a sharp drop from \$2.12 billion to \$56.74 million. Onion exports fell to 17.08 lakh tonnes worth \$467.83 million following export restrictions.

#### Global Price Shifts:

A global crash in agri-commodity prices between 2013-14 and 2019-20 made India's exports less competitive. The FAO food price index dropped from 119.1 to 96.5 points, impacting export revenues.

### Why did imports change?

Imports changed in 2023-24 primarily due to shifts in edible oil prices and pulses demand.

Global edible oil prices dropped after the Russia-Ukraine war, leading to a fall in India's vegetable oil import bill to below \$15 billion from over \$20 billion the previous year.

Conversely, pulses imports nearly doubled to \$3.75 billion, driven by high domestic demand.

The change in import trends was thus shaped by declining international oil prices and rising domestic demand for essential agricultural products like pulses.

### What should be done?

**Policy Stability:** Farmers and traders require predictable policies. Sudden bans on key exports like wheat hurt market development and need careful consideration.

**Temporary Tariffs:** Introducing temporary tariffs instead of outright bans would better balance consumer and producer interests.

**Support Crop Diversification:** Encourage farmers to grow less water-intensive crops like pulses and oilseeds by maintaining reasonable tariffs. Current zero/low tariffs on imports of these crops counter efforts to diversify away from rice, wheat, and sugarcane.

**Balanced Approach:** Develop a policy that prioritizes both short- and long-term goals, supporting the farm sector's growth while safeguarding consumer interests.

**Invest in Agriculture:** Invest in agricultural research and efficient farming practices like precision agriculture. These investments reduce costs and improve competitiveness.

**Address Ecological Impacts:** Focus on sustainable farming to preserve resources, particularly water, as rice cultivation is notably water intensive.

**Rebalance Policies:** Adjust policies like the high minimum export prices for onions, which currently disadvantage farmers, to better support farmer incomes and make domestic and export markets more equitable.



## Topic- Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

### Indian government's plans to prioritize addressing unwanted calls and messages

**Context:** The article discusses the Indian government's plans to prioritize addressing unwanted calls and messages. It highlights ongoing issues with spam despite existing regulations and mentions new measures to improve control, such as technology upgrades and stricter enforcement policies, as part of a 100-day agenda by the new government.

#### What is the current situation with spam calls and messages in India?

**Persistent Issue:** Despite various regulations, India continues to struggle with a high volume of spam calls and messages.

**Regulatory Efforts:** Initiatives like the "Do Not Disturb Registry" and the Telecom Commercial Communication Customer Preference Regulations have been implemented, but spammers and some telecom providers have been quick to find loopholes.

**Truecaller Statistics:** Truecaller reports India as its largest market, with 272.6 million users facing spam issues.

Currently, telecom service providers can be **fined up to ₹34.99 crore if they fail to control spam on their networks.**

#### What are the new plans?

**100-Day Agenda:** The Department of Telecommunications aims to prioritize tackling spam as part of the new government's initial plans.

**Inter-Ministerial Panel:** A new panel is proposed to coordinate actions against spam across different sectors.

**Chakshu Portal Updates:** Enhancements to this portal are planned to improve monitoring and enforcement against unsolicited communications.

**AI and Digital Consent:** The implementation of AI technology for digital consent acquisition is on the agenda to reduce spam effectively.

**Separate Numbering Series:** Considering distinct series for transactional and marketing calls to clearly differentiate them.

## Subject: Science & Technology

### Topic- Developments and their Applications and Effects in Everyday Life. Achievements of Indians in Science & Technology; Indigenization of Technology and Developing New Technology.

#### Significance of AlphaFold 3

**News:** The article discusses AlphaFold 3, a tool developed by Google's DeepMind that predicts protein structures. It highlights the tool's advancements and its ability to model other molecules but notes limitations to it.

#### What is AlphaFold?

**AlphaFold:** An AI tool developed by Google's DeepMind in 2018 to predict how proteins fold.

**Purpose:** It aims to identify the 3D shapes of proteins based on their amino acid sequences, which is crucial for understanding biological functions and disease mechanisms.

**Development History:** The initial release in 2018 came five decades after the protein-folding problem was identified. It has been followed by improved versions, including AlphaFold 2 and the latest, AlphaFold 3, which also models DNA, RNA, and other molecules.

**Accuracy:** AlphaFold 3 has nearly 80% accuracy in predicting protein structures, showcasing significant advancements in the field.

#### Why is protein folding important?

**Biological Function:** Proteins need to fold into specific shapes to perform their biological functions properly.

**Health Implications:** Misfolded proteins can cause diseases, making understanding protein folding crucial for medical research.

**Drug Development:** Knowledge of protein structures aids in the development of drugs by providing insights into how they interact with the body.

#### What are the limitations of AlphaFold 3?

**Explanatory Limits:** AlphaFold 3 can predict how proteins fold but does not explain why they fold in that specific way, a task remaining for human scientists.

**Drug Discovery Impact:** Technology's role in accelerating drug development is uncertain. It doesn't address all the interactions between drug components and the body, which are critical for clinical trial success.

**Access and Transparency:** The use of AlphaFold 3 is restricted, and its algorithms are not open for public scrutiny, which could hinder broader research and innovation.

## Topic- Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, Robotics, Nano-technology, Bio-technology and issues relating to Intellectual Property Rights.

### Regulatory Sandboxes for AI Governance

**Context-**The article highlights the significance of adopting innovative approaches such as “AI regulatory sandboxes” to strike a balance between fostering AI innovation and ensuring responsible development. This assumes great importance in the backdrop of continued AI application across industries such as healthcare, finance etc.

#### What is the significance of AI regulatory sandboxes in artificial intelligence?

- 1) It allows a controlled environment to test innovations for a limited period, under regulatory supervision and with certain restrictions in place.
- 2) It empowers policymakers to craft well-informed legal and policy responses for technologies. This will foster innovation and responsible governance.
- 3) It promotes transparency and accountability by requiring participants to disclose information about their AI models. This will address the concerns about opacity and enable tailored regulations.
- 4) It encourages mitigation of potential societal impacts of AI applications by mandating risk assessments and safeguards.
- 5) It guides businesses, researchers, and policymakers, steering AI development towards sustainable growth.
- 6) It can position India at the forefront of shaping effective and adaptive regulatory frameworks for emerging technologies.

#### What are the steps taken by the countries to regulate AI?

- 1) The European Union's AI Act (Article 53) has a provision for a regulatory sandbox to test technology before mainstream deployment.

Read more- [European Union adopts first AI Law](#)

- 2) Spain became the first European country to establish the Spanish Agency for the Supervision of Artificial Intelligence (AESIA).
- 3) There is a competitive race to regulate and harness AI's potential, with initiatives like the EU's AI Act, the U.S. AI Bill of Rights, the U.K.'s national AI Strategy, and China's efforts to regulate aspects like generative AI.

#### What has been the India's approach in regulating AI?

In India, all financial sector regulators have launched their respective regulatory sandboxes. The Karnataka Innovation Authority Act, 2020, and the Telecommunications Act 2023 propose regulatory sandboxes for various innovative technologies. Some other steps are as follows-

- 1) NITI Aayog released a discussion paper outlining a national strategy for AI, leading to the establishment of the national AI Portal.
- 2) The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) released a report on AI Innovation 2023, highlighting India's AI vision through seven working groups.
- 3) The proposed Digital India Act, 2023, also talks about regulating AI by creating a separate set of laws and regulations.

The regulatory sandbox should be viewed as a progressive step before enacting formal legislation. It's customized to suit India's needs and sets the stage for future regulations.

## Subject: Internal Security

**Topic- Challenges to Internal Security through Communication Networks, Role of Media and Social Networking Sites in Internal Security Challenges, Basics of Cyber Security; Money-Laundering and its prevention.**

### Generative AI impacting cybersecurity

**Context:** The article discusses the rise in cyber threats linked to generative AI misuse. It highlights how hackers use AI to impersonate voices, phishing attacks are growing, and cybersecurity needs tighter global cooperation.

#### How is generative AI impacting cybersecurity?

**Increased Phishing Attacks:** Phishing emails surged by 1,265% and credential theft rose by 967% since late 2022 due to AI.

**Voice Cloning for Fraud:** Hackers imitated a mother's daughter's voice to extort money, highlighting the risks of AI-based scams.

**Enhanced Hacking Sophistication:** AI helps hackers translate code, identify vulnerabilities, and amplify attacks.

**Rising Attacks on Organizations:** 75% of professionals reported more cyberattacks last year, while 85% linked the trend to AI.

**Privacy Erosion:** Voice-activated toys and biometric systems threaten individual privacy.

#### What are governments doing about it?

**Global Cooperation:** Countries like the U.S., U.K., China, and India signed the Bletchley Declaration at the AI Safety Summit to strengthen collaboration.

**Legislation Development:** Governments are working on tighter ethical and legal frameworks to combat AI misuse despite facing challenges in fully understanding the technology.

#### What should be done?

**Content Watermarking:** Implement watermarking for AI-generated content to help identify and limit malicious use.

**Digital Literacy Training:** Companies should offer training to help employees identify phishing and other scams, with 75% reporting increased cyberattacks.

**Public Feedback:** Engage the public to improve regulation and ensure protection for privacy and security.

### Anxiety caused by deepfakes in elections

**Context:** The article discusses the anxiety caused by deepfakes in elections. It explains that deepfakes undermine our ability to trust information. Social media causes "context collapse" and "information overload," making it hard to discern truth from falsehood.

For detailed information on **Deepfakes** [read this article here](#)

### Why do we distrust politicians?

It is widely believed that politicians can't be trusted. Politicians often manipulate information and make false promises. Corruption is a common accusation across all political parties.

Before elections, people were frequently warned about rumors and baseless information. Media and regulatory bodies were trusted to verify and corroborate information.

For example, during elections, various sources remind people to be aware of unchecked gossip, which influences voter decisions.

### Why are deepfakes causing anxiety?

Deepfakes cause anxiety because they undermine our ability to trust information. In the past, people believed that they could see through manipulations and trusted media and regulatory bodies to verify information.

Deepfakes make people doubt their own judgment even after verification. Social media's 'context collapse' and 'information overload' worsen this issue.

For example, on social media, people receive information without knowing its source, making it hard to trust. People consume too much information quickly, relying on algorithms that prioritize engagement and profit and not the truth.

For detailed information on **Rise of deepfake-Threat to election integrity** [read this article here](#)

### How can we manage deepfakes?

1. To manage deepfakes, we need clarity between what is real, fake, and really fake.
2. We must address "context collapse" by knowing the source and context of information.
3. Reducing "information overload" is crucial, as it allows thoughtful engagement with content. For example, we should seek information on our own terms, not rely on algorithms that prioritize profit and engagement.
4. Community interventions, fact-checking, and technological solutions like deepfake detectors can help verify information.
5. However, as long as we accept current social media dynamics, stopping deepfakes completely will be challenging.

## Social Impacts of Deepfakes

**Context:** The article discusses how trust is crucial for technology adoption. Deepfakes, which spread quickly and are harmful, erode this trust. It highlights the legal and societal challenges deepfakes pose and suggests regulations, responsibilities for tech platforms, and support for victims.

For detailed information on **Rise of deepfake** [read this article here](#)

### What are Social Impacts of Deepfakes?

Trust is essential for the adoption of technology because it ensures users feel secure and confident in using new innovations.

Deepfakes erode trust by creating believable fake content that spreads rapidly on social media, causing severe harm.

Women and children are frequent targets of deepfakes, facing significant psychological distress. Deepfakes can manipulate evidence, threatening the judiciary and leading to wrongful convictions. They undermine user-verification methods like facial recognition, critical for services in India. Deepfakes spread misinformation, impacting democratic processes. The World Economic Forum's 2024 risk report highlights misinformation as a critical global risk.

### What are the legal challenges related to deepfakes in India?

Sections 66D, 66E, 67, 67A, and 67B of the IT Act penalize impersonation and obscene material but do not fully address deepfakes.

The Digital Personal Data Protection Act could be more effective if it included reputational loss in its definition of "loss."

Data fiduciaries are required to notify individuals of data breaches but need stricter measures like disabling private-media downloads.

Rule 4(2) of the 2021 IT Guidelines mandates social media to identify originators of harmful content, but platforms like WhatsApp and Meta contest this, citing privacy concerns.

The Anil Kapoor vs. Simply Life India case highlights privacy and publicity rights violations by deepfakes.

For detailed information on **legal provisions exist against deepfakes in India** [read this article here](#)

### What should be done?

Social media platforms must limit the spread of deepfake content and crack down on bots amplifying misinformation.

Tech developers should incorporate consistent labeling features to identify artificial content, as suggested by the Union IT ministry's advisory.

Implement mandatory user verification for content creation to establish accountability.

Provide clear legal paths and psychological support for deepfake victims.

Criminalize the creation of non-consensual deepfakes, like the proposed UK law.

Invest in media literacy efforts and promote responsible digital citizenship to help individuals critically evaluate online content and identify deepfakes.

## Topic- Security Challenges and their Management in Border Areas - Linkages of Organized Crime with Terrorism.

### Need for theatre commands in India's defence

**Context:** The article discusses the need for India's armed forces to focus on specific war theatres. It explains the plan for integrated theatre commands (ITCs), where forces will be organized by regions. It emphasizes the importance of strategic planning, command roles, and careful use of new technologies.

### What is the need for theatre commands in India's defence?

**Current Challenges:** India's defence faces potential threats from Pakistan and China, necessitating a focused approach.

**Operational Efficiency:** Traditional separation of forces for land, air, and sea combat leads to inefficiencies.

**Specific Theatres:** Forces need to be strategically positioned—Jaipur for western threats, Lucknow for

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northern threats, and Combatore for maritime threats.

**Resource Optimization:** Integrated Theatre Commands (ITCs) ensure better use of resources and improved readiness.

For detailed information on **Integrated Theatre commands in India** read [Article 1](#), [Article 2](#)

**Evolving Warfare:** Modern warfare demands quick, coordinated responses, which separate commands cannot effectively provide.

### What progress has been made?

**CDS Appointment:** Nearly five years ago, India appointed its first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) to oversee defence reforms.

For detailed information on **CDS, Chief of Defence Staff: Benefits and Challenges** [read this article here](#)

**ITC Proposal:** A concrete plan for Integrated Theatre Commands (ITCs) has been reported, indicating progress in restructuring.

**Leadership Roles:** The proposed structure includes a vice-CDS for strategic planning and procurement, and a deputy CDS for operations and intelligence.

**Operational Coordination:** The three existing service chiefs will continue to lead their respective forces, while combat operations will be managed by top officers with a strategic view.

### What should be done?

**Implement ITCs:** The shift to Integrated Theatre Commands (ITCs) should be prioritized to enhance operational efficiency.

**Strategic Leadership:** Appoint a vice-CDS for strategic planning and procurement, and a deputy CDS for operations and intelligence.

**Focus on Equipment Upgrades:** Ensure continuous modernization of military equipment.

**Avoid Reckless Moves:** Transition cautiously to prevent exposing vulnerabilities.

**Consensus on AI Use:** Develop a consensus on the tolerance for AI-led strikes to minimize collateral damage